

# Psalm 104

## Psalm 104:1–35

## God's Intelligent Creation

### Outline of Chapter 104

- vv. 1–4 **The habitation of God**
- vv. 5–13 **The waters of the earth**
- vv. 14–18 **The earth**
- vv. 19–23 **The seasons—the days and the nights**
- vv. 24–30 **God's sustenance of those on the earth**
  
- vv. 31–35 **Praise to God because of His power and glory**

### Alternate Outline of Chapter 104

- vv. 1–4 **God's Habitation**—"Let there be light, and light was." The first day.
- vv. 5–10 **The waters of the earth are divided**—"Let there be an atmosphere in the midst of the waters." Day two.
- vv. 11–18 **The vegetation of the earth**—"Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed and fruit trees bearing fruit." Day three.
- vv. 19–23 **The seasons, the days and the nights**—And God made the two great lights...the stars also. Day four.
- vv. 24–26 **The sea creatures**—And God created the great sea creatures...and every winged bird. Day five.
- vv. 27–30 **God's sustenance of all His creatures**—"Look, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree which has fruit yielding seed; it is food for you." Day six.
- vv. 31–35 **Praise be to God**—Then God blessed the seventh day and set it apart because in it, He rested from all His work which God had created and made. Day seven.

### Charts and Maps

- Introduction **Various Outlines for Psalm 104**
- Introduction **Alternate Outline of Chapter 104**

**Introduction:** It is difficult to know where to place Psalm 104 in terms of where it should be taught. The material covered deals, in part, with the creation of the earth and the tremendous power of God; therefore, it belongs soon after the first couple of chapters of Genesis. However, this psalm appears to be part of a quadruplet of psalms, probably all written by David, Psalms 103–106. Psalm 103 deals with the character of God and is undisputably David's work, and therefore should be taught sometime during the teaching of his life. However, Psalm 104 centers on creation, whereas Psalms 105–106 deal with the history of Israel up to the time of Moses and slightly beyond. In this Psalm Addendum, I will keep this in the same order as it is found in the Psalms, but I will teach Psalm 104 after chapter 2 of Genesis.

As was mentioned, this psalm was likely written by David. The first of these quadruplet of psalms lists David as the author. Psalm 103 is enclosed by the words **Bless Y<sup>h</sup>owah, O my soul**; and so is Psalm 104. I don't think that this is merely a similarity of styles of two separate psalmists, but a device to connect these two psalms to one another. In fact, it is probably more difficult to tie Psalms 104 and 105 together than it is to tie this psalm and the

one immediately previous. After giving my opinion that this was a psalm of David, I found that Barnes' Notes wrote: *This psalm in the Syriac, the arabic, the Greek and the Latin versions, is ascribed to David, but on what authority is now unknown. In the Hebrew, it has no title.*<sup>1</sup> So that you know there are other views, the NIV Study Bible expresses the thought that the first line and the last two lines of this psalm were added by a later editor. My guess is that their justification is that these three lines are not an integral whole with the rest of the psalm, and therefore must have been added. I personally think that this framing was done by David to identify this quadruplet of psalms as his.

We do not know the occasion of this psalm—i.e., why or when it was written. As Barnes points out, there is no time period to which it must be affixed (other than David's) and it would not be inappropriate at any given ceremony or celebration. *It is such a psalm as might be composed at any period of the world, or in any country, where there was an intelligent view and a careful observation of the works of God. It implies, indeed, such a knowledge of the fact that God made the world as could be obtained only be revelation; but it evinces also a power of close observation; a large acquaintance with the creation aroundus; a relish for the scenes of nature; as well as a rich poetic faculty, and a power of description, adapted to place such scenes before the mind as realites, and to make us feel, in reading it, that we are in the very midst of the things which are described,—so that they seem to live and move before our eyes.*<sup>2</sup>

In placing this psalm topically with Genesis, I found that Barnes, obviously a brilliant man, and I agree. *The psalm was probably founded on the record of the creation in gen.i., with a design to show that the order of the creation, as there described, was adapted to the purposed which were inteneded, and was carried out in the providential arrangements now existing on the earth; or, that, taking the order of the creation as described there, the existng state of things furnished an illustration of the wisdom and benevolence of that order. Accordingly, in the psalm, it was convenient for the writer to follow substantially the order observed in gen. i. in narrating the creation of the world; and he states, under each part, the acting out of that order in existing things;—creation in its being actually carried out, or in its results—the creation developing itself in the varied and wonderful forms of being—of vegetable and animal life—of beauty, of harmonious movement, of ceaseless activity,—on the land, in the air, and in the waters.*<sup>3</sup> This psalm makes mention of the angelic world possibly in v. 4 and man himself is only mentioned in passing. What is in full view is the visible creation of God all around the psalmist.

With respect to the outline, after looking over this psalm for several minutes, I decided to see what others have done. Several Bibles break these up into poetic paragraphs, and I have printed a chart of those on the next page.

Various Outlines for Psalm 104				
NAB	NASB	NIV	NJB	NRSV
1–4	1–4	1a	1–2a	1–4
		1b–4	2b–4	
5–9	5–9	5–9	5–6	5–9
			7–9	
10–18	10–13	10–18	10–12	10–13
	14–17		13–15	
			16–18	14–23

<sup>1</sup> Barnes' Notes, Vol. IV, book 3, p. 80.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p. 81.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 81.

Various Outlines for Psalm 104				
NAB	NASB	NIV	NJB	NRSV
19–23	18–23	19–23	19–21	
			22–23	
24–26	24–26	24–30	24	24–26
			25–26	
27–30	27–30	27–28	27–28	27–30
			29–30	
31–35	31–35	31–35a	31–32	31–35
			33–35a	
		35b	35b	

Barnes equates it with Gen. 1 and creation, following along day by day, and, at first, this correlation seemed forced to me. Don't get me wrong—when reading the introduction of Barnes, I wanted this idea to work; I liked the idea of this psalm falling into 7 neat sections, but that did not seem to occur because I wanted this psalm to be about creation, but it is not—not exactly.<sup>4</sup> This psalm parallels creation and occasionally alludes to creation and that is where we get our correlation; that is, while writing this psalm, the author had one eye on the first chapter of Genesis and the other eye on the subject matter of the psalm. *Whereas Ge 1 recounts creation as God's first work at the beginning, this poet views the creation displayed before his eyes and sings the glory of its Maker and Sustainer.*<sup>5</sup> This is therefore, from whence we build our outline. There is mention of light in the first four verses and God created light on the first day. There are boundaries set for the waters of the earth in vv. 5–9 and God divided the waters in heaven from the waters of the earth on the second day. In Genesis, on the third day, God caused the waters to gather together and for dry land to appear. The geological occurrence here would have been earthquakes and volcanoes the second time it occurred; I am not completely clear on how it occurred on the third day of restoration. I personally believed that occurred twice; once on the third day and once after the flood. Also on that third day, God caused the earth to sprout vegetation and vv. 10–18 mention the sprouting of grass, plants and the cedars of Lebanon. On the fourth day, God saw to the lights of the skies, which would be used to calculate days and seasons and years. In vv. 19–23, we have mention of the sun and the moon, the day and the night. God created the creatures of the seas on the fifth day and these creatures are mentioned in vv. 25–26.

At this point, Barnes no longer sees a correlation; however, I do. On the sixth day, God created the creatures of the earth and of the sky, and then He created man. Back in v. 24, animals in general are mentioned. In Genesis, God points out to man how He has provided for man—before man even existed, God had everything in order for man's sustenance. After created man on the sixth day, God explains this to the first man. The psalmist points out that all the creatures of the earth look to God for their food and for their very breath in vv. 27–29. On the seventh day, God had finished with all of His labors and so He rested—and, as Thieme often pointed out, not because He was tired but because He was finished. The seventh day was set aside primarily for rest and worship to God. Man paused from his hectic schedule and recognized and glorified his Creator. This psalm ends with the psalmist singing praise to God all of his life; and then the psalmist speaks of the end times. Therefore, I ended up doing two outlines, which I am essentially happy with, but they are not anything which I feel married to.

<sup>4</sup> Besides which, I was exhausted from studying by that time. I am able to have a good two hour clear-headed study on any given day and then after that, it is down hill.  
<sup>5</sup> *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995; p. 888.

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## The Habitation of God

Literally:

Smoother English rendering:

**Bless, O my soul, Y<sup>h</sup>owah  
O Y<sup>h</sup>owah my God, You are very great.  
You are clothed with honor and majesty.** Psalm 104:1

**Bless, O my soul, Y<sup>h</sup>owah  
O Y<sup>h</sup>owah my God, You are very great.  
You are clothed with honor and majesty.**

To begin the translate this verse is difficult. Most English translations are correct. It begins with the 2<sup>nd</sup> person, Piel imperative of *bless*. At first it would appear as though the writer is telling God to bless his soul; however, the verb *bless* is also in the feminine singular, making his soul (a feminine singular) the object of the imperative. He is telling his own soul to bless God. The Hebrew word for *bless* is *bârak*<sup>6</sup> (בָּרַךְ) [pronounced *baw-RAHK*<sup>6</sup>] and this word is found nearly 350 times in the Bible. Now, I don't know about you, but I can conceive of being *blessed* by God; that is, it is easy for me to comprehend God giving me great wealth (I am not speaking only of material wealth here); but I have a more difficult time related to the idea of me *blessing* God. However, in a situation like this, our very lives are a *blessing* to God. Now this is an anthropathism, to be sure, where our concept of being blessed is placed upon God. But the reality of the situation is that, by our lives, by the doctrine in our soul, by the integrity of our day-to-day walk, we are a *blessing* to God. That is, we glorify Him and His wisdom. Strong's #1288 BDB #138. As was mentioned, the previous psalm began and ended with [Bless Y<sup>h</sup>owah, O my soul](#); indicating that these two psalms were written to stand together as two chapters of a book.

The psalmist recognizes the character of God by saying He is clothed with honor and majesty. God order Job to do the same in Job 40:10: ["Adorn yourself with eminence and dignity and clothe yourself with honor and majesty."](#) Paraphrasing Barnes: *As a king is arrayed in royal robes, creation is the garment with which God has vested Himself.*<sup>6</sup>

**Covering [with] lights like the garment;  
stretching out the heavens like the [tent]  
curtain;** Psalm 104:2

**the One enveloping all with light like a  
garment;  
the One stretching out the heavens like  
the curtain of a tent;**

In this psalm, we will encounter some of the more difficult poetical language, making the interpretation difficult. Let me give you what other translators have done with this verse:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	Who cover Yourself with light as with a garment, Who has stretched out the heavens like a curtain <i>or</i> a tent,...
<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	Putting on light, as a robe, stretching out the heavens as a curtain;
KJV	Who covereth <i>thyself</i> with light as <i>with</i> a garment; who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain;
NAB	...robed in light as with a cloak. You spread out the heavens like a tent;
NASB	Covering Thyself with light as with a cloak, Stretching out heavens like a <i>tent</i> curtain.
NEB	...and wrapped in a robe of light. Thou hast spread out the heavens like a tent...
NJB	...wearing the light as a robe! You stretch out the heavens like a tent,...
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	Covering himself <i>with</i> light as a garment, Stretching out the heavens as a curtain,...

One of the reasons I include the KJV in these translations, is that it takes itself so seriously as a translation that when a word is italicized, that means that it was added by the translators to help make sense of the sentence, but is not found in the Hebrew. It is unfortunate that more translations do not do this. However, all translations run into

<sup>6</sup> *Barnes' Notes*, Vol. IV, book 3, p. 83.

the same problem which I did originally—just how literal do you want to be if the meaning of the verse is lost? Conversely, just how much interpretation do you want to include in the translation. For *The Living Bible* and the somewhat more erudite *New English Bible*, interpretation is everything. For *The Emphasized Bible* or *Young's Literal Translation*, translation is everything. Most all other Bibles are in the middle and sacrifice one for the other. There is no *Thyself*, *Himself*, or *Yourself* to be found in this verse. In fact, what we have in this verse and the next two verses is a series of eight participles, most of them Qal active participles. A Qal active participle chiefly takes a verb and uses it as a noun, although it may also function as a verb or as an adjective. Our participle is similar; generally to a verb, we add the ending *-ing* and it becomes a participle. However, the usage is somewhat different. Here, it can refer to someone in particular. That is, this could be rendered *the one covering*; this is why many translations read: *Who covers*. The first verb is the Qal active participle of *ʿâṭâh* (הָעֹטֵה) [pronounced *gaw-TAWH*] and it means *to wrap oneself, to cover, to envelop, to conceal, to envelop oneself, to cover with something*. This word is found only 17 times in the Old Testament, generally in the poetry or in the prophets (which are often poetical). It is found only twice in another form of writing (Lev. 13:45 I Sam. 28:14). There are times when adding *oneself* and *with* confuse the meaning more than clarify it, e.g., Jer. 43:12. A suffix can be added to the participle to indicate that something or someone is being covered, as is done in Isa. 22:17. A subject may be affixed by giving the participle gender and number as is done in Psalm 71:13. However, the idea of being wrapped *with* or *in* something does not require a preposition (e.g., I Sam. 28:14). Therefore, adding the *with* or *in* here is not out of line. Strong's #5844 BDB #741. We could render this as *covering with light* or *light covering*. Paul wrote to Timothy: **The King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone posses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light; whom no man has seen or can see. To Him honor and eternal dominion! Amen!** (I Tim. 6:15b–16).

The verb is followed by the preposition *as* or *like* and the definite article and the word for *robe, garment*. What is quite helpful with the other translations is the idea that the first participle specifically goes with v. 1 and that the second participle goes with the next few verses; and that would be a valid concept, if the next verse had a main verb in it, but it does not. As I mentioned, the next few verses are a series of participles, all of which refer back to God in v. 1; therefore, these participles are bettered rendered as *the one doing this or that*. The reason that we need to determine whether or not there should be a split in this verse is that contextually tells us what is covered or enveloped by light. If v. 2a belongs strictly with v. 1 and if v. 2b belongs strictly with what follows, then the rendering *covering Thyself* would be apt, as v. 1 deals with poetical attire (**Honor and majesty You have put on**). However, the series of participles means that which is enveloped is not God but what He has created—the earth and the universe. Since God is light, everything which God comes into contact with is enveloped in light or covered with light.

The second verb is the Qal active participle of *nâṭâh* (נָטֵה) [pronounced *naw-TAWH*], which means *to stretch out, to spread out, to extend*. Except for the beginning of the word, this sounds just like the previous verb, which is no doubt done, in part, for poetical reasons. Strong's #5186 BDB #639. What is being stretched out or extended is heavens. It is theorized that they continue to be stretched out even today—that is, that heaven is expanding at an incredible rate of speed. This fits in with the language of the Bible.<sup>7</sup> It is possible that few if any of the authors of Scripture had any true concept as to how vast and infinite were the heavens; however, what they wrote was always in keeping with the idea of a universe which is infinite, for all intents and purposes. This covering of the earth by the stretching out of the heavens is a complete envelopment. Isaiah used the same sort of language: **It is He Who is enthroned above the sphere of the earth and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers, Who stretches out the heavens like a curtain and spreads them out like a tent to dwell in** (Isa. 40:19). **He made the earth by His power, Who established the world by His wisdom and by His understanding, He stretched out the heavens** (Jer. 51:15; see also Job 9:8 37:18 Isa. 42:5 44:24 Zech. 12:1).

The next noun is the feminine singular of *y<sup>o</sup>rîy<sup>o</sup>âh* (יְרֵיָאֵה) [pronounced *y<sup>o</sup>ree-ÇAWH*] and this is the *curtain* of a tent, most often found as the curtains of the tabernacle. Strong's #3407 BDB #438. Although it is not stated in this verse, it appears as though what is referred to primarily in this context is the earth, God's creation.

<sup>7</sup> Throughout these passages, the act of stretching the heavens out is either in the perfect (completed) state or is mentioned in the Qal active participle (e.g., Isa. 42:5), which can refer to an ongoing process. God kicked everything into motion, but He is probably not creating the heavens as we speak.

**The One installing [the rafters] in the waters His roof-chambers;  
the One making clouds His chariot;  
the One walking upon wings of wind.**

Psalm 104:3

**The One installing the rafters of His second-floor room in the waters;  
the One making clouds His chariot;  
the One walking upon wings of wind.**

Both v. 2 and v. 3 are filled with participles. However, you will notice that I have rendered the participles in v. 3 with *the One* doing this or that. That is because each participle in this verse is preceded by the definite article, meaning that it refers to a particular person (or thing) that performs the action of the verb.

The first verb is the Piel participle of *qârâh* (קָרַח) [pronounced *kaw-RAWH*], which means *to lay wooden rafters, to furnish with beams, to install rafters*. The noun for *beams* or *rafters* does not have to occur here. The corresponding noun means *rafters, beams*. Strong's #7136 BDB #900.

The rafters which are being placed are those of His *ʿălîyyâh* (עֲלִיּוֹת) [pronounced *ga-lee-YAWH*], which means *roof-chambers*; it is an enclosed area built upon a roof. I am envisioning a man's study, or rec room or garage, if you will. That is, he's got the whole house built and then he decides he needs a place just for himself, so he adds on a room on the roof. This comes directly from BDB, which reads: *chamber on roof, cool and secluded*.<sup>8</sup> Strong's #5944 BDB #751.

My first impression from the use of *waters* was the oceans; however, this is not what is being referred to, as v. 13 will clearly point out (**He waters the mountains from His roof chambers**); the psalmist is making reference to the waters in the skies; to the water vapor. This is where the beams for the second floor room for God have been installed. Obviously, this is metaphorical, as is the rest of the verse. The concept being presented is the omniscience and omnipresence of God.

The next verb is the Qal active participle of *sîym* (סִיַּם) [pronounced *seem*] which generally means *to put, to place, to set*. It also can mean *to make, to transform into*. The participle is preceded also by a definite article, so it should be translated *the One making*, since we do not have the *bêyth* preposition for clouds as we do for waters. Strong's #7760 BDB #962.

All of these three participles place God in the heavenlies, traveling throughout our immediate universe.

**Making the winds His messengers;  
His minstering ones a flaming fire.**

Psalm 104:4

**Making the winds His messengers;  
and lightning His minsters.**

The participle beginning this verse is the very common verb *ʿâsâh* (עָשָׂה) [pronounced *gaw-SAWH*] which means *to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form*. Strong's #6213 BDB #793. God is the One Who takes the winds and the lightning and makes these things into the things which communicate to us. *Messengers* is our typical word also rendered *angels*; in the human realm, this can refer to a prophet (Isa. 42:19 44:26) or, more rarely, to a priest (Mal. 2:7). Strong's #4397 BDB #521. *Minstering ones* is the participle of the verb *shâraṯh* (שָׂרַח) [pronounced *shaw-RAHTH*], which means *to serve, to minister*. Strong's #8334 BDB #1058. There is no definite article, as God uses many different things as His ministers.

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<sup>8</sup> *The New Brown-Driver-Briggs-Gesenius Hebrew-English Lexicon*; Hendrickson, ©1979, p. 751.

## The Waters of the Earth

**He founded [the] earth upon its foundations;  
it should not be shaken age and perpetuity.**

Psalm 104:5

**He founded the earth upon its foundations  
so that it should not be shaken to all eternity.**

In this verse, we have our first finite verb since v. 1 (until now, every verb has been a participle, standing for the one performing the action rather than acting as a verb for the subject of the sentence. This is the verb *yâṣar* (יָצַר) [pronounced *yaw-SAHR*], and it means *to establish, to found, to fix, to lay a foundation*. Strong's #3245 BDB #413. It is the earth which is *founded* or *established*. It is place upon its *mâkôwn* (מַכּוֹן) [pronounced *maw-KOWN*], which means *fixed, established place, foundation*. Strong's #4349 BDB #467.

The next main verb means *to be shaken, moved, dislodged, thrown into disorder or disarray* and it is found in the Niphal imperfect. Strong's #4129 & 4131 BDB #556.

Then we have the word *ôwlâm* (עוֹלָם) [pronounced *goh-LAWM*], which means *long duration, perpetuity, antiquity, futurity*. Strong's #5769 (& #5865) BDB #761. This is followed by the *wâw* conjunction and the masculine singular of *ad* (אֲדָ) [pronounced *gahd*], which means *perpetuity*. Strong's #5704 BDB #723. This phrase has been translated *to the age and forever* (Young), *to times age-abiding and beyond* (Rotherham), *forever and ever* (NASB, NJB), *never* (this is with the negation in the NAB, REB, NIV and NRSV), and *forever* (*The Amplified Bible*).

**The deep as the garment You covered it above the mountains, stood the waters.**

Psalm 104:6

**You covered the earth with the ocean as you would cover it with a garment; the waters stood above the mountains.**

Let's look at a few other translations:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	You covered it with the deep as with a garment; the waters stood above the mountains
<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	With the resounding deep—as a garment hast thou covered it, Above the mountains stand the waters;
KJV	Thou coveredst it with the deep as <i>with</i> a garment; the waters stood above the mountains.
NKJV	You covered it with the deep as <i>with</i> a garment; The waters stood above the mountains.
NAB	The ocean covered it like a garment; above the mountains stood the waters.
NJB	...you covered it with the deep like a garment, the waters overtopping the mountains.
NRSV	You cover it with the deep as with a garment; the waters stood above the mountains.
REB	The deep covered it like a cloak, and the waters stood above the mountains.
Owen's Translation	The deep as with the garment thou didst cover it; above the mountains stood the waters.
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	The abyss! as with clothing Thou hast covered it, Above hills do waters stand. <sup>9</sup>

Surprisingly, only Owen's makes note of the definite article for *garment*. At this point, I only have a very reasonable hypothesis. In a world-wide flood, where the water stands above all of the mountains (and this is one of the few passages which more clearly represents that view), we are dealing with an incredible amount of water. Most fundamentalists don't really give this much thought, as the easy explanation is God can do anything, but every time the amount of water over the entirety of the earth is raised by, say, a foot, that is an incredible amount of water.

<sup>9</sup> I have no clue as to why the first *a* is lower case and the second is capitalized; you'll have to ask Young.

I cannot locate the author who dealt with the flood from a scientific standpoint (several have), but the problem is *where did all the water come from and where did it go?* The two most common explanations is that it came out from the earth and from rain and it retreated into to earth and back into the sky as water vapor. This is all very Biblical, as this is what the Bible teaches us. However, there is no way that there is enough water in the earth to cover all of the mountains. Let's just say that the earth was solid water. Given that the earth has a radius of 3950 miles, that means its volume is  $8.2 \times 10^{10}$  cubic miles. The highest mountain is 29,000 feet, or 5.5 miles above sea level. Therefore, the volume of the water necessary to cover the highest mountain would be the volume of a sphere with a  $3955.5^{10}$  mile radius minus the volume of the earth, or  $8.2517 \times 10^{10} - 8.2173 \times 10^{10} = 3.44 \times 10^8$  cubic miles of water. Our largest ocean, the Pacific Ocean, an area in which all the continents could fit, has approximately  $1.69 \times 10^8$  cubic miles of water. So, what we would need is roughly the equivalent of two Pacific Oceans of *additional* water in order to cover the entire earth. I just don't believe that we have the much water in the atmosphere or under the earth. As I said, the easy answer is that God created the majority of the flood waters and then made them disappear. Unfortunately, that answer is not necessarily Biblical. Now, certainly you are thinking that God is capable of doing anything, within the confines of His perfect character.<sup>11</sup> And, although I agree with you on that point, the Bible nowhere states that God created this water as a separate part of creation. In fact, a very good argument could be made against that, as we have six days of creative activity, after which God rested. Not only that, but the oceans were all created even prior to these six days of restoration and creation. There is no Biblical indication that God woke up one day and said, "Oh, hell, I need some more water!" We are clearly given the source of the waters—the came from rain and from under the earth. **But God remembered Noah and all the beast and all the cattle that were with him in the ark, and God caused a wind to pass over the earth and the water subsided. Also, the fountains of the deep and the floodgates of the sky were closed, and the rain from the sky was restrained** (Gen. 8:1–2). What is nice, and God did not have to do this for us, but He did, is that He explains how this problem was dealt with and He does so in this Psalm. Prior to the great flood, the mountains were lower and the ocean depths were higher. Furthermore, there was likely a vaporous canopy above the earth much greater in water vapor volume than the amount of water which our atmosphere holds now (this is the theory of Henry Morris, who has written some fantastic books dealing with science and the Bible).<sup>12</sup>

**At your rebuke, they fled;  
at the sound of thunder, they retreated.**

Psalm 104:7

**At your rebuke, they fled;  
at the sound of thunder, they retreated.**

The *they* spoken of in this verse is the flood waters of the previous verse; we know this not only because of context, but *waters* is in the masculine plural and *they* in this verse (actually, the verb in this verse) is also in the masculine plural.

The word *kôwl* (כֹּוַל) [pronounced *coal*] means *sound* or *voice*. Strong's #6963 BDB #876. When the thunder sounded, the water *châphaz'ed* (חָפַזְזָה) [pronounced *khaw-fahz*]; and it means *to run away in fear, to retreat in alarm, to move away from out of trepidation*. Here, in the Niphal, it means to simply retreat. Strong's #2648 BDB #342. Water doesn't have emotion, but it retreated at the voice of God (which is the thunder).

**The mountains rose;  
the valleys sank down  
to the place which you appointed for  
them.**

Psalm 104:8

**The mountains rose;  
the valleys sank down  
to the place which you appointed for  
them.**

The word for *rose* is the very common verb *ʿâlâh* (עָלָה) [pronounced *gaw-LAWH*], which means *to climb, to ascend, to rise*. Strong's #5927 BDB #748. This describes what happened following the flood. The mountains,

<sup>10</sup> Notice that relatively speaking, the mountains don't really rise that far above the earth. Compared to the radius of the earth, the highest mountain is only 0.14% higher.

<sup>11</sup> That is, God cannot make wrong right, for instance.

<sup>12</sup> His only serious flaw, as I recall, is that he rejects the gap fact and, therefore, all of his science is colored by that assumption. This is just like the evolutionist whose science is all distorted because of his assumptions concerning evolution.



due to the tremendous amounts of water, and the ocean depths, all became more extreme. Whereas mountains may have only been, say one or two miles high (and I am simply pulling random numbers out of a hat here), the highest became 5.5 miles following the flood. Whereas the oceans may have had a maximum depth of, say two or three miles, it now has a depth of 6.86 miles at its deepest. There were tremendous earthquakes and volcanic activity which occurred simultaneously with the floods and soon thereafter. During this period of time, we saw great seismic activity and tremendous upheaval as never before or since. I just realized, God promised Himself (and, therefore, all mankind): “I will never again curse the ground on account of man, for the intent of man’s heart is evil from his youth. And I will never again destroy every living thing, as I have done.” (Gen. 8:21b). He promised Noah: “And I will remember My covenant, which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh and I will never again cause the water to become a flood as to destroy all flesh.” (Gen. 9:15). With the change of the earth’s surface as herein described, it has now become impossible to flood the entire earth again. This verse tells us that a scientist should be skeptical when it comes to a world-wide flood, because such a thing has become impossible.

All this was done according to God’s plan. He had so much water to deal with, which He didn’t just make appear and disappear; and the simple way to deal with it was to alter the landscape to where the mountains became higher and the valleys and ocean beds became deeper. This allowed a place for the water to go to. Some of it, of course, returned to the underground streams, which is from whence we get our well-water.

**The One sending forth springs in the valleys;  
they flow between the hills.**

Psalm 104:10

**The One Who sends forth springs in the valleys;  
which flow between the hills.**

A personal question of mine has always been why do we have freshwater in some areas and salt water in others. My educated guess is that in the changing of the land, God provided rain later, which filled up the valleys and they became lakes. The deeper and more original lakes would remain salt lakes. Those which are newer, those which have a depth which was the result of later heavy rains, are the freshwater lakes and springs. Some were filled by melting snow coming off the mountains every year, as the result of a freezing precipitation cycle.

**They give drink to every animal of the field;  
wild asses break their thirst.**

Psalm 104:11

**They provide water for every animal of the field;  
wild asses assuage their thirst there.**

*They*, refers to the *springs* of the previous verse. The first verb is the Hiphil imperfect of *shâqâh* (שָׁקַח) [pronounced *shaw-KAWH*], which means *to water, to irrigate* in the Qal; *to give drink to, to cause to drink* in the Hiphil. Strong’s #8248 BDB #1052. The second verb is the Qal imperfect of *shâ<sup>p</sup>var* (שָׁבַר) [pronounced *shaw<sup>p</sup>-VAR*], which means *to break, to break into pieces*. Strong’s #7665 BDB #990. What is being *broken* is the thirst of the animals. God invented the concept of the necessity of water and provided that for all of the animals. One of the rarest forms of H<sub>2</sub>O in the universe is in its liquid state. The temperature range for water is rather narrow (we don’t have any concept of just how narrow that range is); wherever else water is in the universe, it is either frozen or it is in its gaseous form. Furthermore, it is a rare compound of the universe. But on earth, it is absolutely necessary to our very existence and to the existence of the animals, and God has provided our earth with an incredible amount of water.

We also have the word *kôl* (כֹּל) [pronounced *kole*] which means *the whole, all of, the entirety of, all, every*. When in the construct and accompanied by a plural noun, *kôl* should be rendered *all of*; and when *kôl* is with a singular noun, it should be rendered *every*. Strong’s #3605 BDB #481

**Because of them a bird of the heavens resides  
out from among branches he gives [out] a voice.**

Psalm 104:12

**Because of these waters the birds of the sky reside on earth;  
from the midst of the branches they sing.**

Shakan (שָׁכַן) [pronounced *shaw-KAHN*] means *to tabernacle* also means *to pitch a tent*. By application, it means *to dwell, to reside, to live in, to domicile at*. Strong's #7931 BDB #1014.

In the midst of this verse, we have the preposition *bêyn* (בֵּין) [pronounced *bane*], which means *in the midst of, between, among*. It is often found in conjunction with other prepositions. Here, it is found with the *min* (מִן) [pronounced *min*] preposition, so it means *out from among, from between, from the midst of*. Strong's #996 BDB #107. In the second line, the birds *put out, give forth* their voice. That is, they sing. The birds do not come out from among the branches to sing; their voice come out from the midst of the branches. I recall this incredible experience one day when I returned from work. It was early—maybe four or five in the afternoon—and, apparently, there were birds migrating through and they were extremely vocal—almost to a point that it was a surreal experience. It was not loud enough to completely drown out a conversation, but it would have been competitive in that regard. Not being one to relax easily, I immediately went outside again to listen, it was so incredible. And, within a minute or two, the bird visiting stopped. I didn't see fewer birds (in fact, I didn't see many birds to begin with); I just heard their incredible voices coming out from among the branches.

**Watering the mountains from His upper chambers;  
the earth is satisfied with [the] fruit of Your work.**

Psalm 104:13

**He Waters the mountains from His upper chambers;  
and the earth is satisfied with your provision of water.**

The psalmist recognizes that God has control of the weather and his system of irrigation and watering and the entire water cycle is the proper amount for the earth. If you took a group of scientists who had to design an abode for man and beast, even in their great wisdom, they could not have improved upon the necessary provisions of the earth. God saw that our life on earth would be sustained by water for thousands of years. I don't know the parameters within which God works, but it is my guess that an increase or decrease of say 10% of the water on this planet would drastically change our lives. God has set up the ratio of water to land in such a way that the earth is completely satisfied with the amount of water provided for her.

Back in v. 3, we saw the word *ʿālīyyāh* (עֲלֵיָאֵל) [pronounced *ga-lee-YAWH*], which means *roof-chambers, upstairs study, upstairs abode*. Strong's #5944 BDB #751. This is an anthropopathism, where God resides above us in His upstairs flat.

Note that in this verse we have a change of person, yet it still refers to God. Most of the time, when there is a change of person, as in this verse where we read *His upper chambers* and *Your work*, we would assume that we are dealing with two different entities. However, there is, within this psalm, a continual change from the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular which refers without question to God (e.g., *Your work* from this verse) to the 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, as in *He construct the moon* (v. 19). When we find several instances of both the 2<sup>nd</sup> and the 3<sup>rd</sup> person referring to God, then we can either assume that the psalmist is jumping from person to person, yet still referring to the same God; or, and I haven't explored this yet, the psalmist, through God the Holy Spirit, is making references to both Jesus Christ, the Creator of the Universe, or to the Holy Spirit, the Sustainer of all things (Either of Whom would be in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular) and to God the Father, the planner of all things (Who would be in the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular). In this particular verse, that theory could be made to fit; God the Holy Spirit would be watering the mountains through the rain; and the earth would be satisfied with the work of God, which ultimately came from the plan of God the Father. In presenting such a theory, I do not mean to imply that the psalmist knew he was writing this. The psalmist, in moving from person to person, was exercising poetic license; under God the Holy Spirit, he was directed to refer to the members of the Godhead very specifically.

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## The Earth

**Causing the grass to spring forth for the cattle and plants for [the] service of man to bring forth food from the earth.**

Psalm 104:14

**Causing the grass to grow for the cattle and plants for the service of man to provide for produce from the earth.**

The first verb is the Hiphil participle of *tsâmach* (נָצַח) [pronounced *tsaw-MAHKH*], which means *to sprout, to spring up, to spring forth*. It is used of plants and trees (Ecc. 2:6) and even of a man's hair or beard (Lev. 13:37 | Chron. 19:5). Strong's #6779 BDB #855.

Also in this verse, we have the word *ʿăḇvôdâh* (עָבַד) [pronounced *gû<sup>b</sup>-vo-DAWH*] and it means *labour, service*. Strong's #5656 & 5647 BDB #715.

By the time of the psalmist, the importance of water to agriculture was a well-established fact. Drought was equivalent to an economic depression. Even in today's complex economy, drought seriously impacts any nation, despite its diversity in production.

**And wine—it will gladden the heart of man to cause his face to shine from oil and bread—it will strengthen the heart of man.**

Psalm 104:15

**And wine will gladden the heart of man to cause his face to become radiant from oil and bread will strengthen the heart of man.**

The last verb in this verse is the Qal imperfect of *çâʿad* (צָוָה) [pronounced *saw-ÇAHD*], and it means *to support, to sustain, to stay, to assist*. Strong's #5582 BDB #703.

All of these things, the wine, the radiance of a man's face, the food that he eats which provides sustenance—all of that is a result of the provision of water.

**Trees of Y<sup>e</sup>howah are satisfied, the cedars of Lebanon which He planted.**

Psalm 104:16

**The trees of Y<sup>e</sup>howah are given abundant water; even the cedars of Lebanon which He planted.**

The first verb is the Qal imperfect of *sâḇvaʿ* (שָׂבַע) [pronounced *saw<sup>b</sup>-VAHG*], which means *to satisfy, to fill, to satiate*. Strong's #7646 BDB #959.

There is an interesting fact that you could miss here. Whereas, I am not familiar with the cedars of Lebanon—that is, to their age and life span; this verse seems to indicate that those trees were personally planted by God.

**Which therein birds nest; a stork—fir trees [are] her home.**

Psalm 104:17

**Where birds build their nests; The stork has made her house in the firs.**

This simply means that God has provided for the birds of the sky. He has seen to it that every flying creature has a nest.

**Mountains, the high ones, [are] for the  
wild goats;  
the cliffs [are] refuge to the rock badgers.**

Psalm 104:18

**The high mountains are for wild goats;  
the cliff rocks are a refuge to the badgers.**

Again, what the psalmist is saying is that God has provided for the animals.

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## The Seasons, the Days and the Nights

**He constructed to moon for season;  
[He constructed] the sun—He knew His  
entrance.**

Psalm 104:19

**He constructed to moon to denotes  
seasons;  
He constructed the sun—He knew his  
[the moon's] entrance.**

One this verse, it may be best to first see what others have done with the translation:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	<i>The Lord</i> appointed the moon for season; the sun knows [the exact time of] its setting.
<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	He hath made the moon for seasons [most likely, sacred seasons], And the sun knoweth his place for entering in.
KJV	He appointed the moon for season; the sun knoweth his going down.
NKJV	He appointed the moon for season; The sun knows its going down.
NAB	You made the moon to mark the season, the sun that knows the hour of its setting.
NASB	He made the moon for the seasons, The sun knows the place of its setting.
NEB	Thou hast made the moon to measure the year and taught the sun where to set.
NJB	He made the moon to mark the seasons, the sun knows when to set.
NIV	The moon marks off the season, and the sun knows when to go down.
NRSV	You have made the moon to mark the seasons; the sun knows its time for setting.
REB	He created the moon to mark the seasons, and makes the sun know when to set.
Owen's Translation	He made the moon for seasons; the sun he knew his time for setting.
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	He made the moon for season, The sun hath known his place of entrance.

This is rather distressing; you can read any one of these thirteen translations and not catch what is going on. Only the Revised English Bible<sup>13</sup> even hints at what is occurring in the translation. So you are wondering, *what's the deal? Everyone seems to pretty well agree on this.* Let's just take this word by word. We begin with the 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect of *ʿâsâh* (עָשָׂה) [pronounced *gaw-SAWH*] which means *to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form*. Strong's #6213 BDB #793. This is the verb used by God when he made the atmosphere (Gen. 1:7), the sun, moon and stars (Gen. 1:15–16), the animals of the earth (Gen. 1:25) and mankind (Gen. 1:26)<sup>14</sup>. Bottom line: God constructs something. What follows is the word for moon, which is in the masculine singular. Then follows the *lâmed* preposition and a masculine plural noun which means *seasons* or *sacred seasons*.

What follows is the **feminine** singular noun *sun* and the verb for *know*, which is in the **masculine** singular, Qal perfect. Therefore, *sun* is not the subject of this verb. As often happens in the Hebrew, the direct object can precede the verb which can precede the subject (or the subject can be implied). We sort it all out by number and

<sup>13</sup> In case you are wondering, the Revised English Bible was produced in Great Britain by an ecumenical team of scholars from the Protestant, Anglican, Catholic, Orthodox and Jewish communities. This is generally less literal than the NRSV, also a compilation effort, but produced in the United States.

<sup>14</sup> God also created man as well (Gen. 1:27).

person. If you will look over the translations, most of them indicate, or, at least imply, that *sun* is the subject of this verb *to know*. Following the word *sun* is the Hebrew word *mâ<sup>b</sup>vô<sup>t</sup>* (אֵלֶּךְ) [pronounced *maw<sup>b</sup>-VOE*], which means, according to BDB, *entrance, a coming in, an entering*; according to the KJV, it means *a going down, an entrance into, a coming in, an entry*. Strong's #3996 (& 3997) BDB #99. Its verbal cognate means *to go, to come, to go in, to come in*. Strong's #935 BDB #97. In examining BDB and the verb, I think that we can safely eliminate *a going down* or a *setting* as its possible meanings. With this noun we have the **masculine** singular pronomial suffix *his*. Most of the translations imply that *sun* is the subject of the verb, but it isn't—*sun* would take a verb which is in the feminine singular. So, keeping our gender straight, we have: **the sun—He knew his [the moon's] entrance**. *He* either refers to God the Creator or to the moon; it cannot refer to the sun. Therefore, we have several possible renderings: **he [the moon] knew the sun**; **[he knew] his entrance**; **He [God] knew the sun**; **[He knew] the moon's entrance**; or **He constructed the sun**; **He knew his [the moon's] entrance**. In any case, regardless of how stilted or difficult it may seem, the psalmist is not saying that the sun knows anything nor is *the entrance* a reference to the sun. Certainly, not the way you or I would have phrased this; nor do I fully grasp why it is put this way—however, we need to stay with the actual translation. However, contextually, we will be speaking of the night for the next few verses, so that it is obvious that the entrance of the moon is what is in view here.

**You appoint darkness and it is night;  
in it, every animal of a forest creeps  
about.**

Psalm 104:20

**You set a time for darkness and it  
becomes night  
during the night, every forest animal  
surreptitiously moves about.**

The first verb is the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect of *shîyth* (שִׁיַּת) [pronounced *sheeth*], which means *to put, to set, to appoint, to station*. The KJV gives such diverse renderings as *lay* (Gen. 48:14, 17 Job 9:33) or *make* (Psalm 21:6 10:1). How this differs from the other Hebrew words which mean roughly the same thing, I don't know. I will try to stay with *appoint* when dealing with God as the subject, although there will be times when such a rendering would be untenable (e.g., Psalm 9:20). Strong's #7896 BDB #1011.

The second verb is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, Qal imperfect of *râmas* (רָמָה) [pronounced *raw-MAHS*], which means, according to BDB, *to creep, move lightly, move about, to glide*. I was hoping to find a less creepy word than *creep*, perhaps *bustling, animated, active*. What is good with the word *creep*, is that in it, it carries the implication of *surreptitiously moving about*, which is perhaps also a good, albeit, wordy, rendering. Strong's #7430 BDB #942.

**The young lions roar for the prey  
and to seek from God their food.**

Psalm 104:21

**The young lions roar for the prey  
and seeking from God their food.**

The literal Hebrew rendering of this verse is rather stilted, which is due to the difference between our languages. However, the verse is rather fascinating. The lion roars to God for his food.

**The sun rises, they relocate,  
and in their dens they crouch.**

Psalm 104:22

**The sun rises, they relocate themselves,  
and so in their dens they crouch.**

The second verb is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person plural of the verb *ʾâçaph* (אַחַף) [pronounced *aw-SAHF*], which means *transfer, transport, relocate, gather, to gather and remove, to remove*. *Commute* would be a good modern rendering. Strong's #622 BDB #62. The big cats work the nightshift and then retire to their homes for the day time.

**Man goes out to his work and to his labor  
until evening.**

Psalm 104:23

**Man goes to his work and to his labor  
until evening.**

When the sun rises, and the lions are off work, man, by contrast, goes to work for the entire day.

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## God's Sustenance of Those on the Earth

**How many are Your works, O Y<sup>e</sup>howah;  
in wisdom, You have made them all.  
The earth is filled with Your acquisitions.**

Psalm 104:24

**How countless are Your works, O  
Y<sup>e</sup>howah;  
in wisdom, You have made them all.  
The earth is filled with Your possessions.**

The verbs in this verse are a bit on the unusual side. I would like to first see what others have done and then we will take them apart:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	O Lord, how many <i>and</i> varied are Your works! In wisdom have You made them all; the earth is full of Your riches <i>and</i> Your creatures.
<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	How thy works abound, O Yahweh! All of them—in wisdom hast thou made, The earth is full of thy possession:
KJV	O LORD, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom has thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches.
NKJV	O LORD, how manifold are Your works! In wisdom You have made them all. The earth is full of Your possessions.
NAB	How varied are your works, LORD! In wisdom you have wrought them all; the earth is full of your creatures.
NJB	How countless are your works, Yahweh, all of them made so wissely! The earth is full of your creatures.
REB	Countless are the things you have made, LORD; by your wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	How many have been Thy works, O Jehovah, All of them in wisdom Thou hast made, Full is the earth of thy possessions.

This verse begins with the interrogative *mâh* (מה) [pronounced *maw*], which it means *what, how*. Strong's #4100 BDB #552. This is immediately followed by the Qal perfect of *râ'va* (רַבַּ) [pronounced *raw<sup>p</sup>-VAH<sup>p</sup>V*], and it means *to become many, to become great in number, or to be great in number*. Strong's #7231 BDB #912. The next verb is the Qal perfect of *to construct, to make*. Strong's #6213 BDB #793. The final verb is the Qal perfect of *mâlê'* (מָלֵא) [pronounced *maw-LAY*], which means *to be full, to fill*. BDB #569; Strong's #4390. The final word in this verse is the masculine singular noun *qin<sup>e</sup>yân* (קִינָיָן) [pronounced *kin<sup>e</sup>-YAWN*], which is translated *getting, substance, possession, purchase, riches, goods* in the KJV (this word only occurs 10 times, by the way). BDB gives its meaning as *a thing got or acquired, acquisition*. When God created the earth and all that is in it, He set the process in motion, so that, through the reproduction of His creatures, He has acquired a great deal. It is like the rancher who begins with a few head of cattle and they multiply into a thousand head of cattle; the rancher acquires them through the breeding of his own cattle. I think that we will go with *acquisition, possession*. Strong's #7075 BDB #889. In five early printed editions of the Massoretic text, acquisition is in the singular; in six of them it is in the plural.

**This the sea, great and broad of hands;  
there [are] active life forms  
innumerable organisms, [from] small to  
great.**

Psalm 104:25

**This the sea, great and wide;  
it is filled with active organisms  
innumerable life forms, both small and  
large.**

V. 25 is an interesting verse, as it contains no verbs. As we have seen, most verse will have two or three verbs at minimum. When we run across a few lines of poetry like that, it jumps out at you. This verse begins with the demonstrative adjective *zeh* (זֶה) [pronounced *zeh*] twice and, by itself, it means *here, this*. Strong's #2063, 2088 BDB #260. Then the psalmist calls the sea *great* and *râchâ* (רַחַב) [pronounced *raw-KHA<sup>v</sup>B*], and it means *wide*,

*broad, space, roomy*. Strong's #7342 BDB #932. It is followed by the dual for the word *hands*. Here, it is used in the sense of *sides*. Strong's #3027 BDB #388.

This is followed by the adverb *there* and the noun *remes* (רַמְסֵם) [pronounced *REH-mes*], which is usually rendered *creeping things*. Let me suggest *active life forms, animated and active organisms, lively creatures, animated things, bustling creatures*. Strong's #7431 BDB #943.

This is followed by the common *wâw* conjunction, a negational construct and the word *miç<sup>e</sup>phâr* (מִיֶּפְאָר) [pronounced *mis<sup>e</sup>-FAWR*] and which means *number, counted, numerical total*. With the negational construct, it means *innumerable*. Strong's #4557 BDB #708. Next we have the plural of *chayyâh* (חַיִּים) [pronounced *khay-YAWH*], which means *living thing, animal, organisms, life forms*. Strong's #2416 BDB #312.

**There ships go;  
Leviathan, which You formed to play in it!**

Psalm 104:26

**There ships go and large aquatic  
creatures;  
(which You formed to play in it!)**

This verse begins with the adverb *there* and the feminine plural of the word *ships*. The verb is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Piel imperfect of *hâlak<sup>e</sup>* (הָלַךְ) [pronounced *haw-LAHK<sup>e</sup>*] means *to go, to come, to walk*. Strong's #1980 (and 3212) BDB #229. My educated guess is that, since there are no other masculine plural nouns to be found anywhere in the near vicinity, that the masculine plural verb here takes in both the ships and the next noun, which is *liv<sup>e</sup>yâthân* (לִיְיָתָן) [pronounced *liv-yaw-THAWN*], which means (and, it appears as though the linguists are basically guessing here) *serpent, dragon, leviathan, whale*. Gesenius gives the possible renderings: *a very large serpent, a crocodile, any large aquatic creature*. Gesenius points out that this word is used of a *fierce enemy*. This word occurs only a few times in Scripture: Job 3:5 41:1 Psalm 74:14 104:26 Isa. 27:1.\* Here, we will go with the rendering *large, aquatic creature(s)*. Strong's #3882 BDB #531.

The relative pronoun refers back to the *liv<sup>e</sup>yâthân*, and this is followed by the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect of *yâtsar* (יָצַר) [pronounced *yaw-TSAHR*], which is used of a potter working with clay. By application, it means *to form, to mold, to sculpt*. Strong's #3335 BDB #427. This is followed by the Piel infinitive construct of the verb *sâchaq* (שָׂחַק) [pronounced *saw-KHAHK*], and it means *to laugh*; by extension, it means *to sport, to play, to jest*. Strong's #7832 BDB #965. This is followed by the *bêyth* preposition, which is affixed to the masculine singular suffix, which should be rendered *in it*. *It* refers back to the *sea*, of course, in the previous verse, which, in the Hebrew is a masculine singular, and is not viewed as a woman as it is in the English.

**These all look to You to give their food in  
its time.**

Psalm 104:27

**These all look to You to them with their  
food for its mealtime.**

This verse begins with the masculine singular of *kôl* (כֹּל) [pronounced *kohl*], which means *the whole, all of, the entirety of, all, every*. Strong's #3605 BDB #481. This has a masculine plural suffix and is rendered *these all* (KJV, NIV, Owen), *all of them* (Rotherham, Young), and *they all* (NASB). The verb is 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Piel imperfect of *see, look*. They look to God (here, the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix), and they look to God to give them their food. God takes care of all of His creatures. The fact that an animal so huge, who consumes so much has been provided for should cause us to realize that God has done the same on our behalf.

**You give to them, they gather [or, pick  
up];  
You open Your hand, they are filled [with]  
good things.**

Psalm 104:28

**You give to them and they gather it up;  
You open Your hand and they are satiated  
with good things.**

You may wonder why this verse is here. It reveals God's mediate work. He immediately causes some things to occur. Most often, these are miracles. However, much of what He does is mediate; that is, God provides these

things in eternity past. The food for the creatures of the sea was provided for in eternity past. They just need to meander about and gather it up. As has been covered many times in our studies, God has set up many of our own needs to be met mediately, through His perfect planning from eternity past.

**You cause Your face to be hidden, they  
are overwhelmed;  
You remove their breath, they die  
and to their dust they return.**

Psalm 104:29

**When You cause Your face to be hidden,  
they become dismayed and overwhelmed  
by life;  
When You remove their breath, they die  
and to their dust they return.**

Although one translator reads *Thou hidest thy face, they suddenly perish*; the thought in the first line is more a removal of the hand of Jesus Christ in their lives and they become overwhelmed or dismayed with their life. Strong's #926 BDB #96. I don't believe that we are looking at a parallelism, as is found in some psalms, but rather this is an intensification when we reach the third and fourth lines.

The first verb in the second line is the Qal imperfect of *ʾâçaph* (אָחַפּ) [pronounced *aw-SAHF*], which means *transfer, transport, relocate, gather, to gather and remove, to remove*. We had this verb back in v. 22. Strong's #622 BDB #62. What is being gathered is their *rûwach* (רוּחַ) [pronounced *ROO-ahkh*], means *wind, breath, spirit*. Here, it stand for both their *breath* and for the electrical impulses running through their brain. When God removes those, they are dead. Strong's #7307 BDB #924.

**You send forth Your breath, they are  
created;  
and You renew the faces of the ground.**

Psalm 104:30

**When You send forth Your breath, they  
are created;  
and You thereby renew the face of the  
earth.**

One of the more controversial aspects of Bob Thieme's ministry was the moment that any living creature becomes alive. Here, what is sent forth is His *spirit* or *breath*. The second verb is not *built, formed, or made* but the Niphal imperfect of *bârâ'* (בָּרָא) [pronounced *baw-RAWH*], which is the verb used for *creation*. It does mean *to shape, to fashion by cutting*; but it is used for *creating something out of energy or creating that which is immaterial*. Strong's #1249–1250 (&1254) BDB #135. *Renewing the face of the ground* means to just replenish the earth. Animals die, but other animals are brought on the scene to replace them.

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## Praise to God Because of His Power and Glory

**The glory of Y<sup>h</sup>owah will be to eternity  
[or, is for eternity];  
Y<sup>h</sup>owah rejoices in His works.**

Psalm 104:31

**The glory of Y<sup>h</sup>owah is for eternity;  
Y<sup>h</sup>owah rejoices in His works.**

The first substantive in this verse is *kâ<sup>b</sup>ôwd* (כְּבוֹד) [pronounced *kaw(b)-VODE*] and it refers to *glory, abundance, or honor*. Strong's #3519 BDB #458. The last word in that line is *ʿôwlâm* (עוֹלָם) [pronounced *goh-LAWM*], a word indicating *long duration, perpetuity, antiquity, futurity*. It seems to be used as a word outside of time in terms of direction, but it occupies a long period of time. Strong's #5769 (& #5865) BDB #761.

**The One looking to the earth and it  
trembles;  
He touches the mountains and they  
smoke.**

Psalm 104:32

**The One looking to the earth and it  
trembles;  
He touches the mountains and they  
smoke.**



The smoking from the mountains is volcanic activity. God's mere glance causes the earth to tremble. There is never any compromise when it comes to the power of God. The gods of other religions and mythology are portrayed as limited, selfish and fallible; God is everywhere presented as perfect, omnipotent, and perfect in His righteousness and justice.

**I will sing to Y<sup>e</sup>howah in my lives;  
I will sing prase to my God in my  
continuation.**

Psalm 104:33

**I will sing to Y<sup>e</sup>howah as long as I live;  
I will sing prase to my God while I  
continue on this earth.**

Lest there be any confusion on the word *lives* in the first line; this is the Hebrew emphatic plural. The word *lives* is chayyîym (חַיִּים) [pronounced *khay-YEEM*], and it is the plural abstract emphatic word for *life*; although it is in the plural, in the English, we usually translate it in the singular. There is possibly another couple of ways of looking at this noun. We have a spiritual, a physical and a soulish life; an unbeliever has only a physical and a soulish life. Our human spirit is our immaterial portion which can commune with God; when our physical being, our soulish expressions to others and our spiritual lives all reflect God's glory and praise to Him, then we are singing to him in our lives. The other possible way to look at this is that, for many of us, our life consists of many lives. I personally have a life that appears to be different, depending upon where I lived and worked and what overall decisions which I had made for my life. This word takes into account these different transitions in our life. What this does not support is the concept of reincarnation, which we have covered previously. Strong's #2416 BDB #313.

The second substantive of note is the word *ôwd* (עוֹד) [pronounced *ôhd*], a word which acts as both an adverb and as a substantive. In both cases, it carries the idea of continuation. As an adverb it means *still, yet, again, besides*; and as a noun it means *continuing, continuance*. Strong's #5750 BDB #728.

**My communication concerning Him is  
given as a pledge  
I, even I, rejoice in Y<sup>e</sup>howah.**

Psalm 104:34

**I give in pldege My communication  
concerning Him;  
I, even I, rejoice in Y<sup>e</sup>howah.**

When you compare what I have done with this verse and compare it to others, you will probably be nonplussed. So let's first see what others have done with this one line:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	May my meditation be sweet to Him;
<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	Pleasing unto him be my meditation,...
KJV	My meditation of him shall be sweet;
NAB	May my theme be pleasing to God;
NASB	Let my meditation be pleasing to Him;
NJB	May my musings be pleasing to him,...
REB	May my mediation be acceptable to him,...
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	Sweet is my meditation on Him,...

This verse begins with the verb *âra<sup>b</sup>v* (עָרַב) [pronounced *aw-RAH<sup>B</sup>V*], which is listed in BDB as having three different Strong's #'s and three different meanings. As Strong's #6147, it is said to mean *to mix*; but it is not given a reference (it is listed, no doubt, because of the noun cognate which follows (Strong's #6154). The second meaning (Strong's #6148) is given as *to take on a pledge, to give in pledge, to exchange*. The third meanings is *to be sweet, to be pleasing* (Strong's #6149). *The New Englishman's Hebrew Concordance* does not give the first Strong number and combines the second two. The renderings in the KJV are as follows: *to be sweet* (Psalm 104:34 Prov. 3:24 13:19 Jer. 6:20), *be a surety* (Gen. 43:9 II Kings 18:23 Job 17:3 Psalm 119:122 Prov. 6:1 11:15 17:18 20:16 22:26 Isa. 36:8), *engaged* (Jer. 30:21), *has taken pleasure* (Ezek. 16:37), *to be pleasant (or pleasing)* (Hosea 9:4 Mal. 3:4), *to take a pledge* (II Kings 18:23 Isa. 36:8), *occupy* (Ezek. 27:9, 27), *to undertake* (Isa. 38:14), *to mingle* (Ezra 9:2 Psalm 106:35), *intermeddle* (Prov. 14:10), *meddle* (Prov. 20:19 24:21), *pleasing* (Hos. 9:4), *to mortgage* (Neh. 5:3).<sup>\*</sup> Obviously, this word is a total mess. Gesenius helps us

somewhat at this point (what follows is taken, in part, from his work). This word properly means *to mix*. Hence, the use of it to mean **to mingle, to intermingle**. When two people are involved, sometimes an item of value is exchanged or given as a guarantee or as a surety; this item is mingled, you might say; hence, the meaning **given as a guarantee**. The tougher meaning for this word is *sweetness*; Gesenius suggests that this is derived from the notion of a dog-fly sucking blood, but I don't quite see that. Strong's #6148 & 6149 (& 6147) BDB #786–787.

The noun in this verse is *sîyach* (נִשְׁ) [pronounced *SEE-ahkh*], and is rendered *complaint, musing, mediation, talk, anxiety, trouble*. I think for awhile we will go with *communication*. Strong's #7879 BDB #967.

This is followed by the preposition for *upon, beyond, against, concerning, in accordance with, because* and the singular masculine suffix *him*.

In this context, to try to stay with consistent meanings, let's go with the rendering: **My communication concerning Him is given as a pledge** [or, **given in pledge**].

**Deviants will come to completion [and  
cease] away from the earth  
and deviants a continuation—not them!  
Bless, O my soul, Y<sup>e</sup>howah  
Praise Yah!**

Psalm 104:35

**Deviants will come to completion [and  
cease] away from the earth  
and deviants will no longer continue on  
this earth.  
Bless, O my soul, Y<sup>e</sup>howah  
Praise Yah!**

We ought to look at the first two lines of this last verse in other translations first:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	Let sinners be consumed from the earth, and let the wicked be no more.
<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	Sinners shall be consumed out of the earth, And the lawless no more shall exist,...
KJV	Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth, and let the wicked be no more.
NAB	May sinners vanish from the earth, and the wicked be no more.
REB	May sinners be banished from the earth and may the wicked be no more!
Owen's Translation	Let be consumed sinners from the earth and the wicked, let be no more (of them).
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	Consumed are sinners from the earth, And the wicked are no more.

The first verb is the Qal imperfect of *tam* (תַּם) [pronounced *tahm*], and it means *to be complete, to be finished, to complete, to come to an end, to cease*. Strong's #8552 BDB #1070.

The subject of the sentence is *chattâ'* (חַטָּאִי) [pronounced *khat-TAW*], which is usually rendered *sinners*. This could be updated to *deviates, deviants, transgressors*. This is an adjective used exclusively as a substantive. This word occurs surprisingly few times in the Old Testament (18, and only 3 times in the Pentateuch). Strong's #2400 BDB #308. The preposition prior to the word *earth* is the *mîn* preposition of separation.

This is all followed by the masculine plural adjective (acting as a substantive) of the word *râshâ'* (רָשָׁע) [pronounced *raw-SHAWG*], and it is usually translated *wicked, wicked ones*; however, a more up-to-date rendering would be *malevolent ones, lawless ones, criminals, the corrupt*. Strong's #7563 BDB #957.

In this second line, to give it extra punch, there is no verb, although you would expect to find one. We have the adverb from a previous verse *'ôwd* (עוֹד) [pronounced *gohd*], a word which acts as both an adverb and as a substantive. In both cases, it carries the idea of continuation. As an adverb it means *still, yet, again, besides*; and as a noun it means *continuing, continuation, continuance, persistence*. Strong's #5750 BDB #728. This is followed by the negative with an affixed masculine plural suffix. Therefore, it literally reads: **malevolent ones a continuation not them**. One of the consistent themes in Scripture is the removal of the corrupt and the malevolent from the earth.

As has been mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, our lives are a *blessing* to God, although this is an anthropopathism. By our lives, by the doctrine in our soul, by the integrity of our day-to-day walk, we are a *blessing* to God, inasmuch as we glorify Him and His wisdom and His righteousness. Furthermore, this is one reason that some Christians ought to keep their mouths shut when it comes to witnessing. There are a large number of people on this earth where God does not want you to tell others about him. You're too visible; your sin nature is given an extensive reign over your life; you are so self-righteous that you are an embarrassment to God (and this expression is also an anthropopathism).

The final two verbs are imperatives. The psalmist orders his soul to bless God, which requires doctrine and the filling of the Spirit. He orders his readers to praise God. [Praise Yah](#) is often rendered *hallelujah*; but that obscures its meaning.

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