May the God of the Bible keep you in peace.

*Finally, brethren, pray for us that the word of the Lord will spread rapidly and be glorified, just as it did also with you.*

 2 Thessalonians 3:1

The Holy Spirit worked among the people of Thessalonica and many were brought to faith in Jesus through the preaching of Paul. Paul recognized that truly turning to Christ was the work of the Lord and that he was merely the messenger that God was using.

Paul knew that the prayer was necessary because that is the way God has ordained to cause things to happen. It was important for Paul and his team to have prayers offered for their success, not for their own glory, but to bring glory to God through building His Kingdom.

It is the same today. All those who evangelize and preach the word of God need prayer. It is prayer that prepares hearts for the Gospel message; that opens doors for the Gospel to be received; and gives strength to the workers to do God’s will.

Pray for these workers in God’s field; not for their glory, but for God’s.

In Christ’s love

John

 11-28-21

Genesis 1:9-13

The God of the Bible continues His creative work on the third day with another separation. He has created light and separated the light from the darkness. Next, He separated the water from the water. He left some of the water on the earth and some He placed above the earth. He stores the water above for rain and snow to refresh the earth and give life. He also stores it as rain and hail to bring His judgement upon those who refuse His Son. Jesus tells us that one day, He will separate the sheep from the goats; those who live for Christ from those who don’t.

This day in creation God separates the water on the earth from the land; He causes dry land to appear. Once again, God asserts His authority over what He has created by naming it: He calls them earth and seas. He has already created “the” earth; this planet we call earth. But now He is referring to the dirt and we still sometimes today call the dirt in our gardens “earth”.

The name “sea” encompasses all the water still on the earth, whether it is large bodies of water or the rivers and streams or the water contained under the earth. God has placed the water where He wants it for the benefit of the life He will create in the next days.

We need to stop and consider the power of water and how this passage demonstrates the power of Almighty God. Consider how ineffectual our efforts are to keep the sea within the bounds we have determined. Think of the destruction floods cause when rivers overrun their banks; and these floods come even with the flood control measures we have installed.

Yet God simply spoke and the chaotic waters obeyed; and they continue to obey whether currently engaged in their work of sustaining life on the earth or waiting in the storehouses for the day of war. The Bible repeatedly speaks, in awe and reverence, of what God has done with the water. Psalm 33:7

*He gathers the waters of the sea together as a heap; He lays up the deeps in storehouses.* And the next verse gives what should be an obvious directive: *Let all the earth fear the Lord; Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him.*

In gathering the waters in a heap, we think of Him putting the water where He wants it on the planet earth so that the dry land can appear. We are also reminded of the parting of the Red Sea where the waters were piled up in a heap on either side of the newly appeared dry land for Israel to walk on to safety. And how this same water returned to its place in judgement upon Egypt. Three times the Jordan River was piled up resulting in the appearance of dry land; for the safe passage of Israel or God’s prophets.

The books of Ezekiel and Revelation both tell us of tremendous amounts of water stored up for the days of judgement and war. God holds these waters in reserve for a time He knows is coming. These chaotic and mighty waters sit quietly in obedience to God, waiting for the time to come when God will unleash their chaos on disobedient men.

With a God this powerful, we must be in awe of Him. We must fear Him. The day will come when all mankind will stand before Him in awe and bend their knee to Jesus Christ their King; and they will fear Him because they know their eternal destiny is in His hands. And yet, how much more awe inspiring is God who has given us a chance to stand before Him in peace through Jesus Christ as Saviour, so that we might joyfully bend our knee in worship.

Good and faithful Job, who was righteous before God, nonetheless asked for an audience with the Almighty so that He might explain Himself; that God might answer for the evil that had been done to Job. Job got his audience and God asked him many questions including “*Or who enclosed the sea with doors; When, bursting forth, it went out from the womb; When I made a cloud its garment; And thick darkness its swaddling band; And I placed boundaries on it; And set a bolt and doors; And I said, ‘Thus far you shall come, but no farther; And here shall your proud waves stop’?*” (Job 38:8-11)

Job got the answer that we all need to remember. God is sovereign and He has absolute right of control over His creation. Nor does He have to answer for what He does. If the ocean must obey God, then we have no room to question God or demand an explanation for what He allows in our lives.

Now because of the work of Jesus Christ, we are able to come before the throne of God and plead for relief from our trials and ask for a change in our situation. We are welcome to ask for strength and courage and wisdom in all we endure. But then it is up to us to praise God knowing that in His wisdom He has allowed whatever we are dealing with; and it will bring Him glory and will be to our ultimate benefit.

Because the water can be so destructive and uncontrollable, it is a good thing for us to dwell on when considering God; it will help us grasp why we should be in deep reverence to Him. God speaks to this in Jeremiah 5:22, *“‘Do you not fear Me?’ declares the Lord. ‘Do you not tremble in My presence? For I have placed the sand as a boundary for the sea; An eternal decree, so it cannot cross over it. Though the waves toss, yet they cannot prevail; Though they roar, yet they cannot cross over it.*” And the verse right before tells us who God is speaking to: *foolish and senseless people; Who have eyes but do not see; Who have ears but do not hear.*

Don’t be among the people God is speaking to here. When we receive Jesus, our eyes are opened; our ears are opened; we are given wisdom and sense through the Holy Spirit. But we need to allow these gifts to be developed; we must not resist the Holy Spirit. The world still entices us and tries to hold our attention; it tries show us what to see and tell us what to hear. But we must contemplate God. The more we know our God, the more we understand that this world holds no comparison with Him. He becomes our delight so we want to gaze on Him and hear His word.

It is also worth considering the symbolism water is given in the Bible. Sometimes the water represents tribulations in our lives. In Psalm 42:7, the sons of Korah lament, “*Deep calls to deep at the sound of Your waterfalls; All Your breakers and Your waves have rolled over me*.” And in Psalm 69, David tells God of his troubles. *I have sunk in deep mire, and there is no foothold; I have come into deep waters, and a flood overflows me*. And he prays to God for relief, “*Deliver me from the mire and do not let me sink; May I be delivered from my foes and from the deep waters. May the flood of water not overflow me; Nor the deep swallow me up; Nor the pit shut its mouth on me*.”

We see here what we spoke of earlier with Job: These people are telling God about their problems; even recognizing that God is allowing them. But then God is the One they turn to for help. They aren’t questioning His motives or proclaiming their own righteousness, but they are communing with God and asking for His help. This is praise; asking God for help knowing that He is the only one who can help.

God is our very present help in time of trouble. We must not neglect turning to Him, regardless of what our problem is or what has brought it about. Turning to Him is the only wise response to deep waters. Just as He ultimately controls the chaotic waters, God is in control of the chaos that erupts in our lives.

In the book of Revelation, we see humanity referred to as “waters”. In Revelation 13 we are told of a beast that comes out of the sea. This beast is the antichrist that will be made known during the seven-year tribulation immediately before the return of Christ. The beast won’t crawl up out of the Mediterranean; it will be a man who comes from the nations of the earth.

In chapter 17 we are introduced to a great harlot who “*sits on many waters*”. The harlot is mystery Babylon and an angel tells us that the waters “*are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues*”. What a fitting metaphor for humanity in this fallen world. We are chaos, no matter what part of the world we are in. Psalm 2 speaks of the nations in an uproar or a rage; just like the sea. We are a destructive force. And when God lovingly sets limits for us, we roar and fight against them.

In spite of all these things, when God gave the water its place and brought forth the dry land, He saw that it was good. And He will once again restore all things to good through Jesus Christ.

Once God called forth the dry land, He continued His creative acts on the third day by bringing forth vegetation. Here we see something a little different: Up to this point, God has created out of nothing and arraigned what He has created. Now, He uses what He has already created to create something new.

The earth is allowed to bring forth plants; God has given the earth the ability to cause these first plants to come into being. When God made the land, He put into it all kinds of nutrients that the plants would need and the plants have the ability to draw nutrients and water from the earth. As God creates, He is providing beforehand all that will be needed later.

This is one of the areas where some will say that the growth of the plants took a very long time. Even while saying God got things started, the plants developed over eons. This is trying to make the Bible fit evolutionary theory.

However, all the wording of the text means that when God said “*Let the earth sprout vegetation*”, it took place immediately. There was no delay of eons or even years; it was all done that day. To allow for a long period of time for these plants to grow forces the Bible to say something it does not. Once again, trying to merge the Bible with evolution does not work.

Science is good; God has worked through scientific means to bring about very good things in our lives. Things are complicated so that we have things to do and the Bible doesn’t tell us every little thing about how stuff works. But the science can’t go directly against what the Bible tells us. If it does, it is in error.

Notice that these plants grew before the sun was created. Vegetation needs the sun now and God created them that way; but these first came at God’s command. Also consider the story of Jonah: after he prophesied at Nineveh, he sat outside the city to see what would happen and it was very hot. God caused a large plant to grow which gave him shade. In the same way God caused the plant to grow quickly over Jonah, He caused the plants to spring quickly out of the newly formed land.

God did something special with the plants He hadn’t done with what He had created so far: the plants yielded seed after their own kind. God gave the plants the ability to reproduce. How miraculous this is: a plant actually creates a seed, that falls into the earth, and from that comes another plant like the first one. This is something more to think about that should give us more reason to be in awe of God.

One more important thing about the plants: each plant produced seed according to their own kind. Each seed grew the same type of plant. Seeds from apple trees didn’t grow plums or cucumbers; seeds of wheat didn’t grow cabbage or oak trees or even barley. Each grew the same type of plant.

Evolution states that things changed over time. Plants would have developed seed that grew something different. If all life started from some single cells, then evolution means that all the different plants came from the same original. This is in direct contradiction to the Bible. God is orderly. He has each plant reproducing its own kind.

How comforting for us to know that God has set each thing up as He desires. He is not a God of chaos and disorder; in fact, He brings order to disorder as He did throughout creation. And one day, He will bring all the chaos caused by sin into order under Christ.

Prayer

Thank You Lord God, because You are not a God of disorder. The world we live in now is in confusion, but that is because it is in rebellion against You. We look forward to that day You bring all things into unity in Jesus.

How blessed we are, Lord, that You control the problems and trials in our lives just as You control the unruly ocean. A simple word from You and the seas obey; our difficulties must equally follow Your commands.

We are grateful that You have plans to prosper us and not to harm us. We understand that prosperity is mainly in eternity with You. But we also understand that You will care for us in this world. Creator God, we humbly bow before You and seek Your grace.

In Jesus’ name we pray

Amen