

All God's Creatures Great and Small

Propositional Statement: Day five through the beginning of day six reveals the God who relieves all of our fears and provides and cares for all of our needs!

FCF: We can know that God will relieve all of our fears in this world. Also, if he cares so much for the animals- -we know he truly cares *for us*.

Introduction

- In the last few weeks we have considered our Great Creator-King and how he has revealed himself to his people in the creation. We learned about the Trinitarian God who creates and the distinction and difference between God the Creator and his creation. We considered the Word of God and His Powerful Spirit in the beginning and how he brought form to formlessness, fullness to emptiness, and light where there was only darkness! We see the Almighty power of God's Word and Spirit working together in his revelation to man.

Then we considered days one through four. How God by his almighty power separated and began to adorn the creation. On day one, God separated the light from the darkness. On day two, God separated the waters and created the expanse or the heavens. On day three, God separated the seas from the land and began to adorn the creation with self-perpetuating plant-life. God's work of separation taught Israel that they had been set apart for his service, that being set apart or separated was for the purpose of glorifying God- - and so that is still our purpose as God's people! On day four, God separated the day from the night and made the sun, moon, and stars. He taught that he ordered time according to his pattern, that in all we do as his people we might *orbit our lives* around our service to God and our neighbor!

As we continue to study Genesis chapter one and the creation account, let us not lose sight of the great impact it would have had on the Ancient Israelites! God was gracious to accommodate himself in their language to them through Moses as much as they could understand about his sovereignty and power, as well as about their origin as humans as well as the People of God! Before the Exodus from Egypt, before the covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, before sin had entered the world and reached catastrophic proportions, when God saved Noah, his family, and the animals. Before the fall of Adam and Eve, God created all things *out of nothing, by the word of his power, in the space of six days, and all was very good!*

Today, we will focus on days five through the beginning of day six of the creation account. These days continue God's work of God's filling the emptiness, or adorning the creation. This will culminate in the apex of God's work that will be the creation of man on day six!

- There are two particular truths that days five through the beginning of day six teach to us: (1) Day five: **the God who relieves all of our fears;** (2) Beginning of Day six: **the God who cares for us and through us rules the animal kingdom.**

I. **Day Five- Birds of the Air, Sea creatures and Sea Monsters (Aerial and Aquatic Animals): the God who relieves all of our fears!**

A. *Let the waters teem with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth (v. 20)*

- Here God makes the creature to inhabit the seas and the skies. Up until now, the sea and skies had no *life* in them. God fills them with the aquatic and aerial life of his creation. These are part of the animal kingdoms that man will be given dominion over. Man will reign as prince over all of God's created kingdoms, including the aquatic and the aerial kingdoms! Let us now focus our attention on the sea creatures that *God created*. Particularly the *Sea Monsters* or *Sea Creatures* described in verses 21-22.

B. *And God created the great sea-monsters (v.21)*

- The creatures who live in the water are divided into two categories:
 - (1) Extremely large and mostly water-related mammals or reptiles (crocodile, whale, large snakes).
 - (2) Small fish and other diminutive or minute aquatic creatures, who either glide through the water or creep along its bed.
- First of all, these verses use the verb *create* again which is very significant. God *creates the Sea Creatures*. This is important for the Israelites! It is important to God to relieve all of their fears!
- Let me explain. For Israel, as well as other ANE people, the seas were incredibly frightening. In the ANE most of the people were like Israel, they were nomads or land-people. The seas were extremely frightening to them because they could not harness the power of the sea. In fact, one of the reasons the Israelites found the Philistines to be so frightening as a people was because they were known as *Sea-Peoples*, those who had learned to build ships and harness the waters. (E.g. Crossing of the Red Sea took a great amount of faith).
- It was the understanding of the cosmology of the times that the Sea was inhabited by great Sea Monsters. Before Jacques Cousteau came along, people did not have underwater cameras and such. They just knew that whatever was out there on the vast blue waters was strange to land-people, and very deep - -deep like an abyss. Also, it was believed at this time in history (remember this is a pre-modern age - - that is, they can only know certain things by observation or by God's revelation to them), that the Sea creatures stirred up the deep and produced many of the great waves and disturbances that were observed in the seas and oceans. I imagine that some of these great Sea Creatures were whales and other great fish, perhaps Great sea creatures that are now extinct. But whatever, they were great and frightening to the Israelites!

- There are three names of Scriptural sea monsters: *Tannin (or Dragon), Leviathan, and Rahab*. Perhaps a few Scriptures would help us to understand the Israelite's understanding of the Great Sea Creatures *that God created!*

Psalm 74:11-14- 12 Yet God my King is from of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth. 13 Thou didst divide the sea by thy might; thou didst break the heads of the dragons on the waters. 14 Thou didst crush the heads of **Leviathan**, thou didst give him as food for the creatures of the wilderness.

- *The God who defeated the hostile waters and controls the great sea monster Leviathan, can overcome Israel's present enemies!*

Isaiah 51:9-10- 9 Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the LORD; awake, as in days of old, the generations of long ago. Was it not thou that didst cut Rahab in pieces, that didst pierce the dragon? 10 Was it not thou that didst dry up the sea, the waters of the great deep; that didst make the depths of the sea a way for the redeemed to pass over?

- *Enemies of Israel are likened to the dragon and sea creatures!*

Jeremiah 51:34 Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon hath devoured me, he hath crushed me, he hath made me an empty vessel, he hath swallowed me up like a dragon, he hath filled his belly with my delicates, he hath cast me out.

- *Job describes the mighty strength of Leviathan!*

Job 41:25 When he raises himself up, the mighty are afraid; Because of his crashings they are beside themselves. 26 Though the sword reaches him, it cannot avail; Nor does spear, dart, or javelin. 27 He regards iron as straw, And bronze as rotten wood. 28 The arrow cannot make him flee; Slingstones become like stubble to him. 29 Darts are regarded as straw; He laughs at the threat of javelins. 30 His undersides are like sharp potsherds; He spreads pointed marks in the mire. 31 He makes the deep boil like a pot; He makes the sea like a pot of ointment. 32 He leaves a shining wake behind him; One would think the deep had white hair. 33 On earth there is nothing like him, Which is made without fear. 34 He beholds every high thing; He is king over all the children of pride.

There is an end to the Sea Monsters...

- *Isaiah in the context of speaking of the future renovation of the creation says that there will be a day when Leviathan and the Tannin (or Dragon) shall be no more!*

Isaiah 27:1 In that day the LORD with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that *is* in the sea.

What do these verses about Sea Monsters teach us today?

- Simply that God relieves all of our fears of the natural creation by knowing that all things *even the Sea Monsters* and the creatures that we do not fully understand were created and ruled by God. In fact, Jesus when he comes he relieves the

fears of his disciples by calming the wind and the waves of the storm when they are out on the Sea of Galilee. He shows them that he is the LORD OF ALL CREATION. As well, part of the great hope of the New Creation is that John records for us in the Book of Revelation these words:

21:1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

- Whereas the ancient pagans looked to false gods or idols to propitiate the wrath of the *sea gods, or the forces of chaos*, in order to relieve the fears of what they could not control such as the sea, and the weather, etc. So, we in our modern world tends to look to science and our knowledge to bring us our relief from all of our fears. We can harness many of the great sea creatures, even train them (a foretaste of the New Creation), we put them on display at *Sea World!* As James 3:7 says: "Many kinds of animals can be tamed!" However, in our modern times, there is a loss of wonder and awe at these great sea creatures that God has created (perhaps because of our technological wonders, the technological sublimity, magnificence, or grandeur, we no longer are in awe of the great creatures of the sea). Much of creation has lost its magnificence in a scientific and technological world!

- We are a scientifically sufficient people! What do we as *Moderns* need to fear?! Our knowledge tends to remove the *sting* out idea of the frightening sea monsters! *We have the whole world in our hands!* We can harness the sea, map out our course with the stars of the heavens, we can travel deep, deep into the abyss with the mechanical inventions our hands have made! We are not fearful of the *unknown* anymore, because it is not longer *unknown to us!* Science and modernity has relieved all of our fears! Listen to how Neil Postman in his brilliant book *Technopoly* describes our idol of Science:

"...The success of twentieth-century technology in providing Americans with convenience, comfort, speed, hygiene, and abundance was so obvious and promising that there seemed no reason to look for any other sources of fulfillment or creativity or purpose. To every Old World belief, habit, or tradition, there was and still is a 'technological alternative'.

To prayer, the alternative is penicillin; to family roots, the alternative is mobility; to reading, the alternative is television; to restraint, the alternative is immediate gratification; to sin, the alternative is psychotherapy; to political ideology, the alternative is popular appeal established through scientific polling. There is even an alternative to the painful riddle of death, as Freud called it. The riddle may be postponed through longer life, and then perhaps be solved altogether by cryogenics. At least, no one can easily think of a reason why not."

- Whatever our fears today the LORD relieves them all because he has created all things and providentially rules all things for his glory and our good! As the great abyss, the great deep, the seas held unknown and unseen and unharnessed mysteries (such as the Sea creatures and monsters) to the Israelites (as well as

other ANE peoples), so in spite of science, we still have our own unknown and unseen and unharnessed mysteries that cause us great fear! Whether it be diseases that are unseen, that are even now creeping through our bodies, these things should not cause us unnecessary alarm. (Illustration: Kaz Yaegashi, missionary of the OPC to Japan has reported that he been diagnosed as having an unruptured aneurysm in the internal right carotid artery of his brain).

- These internal fears may be tiny and microscopic compared to the Great Sea Creatures of the deep, but they can cause us a great amount of fright and worry. Even there our God is faithful to relieve our fears. He is the Lord of all creation! From the greatest creature, to the smallest (like a disease or bacteria), God is Lord over all and in control! Be still and know that our Creator is God!

C. And God blessed them saying: “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth (v. 22)

- “The newly created life is the object of divine blessing, i.e., these living creatures are the recipients of a life-giving, divine power by virtue of which they themselves are capable of passing on the life they have received [from God] by means of their own procreation.”

II. Day Six- Creatures of the land: Wild and Domesticated (Cattle), and Creeping Things: the God who will care and provide for all of our needs!

A. *Cattle- Behemoth, elephants, oxen, cows, horses, etc (domesticated animals)- quadrupeds.*

- Again, modern man with machines knows not the blessings of being able to use cattle to till the land. To farm the land and to receive God’s abundant blessing from the earth!

B. *Creeping Things- reptiles, insects, etc. legless creatures such as lizards and snakes.*

C. *Beasts of the Earth- Every kind of wild animal! Canines, such as Jackals, wolves, hyenas; Great Felines, such as Lions, Tigers; deer, antelope, giraffes, and assortment of other (non-domesticated animals).*

- Man was to have dominion over all of the beasts of the earth. God gives man a responsibility of naming the animals narrated in Genesis 2, as well as to have dominion over them. Three observations:
 1. The Devil subtly tempts man, the Prince of the animals *as an animal*. By submitting to the Devil in obedience, Man who was created *a little lower than the angels*, gives up his high calling and purpose as vice-regent in order to be made *a little lower than the animals!*

2. It is no surprise that King Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon was punished for his pride against God, and he became like an animal.

29 At the end of the twelve months he was walking about the royal palace of Babylon. 30 The king spoke, saying, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honor of my majesty?" 31 While the word *was still* in the king's mouth, a voice fell from heaven: "King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: the kingdom has departed from you! 32 And they shall drive you from men, and your dwelling *shall be* with the beasts of the field. They shall make you eat grass like oxen; and seven times shall pass over you, until you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses." 33 That very hour the word was fulfilled concerning Nebuchadnezzar; he was driven from men and ate grass like oxen; his body was wet with the dew of heaven till his hair had grown like eagles' *feathers* and his nails like birds' *claws*.

3. ***After their kinds... (no hybrids)***- God ordered the creation.

- He had the animals produce (as the plants and trees), *after their kind*. Like the plants, all living creatures- - terrestrial, celestial (or aerial), and aquatic- - are created *according to kind*. They are created to be self-propagating.
- Animal hybrids in Scripture represent chaos. Some scholars call them *chaos monsters* (because they are the antithesis of the order established by God in creation). Poetically and metaphorically these hybrid creatures always represent intense evil. Think about the sea monsters described in Daniel 7: (think back to the Sea creatures)

2 Daniel spoke, saying, "I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the Great Sea. 3 "And four great beasts came up from the sea, each different from the other. 4 "The first *was* like a lion, and had eagle's wings. I watched till its wings were plucked off; and it was lifted up from the earth and made to stand on two feet like a man, and a man's heart was given to it. 5 "And suddenly another beast, a second, like a bear. It was raised up on one side, and *had* three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. And they said thus to it: 'Arise, devour much flesh!' 6 "After this I looked, and there was another, like a leopard, which had on its back four wings of a bird. The beast also had four heads, and dominion was given to it. 7 "After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, exceedingly strong. It had huge iron teeth; it was devouring, breaking in pieces, and trampling the residue with its feet. It *was* different from all the beasts that *were* before it, and it had ten horns. 8 "I was considering the horns, and there was another horn, a little one, coming up among them, before whom three of the first horns

were plucked out by the roots. And there, in this horn, *were* eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking pompous words.

In the Book of Revelation, the Beast is described thus:

13:1 Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name. 2 Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like *the feet of* a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority. 3 And *I saw* one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marveled and followed the beast. 4 So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who *is* like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?" 5 And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months. 6 Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. 7 It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation. 8 All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

Man's Responsibility in Dominion over the Animals...

- Man is to care for the animals and use them responsibly. We should remember two important truths about the animals:
 1. Domesticated animals were part of the covenantal blessings given to Abraham and his seed (Gen. 13:2).
 2. Animals are part of the creation described by the Apostle Paul in Romans 8 as "groaning in birth pains" for the sons of God to be revealed! They have a natural instinct according to Scripture of being reconciled to their King- - man. Right now, because of the fall, some ferocious beasts prey upon man their prince as some men prey upon God their Creator. Some beasts flee from man when he sets foot in the forest. In fact, it is interesting to note the *scurrying sound* one hears when he enters the forest world. Birds will continue chirping because of their prominent and safe haven in the trees, but the little animals and deer will run, rather than come to man their prince!
- God made a covenant with Noah *and* creation in Genesis 9. It is important to remember that God loves his creation, including the animals. In fact, the fourth commandment gives rest to our *cattle*, or our domesticated animals! Animals are to be placed under man's dominion, but they are important as creatures of God. As Christians, we want to preserve the life of animals to the best of our abilities. But we are not to make idols out of this noble task.

God was interested in preserving the animals - -so should we! In Genesis 7 we read:

17 "And behold, I Myself am bringing floodwaters on the earth, to destroy from under heaven all flesh in which *is* the breath of life; everything that *is* on the earth shall die. 18 "But I will establish My covenant with you; and you shall go into the ark -- you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you. 19 "And of every living thing of all flesh you shall bring two of every *sort* into the ark, to keep *them* alive with you; they shall be male and female. 20 "Of the birds after their kind, of animals after their kind, and of every creeping thing of the earth after its kind, two of every *kind* will come to you to keep *them* alive. 21 "And you shall take for yourself of all food that is eaten, and you shall gather *it* to yourself; and it shall be food for you and for them." 22 Thus Noah did; according to all that God commanded him, so he did.

- Noah was to save the animals. He was to *bring* and *gather* animals from doves and eagles of the air, to the llamas, elephants, and oxen of the land, to the arachnids and ants creeping on the ground! (and this was many years before Aristotle's supposed discovery of *zoology* as a science!).

Although God preserved and cared for the animals (they were part of his creation to glorify him), God never wanted man to worship them. This became a perversion...

- Ancient people worshipped the animal kingdom. As the Apostle Paul says, they worshipped the creature rather than the Creator who is forever praised! Egypt had Ra who was half man, half falcon, etc. The crocodile was an inhabitant of the Nile River and Egypt worshipped this beast. Think of what Paul says in Romans 1: "...professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man -- and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things."
- **Illustration:** Today, the roles have been reversed. Man in some ways serves the animal kingdom. We are fascinated by the animal kingdom. Think of all of the animal channels on cable if you have happened to "channel-surf" lately. The *Disney* corporation has never been a fool and they know how to communicate humanist truths through the mouths of animals when they want to get a point across! We were all probably raised on such animal "friends" as *Sylvester and Tweety*, *Bugs*, *Heckle and Jeckle*, *Tom and Jerry*, and some might even remember good 'ol *Slippin' the Crow!*? Disney picked up on this a long time ago and used the *sweetness and innocence* of animals to evangelise the masses with humanism, pluralism, relativism and New Age Theology! Think about the tremendous success of *The Lion King!* Statistically, some 82% of American households own a copy of this wonderful movie. It is *Star Wars*, or the New Age taught by lions (and it is politically correct because it comes from Africa). But let me make two points concerning this:

1. On the one hand, man because he is made in God's image desires to *protect and preserve* the animals. This is good! They are sweet and we do naturally long to have full dominion over them again once the creation has been fully renewed.
 2. On the other hand, because of the Fall of man, man who is made *a little lower than the angels*, has become *a little lower than the animals*. In the Fall, man as Prince became in many ways subjected to his animal subject (again, subtle of the devil!). Man at best today makes himself *a little similar to the animals*, at worst, *a little lower than them*.
- But seriously folks, has there ever been a time when *Pet Superstores* could have opened across the country and successfully stayed in business? In fact, they seem to be multiplying, one after another, after their kind! People today have bought into the old saying that now appears on some bumper stickers around the country: "The more I get to know other people, the more I love my dog."
 - Our humanistic and secular culture wants to save the manatee at whatever cost (as they should naturally desire this)! But saving the manatee, while we abort humanity; saving the baby whales, while killing the baby humans, is not the Biblical way – it is another perversion of the Fall!
 - We are to be responsible for taking care of the animals, but they are for our good. We can eat them and even enjoy the sport of hunting them. Today, we have animals rights people who are giving more importance to our dogs and pets than they are human beings and their rights. PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals), an organization of concerned humans says this in their statement of purpose:

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), with more than seven hundred thousand members, is the largest animal rights organization in the world. Founded in 1980, PETA is dedicated to establishing and protecting the rights of all animals. PETA operates under the simple principle that animals are not ours to eat, wear, experiment on, or use for entertainment.

PETA focuses its attention on the four areas in which the largest numbers of animals suffer the most intensely for the longest periods of time: on factory farms, in laboratories, in the fur trade, and in the entertainment industry. We also work on a variety of other issues, including the cruel killing of beavers, birds and other "pests," and the abuse of backyard dogs.
 - I appreciate some of the good PETA is doing, primarily concerning our stewardship of the animals. However, when man's life and livelihood is subjected to the needs of the animals, animal rights advocates have created

an idol! Think about some of their concerns: Man is to avoid fur that was given to clothe and warm man. In fact, God himself killed an animal to clothe his people after the Fall as a sign that pointed forward to his ultimate redemption in Christ! Milk is to be avoided because the cow is having to labor too much, when milk in Scripture is part of the eschatological and covenantal blessings of God Almighty upon his people. What I ask you to imagine is this: If some of the pet-rights advocates were alive at the time of the flood, they would apparently have built an ark just for the animals and forgotten about the preservation of man himself!! It's a mad, mad, mad, mad, mad world, indeed!

- Remember, people of God is was God himself that taught the Israelites what was good and evil, what was dedicated to himself, or holy, and what was unholy. What was clean or unclean, God after the Fall used the animal kingdom to communicate his grace and mercy to the Israelites to teach them that they were the holy people of God. It was also God himself that commanded Israel to sacrifice animals to him in order to show forth in types their daily need for the forgiveness of their sins, their need for a substitute, their need for the shedding of blood in order to preserve their lives as God's covenantal people. It was the great numbers of sacrificed animals that showed forth God's grace and pointed forward to the once and for all sacrifice of the *Lamb that would take away the sins of the world!* With tongue in cheek, the animals rights idolaters need to remember that it was the vegetarian Cain that first radically slaughtered the meat-eater Abel, and the one that brought an animal in obedience to sacrifice to his God!

What does this mean for the people of God today?

- Because of the Fall, Our Great Creator enfleshed himself in order to lay down his life as a sacrifice for our sins. Our Lord Jesus in his life, death, resurrection, and ascension sent for his Spirit so that we as his people would be recreated in the image of God. This made it possible for the restoration of all creation when man will once again submit willingly to his gracious Creator, and have perfect and continuous dominion over the animals who are the subjects of his Kingdom!
- Meanwhile, our Lord Jesus has told us that if God cares for the sparrow, how much more does he care for us! If our God reveals his concern for the preservation of the animal Kingdom shown by their riding high above the waters of the flood in Noah's Ark, how much more does he love and care for his people!
- He has redeemed his people from the flood of his wrath! His only and dear Son took the cup of wrath that we deserved for our guilt, sins and transgressions against God's Holy Commandments! Jesus, our Lord, suffered the anguish, pain and wrath of God due us for our sins! He has imputed Christ's righteousness to us and watches over us!

- In Christ, God is still proclaiming to all those who would believe:
I am the God who relieves your fears of the unknown – I have created all there is and I rule over it so that no harm will befall except that which I have ordained to make you more like Christ. I am the God who cares for you. If I care for the animal kingdom, if I care for the small and insignificant sparrow, how much more do I care and provide for you - -O you of little faith!

May we sing with the saints in heaven: "You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created."