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PSALM 104

The Psalmist writes 'O Lord my God, You are very great'

The Swedish hymn writer, Carl Gustaf Boberg (1859-1940), expressed the message of the Psalm in the words of the Hymn *How Great Thou Art*.

1. THE GREATNESS OF THE KING

1 ¶ Bless the LORD, O my soul. O LORD my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty.

Clothed with honour and majesty

The Psalmist compares the Lord to an Eastern King

His Kingly garments

The Royal Palace

The Royal Transportation

HIS KINGLY GARMENTS

2 ¶ Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain:

An Eastern King has expensive garments.

Sometimes an expensive cloth can be interwoven with gold.

But nothing can compare with the garments of the creator God.

Who covers Himself with light as a garment

THE PALACE

The curtains of the King's palace

An Eastern King had beautifully woven curtains to surround his dwelling place. But the Lord stretches out the heavens like a curtain.

The beams of the King's palace

3. ¶ Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters:

The beams hold up the structure of the palace.

An Eastern King would build with the best wood – the cedars of Lebanon.

A beam must be able to make the building secure and be able to take the pressure. But the beams of the Lord's palace stand secure in the waters, the rain.

All of life is sustained by water.

Water is heavy.

When water supplies are gone then heavy trucks have to be used to bring the water.

Force of a river can be used to produce electricity.

Yet the Lord sustains all of life with a continuous supply of immense amounts of water - one drop at a time with the rainfall.

The rainfall is the Lord's escalator moving up and down to sustain life

The prophet Amos describes this moving stairway in the sky as 'layers in the sky'. Amos 9:6

Rain - the Lord's moving stairway.

Water – evaporates (liquid to vapour)
The vapour rises Forms
clouds Condenses (gas
– liquid)
Rain falls

In addition the beautiful rainbow that comes as the light shines through the waterdrops in the air, reminds us of His wonderful grace.

ROYAL TRANSPORT

3. ...who maketh the clouds his chariot: who walketh upon the wings of the wind:

An Eastern King has splendid transport.
No expense is spared to show the greatness of the King through the splendour of his chariot.
But the clouds and the wind are the Lord's transport.
There is nowhere to hide from His presence. (Psalm 139:7-10)

THE ROYAL MESSENGERS

4 ¶ Who maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming fire:

An Eastern King has his royal courtiers.
The splendour of His court – those who are close to the King.
His Generals sent as His messengers.
His ministers sent as His ambassadors.
But the Lord's messengers are the angelic host.
The Lord's servants, His ambassadors are a flaming fire.

Fire has no respect of persons. It seeks to destroy the homes of the mighty as well as the poor.
But even the fire must obey its creator.
Even the wind and the waves must obey Him.
He has everything under control

2. THE GREATNESS OF HIS WORKS

THE FOUNDATION OF THE EARTH

5 ¶ Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever.

A foundation has to be secure to hold the building placed upon it.
A weak foundation will show the foolishness of the builder.
But the Lord hangs the earth on nothing. 'He stretches out the north over the empty place, and hangs the earth upon nothing.' (Job 26:7)
Yet it can never be moved.

THE SEA – THE GARMENT OF THE EARTH

6 ¶ Thou coveredst it with the deep as with a garment: the waters stood above the mountains.
7 At thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away.
8 They go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys unto the place which thou hast founded for them.
9 Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over; that they turn not again to cover the earth.

The sea is a garment for the earth. The Lord said 'let the dry land be seen' (Genesis 1:9b) and the waters declined.
The Lord sets the boundaries for the sea.
When the storm comes, strong barricades have to be put up to prevent the mighty onslaught of the sea.
But the Lord sets a small layer of sand and declares this far and no farther.
Jeremiah 5:22 ¶ 'Fear ye not me? saith the LORD: will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it: and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it?'

DRINKING WATER

But all the immense water of the sea does not help to quench thirst.
The creator God supplies drinking water in the hills and the valleys

- 10 ¶ He sendeth the springs into the valleys, which run among the hills.
11 They give drink to every beast of the field: the wild asses quench their thirst.
12 By them shall the fowls of the heaven have their habitation, which sing among the branches.

The animals drink the fresh water.
The birds sing in the branches of the trees.

GOD'S ABUNDANT PROVISION

- 13 ¶ He watereth the hills from his chambers: the earth is satisfied with the fruit of thy works.
14 He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: that he may bring forth food out of the earth;
15 And wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man's heart.

The rain waters the hills.
The grass grows for the cattle
The herbs provide food for man
Wine
Oil
Bread
God doesn't just provide the essentials of life but He provides the enjoyable things of life. God doesn't lead a people in rags.
He is an abundant God.

THE WONDER OF CREATION REVEALED IN NATURE

- 16 ¶ The trees of the LORD are full of sap; the cedars of Lebanon, which he hath planted;

The trees of the Lord

▪ The Cedars of Lebanon

Resin sap used by Egyptians to embalm their dead. Used by the Jews in circumcision and treatment of leprosy. The cedar wood – enduring quality. Used in Bible times for ships, roofs and buildings. Used for building Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem.

▪ The Giant Redwood Trees

The tallest trees in the world are the Giant Redwood trees in California.
The tallest is the General Sherman tree (c. 84 metres high). Previously the world's tallest tree was c.120 metres before it fell.
A road going through a Giant Redwood tree is a tourist attraction.

The birds

- 17 ¶ Where the birds make their nests: as for the stork, the fir trees are her house.

▪ The Stork

The White Stork that is seen in Eastern Europe nesting high on poles migrate in the Winter to the hotter African climate. Then in early Spring they return to the same nest.
They have no clock.
They have no calendar.
They have no compass.
But every year at the same time they return to the same nest.

▪ The Oystercatcher

The national bird of the Faroe Islands.
Flies south for the winter then returns to lay their eggs on the mountainous terrain of the Faroe Islands.

The 12th March is called Grækarismessa and this is the day that marks the return of the Oystercatcher. Every year around the 12 March the Tjaldur as they are called in the Faroe Islands start to return. They have no clock.
They have no calendar.
They have no compass.
But every year at the same time they return to the small islands in the North Atlantic.

The wild animals

18 ¶ The high hills are a refuge for the wild goats; and the rocks for the conies.

The Lord takes care of the animals that no one sees.
No farmer is feeding them.
But God provides for them.

HIS GREATNESS REVEALED IN THE HEAVENS

▪ Sun and Moon

19 ¶ He appointed the moon for seasons: the sun knoweth his going down.

Earth turns once a day producing the day and the night

□ Seasons

The earth is tilted at 23.5 degrees and moves once a year round the sun producing the seasons.

□ Sunrise and Sunset

The day comes when God says and the night comes when God says.
God's covenant with the day and the night cannot be broken neither can His covenant with His people.
Jeremiah 33: 25 ¶ Thus saith the LORD; If my covenant be not with day and night, and if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth;
26 ¶ Then will I cast away the seed of Jacob, and David my servant, so that I will not take any of his seed to be rulers over the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: for I will cause their captivity to return, and have mercy on them.'

Darkness for the animals

Light enables man to work

20 ¶ Thou makest darkness, and it is night: wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth.
21 The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God.
22 The sun ariseth, they gather themselves together, and lay them down in their dens.
23 Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labour until the evening.

HIS GREATNESS REVEALED IN THE RICHES OF HIS CREATION

24 ¶ O LORD, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches.

▪ Earth is filled with His riches.

No matter how much is discovered there is always more.

Satellites

Computers

MIR Space Station – 220 miles above the earth. Orbits the earth every 92 minutes. It

can only happen because the resources are on the earth.

Endless resources.

HIS GREATNESS REVEALED IN THE SEA

25 ¶ So is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts.

26 There go the ships: there is that leviathan, whom thou hast made to play therein.

□ Great Sea Creature (Leviathan)

Not known what this creature was but can be compared with the Great Blue Whale.

□ **The Blue Whale**

Over 30 metres long weighs 100 tons female 150 tons
Feeds on small krill (like a shrimp)
Up to 40 million in a day. (or up to 7,715 pounds a day of krill) Found
in all the oceans.

Man's greed nearly made the Blue Whale extinct
Endangered because too many killed by exploding harpoon - 29,000 killed in one year.
Man goes crazy for financial gain – one whale gives 120 barrels of oil. Worldwide ban.

HIS GREATNESS REVEALED THROUGH HIS PROVISION

27 These wait all upon thee; that thou mayest give them their meat in due season.
28 That thou givest them they gather: thou openest thine hand, they are filled with good.
29 Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust.

□ **Dependent upon the Lord**

The Lord provides krill for the Blue Whale.
If the Lord can provide 40 million krill for the Blue Whale in one day how much more will He care for His people.
Consider the sparrows... Consider the Blue Whale...

HIS GREATNESS REVEALED AS THE EARTH IS RENEWED

30 ¶ Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth.

□ **When Spring comes new life begins to appear.**

The daffodils begin to flower
Lambs are seen on the hillside

THE PSALMIST REJOICES IN THE GREATNESS OF THE CREATOR

31 ¶ The glory of the LORD shall endure for ever: the LORD shall rejoice in his works.
32 He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth: he toucheth the hills, and they smoke.
33 I will sing unto the LORD as long as I live: I will sing praise to my God while I have my being.
34 My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the LORD.

BUT THERE IS JUST ONE PROBLEM

35a ¶ Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth, and let the wicked be no more.

The Psalmist sees that creation should bring glory to its creator. Yet sin has brought destruction.
The Psalmist rejoices in the Glory of God and cries out for sinners to be destroyed.
Mankind's rebellion against God has brought a curse.
Evil exists in the earth.
The Psalmist cries out for evil to be destroyed.

THE LORD ANSWERS – HE WILL DESTROY THE SINNER AND THE WICKED WILL BE NO MORE

□ **Destruction of the sinner through the cross – New life in Christ.**

The Lord says 'Yes I will destroy the sinner but I'll do it through the cross'.
John 3:16 ¶ For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not
perish, but have everlasting life.
The Lord will destroy the wicked at the last judgment.
But it is not His will that any should perish.

He desires to destroy the sinner by giving new life through faith in 'the finished work of Jesus Christ alone'. When
a person receives Christ as his or her Saviour.
He or she is crucified with Christ
Risen with Christ

Raised to sit in heavenly places with Christ as a joint heir with Christ.

VOYAGER'S FINAL PICTURE

When the spacecraft Voyager had completed its mission and was about to be left to fly off into space NASA took a picture of the earth from 4 billion miles away. The earth is just a small blue dot.

The scripture says 'Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing.' Isaiah 40:15

Yet He loved us so much that the Eternal Son of God came to this earth so that we can have new life in Him.

35b ¶ Bless thou the LORD, O my soul. Praise ye the LORD.

[Psalm 104 Pictures \(pdf\)](#)