

Psalm 104 (God's work in creation)

¹ I praise and thank the LORD with all that is within me! I am compelled to praise Him because He is adorned with honor and majesty, and He wears these things as though they were a garment. ^{2a} He dwells in pure light, and

The creation of the firmament

^{2b} He is so powerful that He flung out the contents of the universe like we would throw back the door covering of a tent. ³ He created a water vapor canopy above the water on the earth's surface. From that canopy He created clouds and winds, and He is present in both of them. ⁴ He makes His angels servants like a flaming fire, moving throughout the earth like the winds, doing His will, ministering to God's people in the world.

The creation of land and water

⁵ The LORD placed the earth in its orbit at exactly the right speed and exactly the right distance from the sun. He also caused the earth to spin on its axis at precisely the right rotational speed. He ordained that it would continue doing so until all things are made new at the end of time. ⁶ Initially, He covered the earth with enough water so that the mountains were submerged. ⁷ At His rebuke the waters were absorbed by the earth and evaporated into the atmosphere so that the mountains were uncovered. ⁸ As the water level lowered, the mountains rose and the valleys were exposed. ⁹ In doing so, the LORD set boundaries for the seas so that they would not cover the whole earth again (except for Noah's flood which was a one-time event). ¹⁰ After this He caused some of the water absorbed into the earth to leak from the surface of the ground at a controlled rate in order to produce springs of water that flow down the valleys between the mountains. ¹¹ These springs supply water to quench the thirst of every animal in the fields (humans too). ¹² In addition, birds sing among the branches in trees near the springs.

The creation of vegetation

¹³ The LORD so wisely designed the laws of nature so that clouds form in the atmosphere and drop rain on the mountains. ¹⁴ This rainwater causes vegetation to grow in the field for animals to eat, produces food to sustain a man when he toils in the field, ¹⁵ makes grapes grow so that he will have wine to make his heart merry, and causes olive trees grow from which man can extract oil. ¹⁶ The trees of Lebanon which the LORD planted drink their fill, and ¹⁷ the birds (specifically the stork) build their nests in those trees. ¹⁸ Above the tree line vegetation is scarce, but it is still the home of mountain goats, and the cliffs are a refuge for rock badgers.

The creation of the heavenly bodies

¹⁹ The LORD placed the moon in orbit around the earth to generate the seasons, and He established the earth's rotational speed so that the sun appears to rise in the east and set in the west every day. ²⁰ The LORD made darkness and appointed it as a time when the beasts of the forest prowl about. ²¹ During the night young lions roar and seek their food from God. ²²⁻²³ Once the sun comes up they withdraw to their dens and lie down while men get out of bed and go to work until evening.

The creation of marine life and birds

²⁴ LORD, by Your exceptional wisdom You have done many wonderful works. The earth is full of things You have made and they all belong to You. ²⁵ The seas are so vast and they are filled with swarms of living things both small and great. ²⁶ Ships transverse Your sea, and Leviathan, the sea monster You created, plays there.

He provides for His creations

²⁷⁻²⁸ All of Your creatures wait for You to supply their food at the right time, and when You do, they gather it up and are satisfied. ²⁹⁻³⁰ When You hide Yourself and withhold their needs they are dismayed. When You send forth Your Spirit new creatures are created, but when You take away their spirit they die and return to the dust. Over and over again You cause the vegetation to die in the winter and grow again each spring.

³¹ The glory of the LORD will endure forever, and He will rejoice over all the works that He has done. ³² When He looks at the earth with a stern look the earth trembles, and when He touches the mountains they shake and smoke.

³³ I will sing praises to the LORD as long as I live and have control of my senses. ³⁴ I pray that my meditations will be sweet in His sight. Regardless of what comes my way, I will be glad that the LORD is my God. ³⁵ I pray that every wicked person will be eradicated from the earth so that they will all be gone. Bless the LORD, O my soul. In all things, praise the LORD!