



PSALM 104

PRAISE FOR THE CREATOR

Introducing Psalm 104

- **Book 4 of the Psalter concludes with 4 psalms calling on God's people to bless or praise Him.**
- **Psalm 104 might be considered an expanded commentary on Psalm 19:1.**

Introducing Psalm 104

- **It echoes Psalm 8 with its focus on the glory of God and His providential care for mankind.**
- **The Creator is in control and He cares.**

Praying Psalm 104



- Oh Lord, You are very great and majestic. [v. 1]
- Help me to see Your creation and to give You all the praise. [vv. 5]
- Thank You for the food I eat. [v. 14]
- Thank You for giving me work. [v. 23]
- Father, make my meditation on Your creation pleasing to You. [v. 34]

Understanding Psalm 104

- I.** The Creator's Praise (vv. 1–4)
- II.** The Creator's Preparation of the Earth (vv. 5–13)
- III.** The Creator's Provision for Mankind (vv. 14–23)
- IV.** The Creator's Possessions on the Earth (vv. 24–30)
- V.** The Creator's Praise (vv. 31–35)

Understanding Psalm 104

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Understanding Psalm 104

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Understanding Psalm 104

v. 1 “Bless the LORD, O my soul!”:
Bendize, ó minha alma

- **Similarities with Psalm 103 do not necessarily indicate the same author.**
- **Similarities may have caused the editor to place them back-to-back.**

Understanding Psalm 104

v. 3 “His chariot [seu carro] . . . He walks [anda]”

- Did the psalmist borrow his description of the theophany from Canaanite literature about Baal?
 - Verses 6–7 associated with “the deep”:
 - o abismo (Hebrew, *tehom*) with either the Canaanite (Ugaritic) sea god Yam or the Babylonian goddess Tiamat.

Understanding Psalm 104

v. 3 “His chariot [seu carro] . . . He walks [anda]”

- Did the psalmist borrow his description of the theophany from Canaanite literature about Baal?
 - These myths represent the conquest of chaos.
 - It is not necessary to accept this association of the biblical text with myths.

Understanding Psalm 104

v. 3 “His chariot [seu carro] . . . He walks [anda]”

- Did the psalmist borrow his description of the theophany from Canaanite literature about Baal?
 - Potential parallels between Psalm 104 and an Egyptian hymn to Aten in the time of Pharaoh Akhenaten.

Hymn to Aten

<Those on> earth come from your hand as
you made them,
When you have dawned they live,
When you set they die;
You yourself are lifetime, one lives by you.
All eyes are <on your> beauty until you set,
All labor ceases when you rest in the west;
When you rise you stir [everyone] for the
King,

Understanding Psalm 104

v. 3 “His chariot [seu carro] . . . He walks [anda]”

- Did the psalmist borrow his description of the theophany from Canaanite literature about Baal?
 - Apparent parallels indicate similar concepts and themes common to all ancient near eastern cultures, rather than direct dependence or relationship.

Understanding Psalm 104

v. 4 “makes”: Faz

- Hebrew root word for “make” and “works” [obras] occurs in strategic verses that divide the psalm into stanzas.
- See verses 4, 19, 24 for “make” and verses 13, 24, 31 for “works.”

Understanding Psalm 104

- I.** The Creator's Praise (vv. 1–**4**)
- II.** The Creator's Preparation of the Earth (vv. 5–**13**)
- III.** The Creator's Provision for Mankind (vv. 14–23) **19**
- IV.** The Creator's Possessions on the Earth (vv. **24**–30)
- V.** The Creator's Praise (vv. **31**–35)

Understanding Psalm 104

- v. 7** “At Your rebuke”: À tua repreensão
- Seems to indicate that verses 7–9 refer to the Flood.
 - Seems disharmonious with the Creation account, since the verb often implies anger (Isa 51:20; cp. 54:9).
 - Intent to instill fear in the hearer (Isa 30:17).

Understanding Psalm 104

v. 7 “At Your rebuke”: Å tua repreensão

- Seems to indicate that verses 7–9 refer to the Flood.
 - “Rebuke” = a war cry and refers to the Babylonian and Canaanite chaos myth?
 - Contexts dealing with the parting of the Red Sea’s waters (Pss 18:15; 106:9; cp. Nahum 1:4), resulting in judgment upon the Egyptians and deliverance or safety for the Israelites.

Luke 8:24

They came to Jesus
and woke Him up, saying,
"Master, Master, we are perishing!"
And He got up and rebuked the wind
and the surging waves,
and they stopped, and it became calm.

Understanding Psalm 104

v. 8 “The mountains rose; the valleys sank down”: Subiram aos montes, desceram aos vales

- This verse “is to be understood in terms of disorganized movement helter-skelter, back and forth, as they [the waters] leave the mountains (v 7).” — Leslie C. Allen

Understanding Psalm 104

v. 8 “The mountains rose; the valleys sank down”: Subiram aos montes,
desceram aos vales

- Do verses 8–9 refer to Creation or to the Flood?
- *Creation*
 - Order of created entities in Genesis 1 and Psalm 104 appears to be the same.

Day 1: light (Gen 1:3; Ps 104:2)

Day 2: heavenly waters (Gen 1:7; Ps 104:3)

Day 3: draining water off the earth and appearance of landforms (Gen 1:9; Ps 104:7-8), vegetation (Gen 1:11; Ps 104:14)

Day 4: sun and moon (Gen 1:14-16; Ps 104:19)

Day 5: sea creatures (Gen 1:21; Ps 104:25–26)

Day 6: provision of food (Gen 1:29; Ps 104:27).

Understanding Psalm 104

v. 8 “The mountains rose; the valleys sank down”: Subiram aos montes, desceram aos vales

- Do verses 8–9 refer to Creation or to the Flood?
- *Creation*
 - Order of created entities in Genesis 1 and Psalm 104 appears to be the same.
 - Description of boundaries for the waters is reminiscent of Job 38:4–11.

Understanding Psalm 104

v. 8 “The mountains rose; the valleys sank down”: Subiram aos montes, desceram aos vales

- Do verses 8–9 refer to Creation or to the Flood?
- *Flood*
 - Psalm 104:9 seems to echo Genesis 7:20, 9:21–22, and 10:12–15: “You set a boundary that they may not pass over, So that they will not return to cover the earth.”

Understanding Psalm 104

v. 8 “The mountains rose; the valleys sank down”: Subiram aos montes, desceram aos vales

- Do verses 8–9 refer to Creation or to the Flood?
- *Flood*
 - Apparent creation order in Psalm 104 ignores the disharmonies.

Disharmonies

- “Light” covers God rather than illuminating the earth.
- God creates the earth after the light.
- Light exists before waters cover the earth.
- Birds precede vegetation and the sun and moon.
- Wild donkeys precede birds.
- Mankind appears before the sun and moon.

Understanding Psalm 104

v. 8 “The mountains rose; the valleys sank down”: Subiram aos montes, desceram aos vales

- Do verses 8–9 refer to Creation or to the Flood?
- *Flood*
 - Nearly every scholar who denies a reference to the Flood in verse 9 depicts the waters at creation as chaotic, raging, and dangerous — waters needing to be tamed — making a clear association with Canaanite mythology.

Understanding Psalm 104

v. 8 “The mountains rose; the valleys sank down”: Subiram aos montes, desceram aos vales

- Do verses 8–9 refer to Creation or to the Flood?
- *Both*
 - Clearly, Creation is a major theme in Psalm 104. However, it also seems clear that verse 9 refers to the Noachic Flood (David Barker, Boice, Travers, VanGemeren).

Understanding Psalm 104

v. 9 “You set a boundary that they may not pass over”: Termo lhes puseste, que não ultrapassarão

- **Jeremiah 5:22 is in a context (vv. 18–25) echoing phrases and concepts from Genesis 8:20–9:17.**
- **Job 38:10–11 (referring to Creation) uses totally different terms in the Hebrew.**
- **Key: The waters did return in the Flood!**

Understanding Psalm 104

v. 15 “wine [vinho] . . . oil [azeite] . . .
food [pão]”

- Hebrew for “food” is literally “bread,” providing a potential reference to the 3 staples of the ancient Israelite economy:
 - Wine
 - Olive oil
 - Grain (wheat, barley, and rye)

Deuteronomy 7:13

“He will love you and bless you and multiply you; He will also bless the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground, your **grain and your new **wine** and your **oil**, the increase of your herd and the young of your flock, in the land which He swore to your forefathers to give you.**

Understanding Psalm 104

v. 26 “Leviathan”: o leviatã/monstro marinho

- “Leviathan functions here not as the Canaanite chaos monster, not even as a captive prisoner, but simply in a demythologized capacity as a created being, a marine creature . . . , perhaps a whale.” — Leslie Allen

Understanding Psalm 104

v. 30 “You send forth Your Spirit”:
Envias o teu Espírito

- Same Spirit of God active at creation (Gen 1:2) continues to be active in sustaining life on the earth.
- “Breath” [respiração]?—verse 29.
 - Some scholars do not believe that the Old Testament clearly speaks of the Spirit of God.

Job 33:4

O Espírito de Deus me fez;
e a inspiração do Todo-Poderoso
me deu vida.

John 14:26

**But the Helper, the Holy Spirit,
whom the Father will send in My name,
He will teach you all things,
and bring to your remembrance
all that I said to you.**

John 15:26

**When the Helper comes,
whom I will send to you
from the Father,
that is the Spirit of truth
who proceeds from the Father,
He will testify about Me,**

John 20:22

And when He had said this,
He breathed on them
and said to them,
"Receive the Holy Spirit."

Understanding Psalm 104

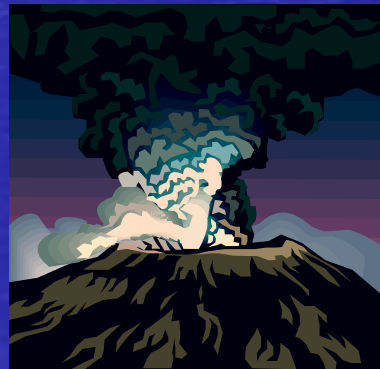
v. 31 “Let the LORD be glad”: o SENHOR
se alegrará

- The Lord’s joy with His creation is echoed in the psalmist’s own emphatic declaration in verse 34:
“As for me, I shall be glad in the LORD”: eu me alegrarei no SENHOR.
- The joy is mutual.

Understanding Psalm 104

v. 32 “it trembles [ela treme] . . . they
smoke [logo fumegam]”

- Earthquake and volcanic activity often accompany theophany in the Old Testament.



Exodus 19:18

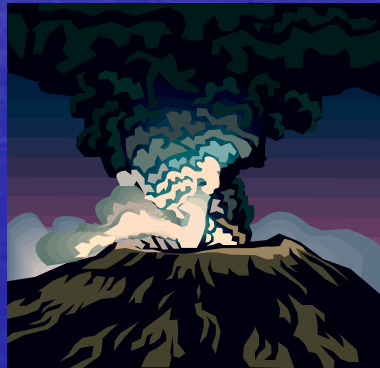


**Now Mount Sinai was all in smoke
because the LORD descended
upon it in fire;
and its smoke ascended
like the smoke of a furnace,
and the whole mountain
quaked violently.**

Psalm 144:5

**Bow Your heavens, O LORD, and come
down;**

**Touch the mountains, that they may
smoke.**



Understanding Psalm 104

v. 35 “Praise the LORD!”:

Louvai ao SENHOR.

- Literally, “Hallelujah!” — the first in the Psalter.

Revelation 19:1–6

1 After these things I heard something like a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, “**Hallelujah!** Salvation and glory and power belong to our God; **2** BECAUSE HIS JUDGMENTS ARE TRUE AND RIGHTEOUS; for He has judged the great harlot who was corrupting the earth with her immorality, and HE HAS AVENGED THE BLOOD OF HIS BOND-SERVANTS ON HER.”

Revelation 19:1–6

3 And a second time they said, “**Hallelujah!**
HER SMOKE RISES UP FOREVER AND EVER.”

4 And the twenty-four elders and the four
living creatures fell down and worshiped
God who sits on the throne saying, “Amen.
Hallelujah!”

Revelation 19:1–6

5 And a voice came from the throne, saying, “Give praise to our God, all you His bond-servants, you who fear Him, the small and the great.”

6 Then I heard something like the voice of a great multitude and like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, saying, “**Hallelujah!** For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns.”

Preaching/Teaching

Psalm 104

- **Praise is due to God as both Creator and Sustainer of all things.**
- **Creation reveals the great power and wisdom of the Lord.**
- **We ought to rejoice in the Lord's works.**
- **We ought to entrust ourselves "to a faithful Creator in doing what is right" (1 Pet 4:19).**