

Monday Evening Bible Reading Notes: November 6: Psalm 104: Some Notes

Psalm 104

The Message

104 ¹⁻¹⁴ O my soul, bless GOD!

GOD, my God, how great you are!
beautifully, gloriously robed,
Dressed up in sunshine,
and all heaven stretched out for your tent.
You built your palace on the ocean deeps,
made a chariot out of clouds and took off on wind-wings.
You commandeered winds as messengers,
appointed fire and flame as ambassadors.
You set earth on a firm foundation
so that nothing can shake it, ever.
You blanketed earth with ocean,
covered the mountains with deep waters;
Then you roared and the water ran away—
your thunder crash put it to flight.
Mountains pushed up, valleys spread out
in the places you assigned them.
You set boundaries between earth and sea;
never again will earth be flooded.
You started the springs and rivers,
sent them flowing among the hills.
All the wild animals now drink their fill,
wild donkeys quench their thirst.
Along the riverbanks the birds build nests,
ravens make their voices heard.
You water the mountains from your heavenly reservoirs;
earth is supplied with plenty of water.
You make grass grow for the livestock,
hay for the animals that plow the ground.

¹⁴⁻²³ Oh yes, God brings grain from the land,
wine to make people happy,
Their faces glowing with health,
a people well-fed and hearty.
GOD's trees are well-watered—
the Lebanon cedars he planted.
Birds build their nests in those trees;
look—the stork at home in the treetop.
Mountain goats climb about the cliffs;
badgers burrow among the rocks.
The moon keeps track of the seasons,
the sun is in charge of each day.
When it's dark and night takes over,
all the forest creatures come out.
The young lions roar for their prey,
clamoring to God for their supper.

When the sun comes up, they vanish,
 lazily stretched out in their dens.
 Meanwhile, men and women go out to work,
 busy at their jobs until evening.

24-30 What a wildly wonderful world, GOD!
 You made it all, with Wisdom at your side,
 made earth overflow with your wonderful creations.
 Oh, look—the deep, wide sea,
 brimming with fish past counting,
 sardines and sharks and salmon.
 Ships plow those waters,
 and Leviathan, your pet dragon, romps in them.
 All the creatures look expectantly to you
 to give them their meals on time.
 You come, and they gather around;
 you open your hand and they eat from it.
 If you turned your back,
 they'd die in a minute—
 Take back your Spirit and they die,
 revert to original mud;
 Send out your Spirit and they spring to life—
 the whole countryside in bloom and blossom.

31-32 The glory of GOD—let it last forever!
 Let GOD enjoy his creation!
 He takes one look at earth and triggers an earthquake,
 points a finger at the mountains, and volcanoes erupt.

33-35 Oh, let me sing to GOD all my life long,
 sing hymns to my God as long as I live!
 Oh, let my song please him;
 I'm so pleased to be singing to GOD.
 But clear the ground of sinners—
 no more godless men and women!

O my soul, bless GOD!

Hymns related to Psalm 104 (Some of Many!)

Scripture	Matching Instances
	5
Jesus, the Very Thought of Thee	Psalm 104:34 4
We Plow the Fields and Scatter	Psalm 104 4
God is Love: let heav'n adore him	Psalm 104:5 4
My Soul, Bless the Lord!	Psalm 104 4
Psalm 104: Lord, Send Out Your Spirit	Psalm 104 4

Psalm 104: Lord, Send Out Your Spirit	Psalm 104:1	4
Salmo 103: Envía Tu Espíritu	Psalm 104:1-2	4
Holy, Holy, Holy	Psalm 104:24	3
Psalm 104:1-13, 24-35	Psalm 104:1-35	3
Angel Voices, Ever Singing	Psalm 104:31	3
Come, O my soul, in sacred lays	Psalm 104:1-2	3
Great Is Thy Faithfulness	Psalm 104:19	3
How Great Is Our God	Psalm 104:1	3
Your Spirit, O LORD, Makes Life to Abound	Psalm 104	3
The Works of the Lord Are Created	Psalm 104	3
We Praise You	Psalm 104:24	3

- Psalm 104. The Duke of Edinburgh requested that Psalm 104 should be set to music by William Lovelady (b. 1945) abridged and arranged for choir and organ by James Vivian (b. 1974) with the composer's permission. Words from Psalm 104, adapted by Sam Dyer (b. 1945)

This formed part of the Prince's Funeral Service.

What a contrast to last week's psalm. This Song of Creation is bursting with joyous energy. The nature enthusiast today is just as enthusiastic – especially if he or she can capture that child-like wonder at both very small and very big things: the “wow!” factor. There are, of course, differences between then and now – not least our awareness of just how much human beings can mess up creation! The OT writers knew about stewardship, but not quite what we know about damage potential, and indeed restoration/preservation potential. Though they were “closer to the soil” than most of us are: a crop failure meant starvation. The old picture of the world and the universe has been transformed by awareness of how many noughts there are in measuring both the size and the age of creation.

You can't appreciate nature just at a pretty, pretty, level. I was watching the squirrel displacing the birds on the bird table when the fox arrived, grabbed the squirrel, killed it, and ate it. I was watching a Red Admiral butterfly when a House Sparrow also spotted it – grabbed it, ate the body and discarded the wings. I was talking to the Robin while gardening, and dug up a worm – which the Robin gratefully ate in three goes, apart for the last bit which wriggled away. The Harry Potter section on Mandrakes implies vegetables have feelings!

If nature speaks to us of the Creator, what does nature say about the Creator? Your “stunning nature” moment? What are our stewardship responsibilities? How, knowing what we do know, do we tackle extracting sea bed resources to replace the carbon and other damage we have done by digging up the land? How do you feel about those women/couples who have decided against bringing children into the world, because of the damage done by population growth? Does “evolution” challenge “creation”?