

97-08-31b

We're back now from our break, and we're going to pick up where we left off in Genesis chapter 1 in the creation account. We have seen the activities of God in the first three days. Last week we covered day four where the luminaries are created.

We noted with interest that the names such as Shemesh for the sun in Hebrew are not used here. There can be a variety of reasons for this. I personally think, as we noted, that because of the existence of the waters above, that these luminaries were not clearly visible.

Their light shone, but as far as being able to see the sun as a distinct orb in the sky or the moon, would have been unlikely with this canopy. Another reason for this, we've noted from the beginning, that the creation account flies in the face of the conventional wisdom of the day in the ancient Near East. The Mediterranean thinking of how the universe came to be, they had deified the sun and they had deified the moon.

To not even use their names and show that they were luminaries that were created by God here is a strong contradiction, a strong antidote to the cultural beliefs that existed in those days. God creates these lights. They're not deities.

God is not the sun. God is not the moon. They're clearly works of his hands and they're not even necessary to provide light.

God delegates authority and responsibility for the days and for the giving of light to these created entities. God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth. That word firmament is the same firmament that is created and exists between the divided waters back in verse 7. There are waters above the firmament and so when these lights shine in the firmament, you get the idea that they are shining either in or beneath the waters above.

This is another one of the reasons why I think the account here is clearly indicating to us that there is a difference in the pre-flood, in the original creation that came from God's hand. There are lights. They are in the firmament which exists between the waters above and the waters below.

So the evening and the morning were day four. On the fifth day, beginning in verse 20, God said, Let the waters abound with an abundance of living creatures. Let birds fly above the earth across the face of the firmament of the heavens.

God created great sea creatures. Now this is fascinating. In verse 21, God created great sea creatures.

These are a tannin. A tannin is a big creature. These are mentioned in scripture rarely, but when they do occur, they are always in fascinating passages.

The tannin, T-A-N-N-I-N, and in the plural you can put I-M on there. Tannin, the great sea creatures. Turn if you will over to Psalm 74.

Psalm 74. This is one of the few other places in the Old Testament where this word occurs. Tannin.

Psalm 74. This is a psalm that deals with desolation. You can see in the very beginning, this is a psalm of Asaph.

Oh God, why have you cast us off forever? Why does your anger smoke against the sheep of your pasture? Remember your congregation which you have purchased of old. The tribe of your inheritance which you have redeemed. This Mount Zion where you have dwelt.

Lift up your feet to the perpetual desolations. The enemy has damaged everything in the sanctuary. Your enemies roar in the midst of your meeting place.

They set up their banners for signs. They seem like men who lift up axes among the thick trees. And now they break down its carved work all at once with axes and hammers.

They have set fire to your sanctuary. They have defiled the dwelling place of your name to the ground. They said in their hearts, let us destroy them all together.

They have burned up all the meeting places of God in the land. We do not see our signs. There is no longer any prophet.

Nor is there any among us who knows how long. Oh God, how long will the adversary reproach? Will the enemy blaspheme your name forever? Why do you withdraw your hand, even your right hand? Take it out of your bosom and destroy them. For God is my king of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth.

You divided the sea by your strength. You broke the heads of the sea serpents in the waters. And that word, sea serpents, is tiny name.

You broke the heads of Leviathan in pieces and gave him as food to the people inhabiting the wilderness. You broke open the fountain and the flood. You dried up mighty rivers.

The day is yours. The night also is yours. You have prepared the light and the sun.

You have set all the borders of the earth. You have made summer and winter. Remember this, that the enemy has reproached, oh Lord, and that a foolish people has blasphemed your name.

Oh, do not deliver the life of your turtle dove to the wild beast. Do not forget the life of

your poor forever. Have respect to the covenant, for the dark places of the earth are full of the haunts of cruelty.

Oh, do not let the oppressed return ashamed. Let the poor and needy praise your name. So, the psalmist here, Asaph, is appealing back to the account that we're studying.

Back to the days when God divided the waters. Back when God divided the sea and caused the dry land to appear. And God's authority over.

He is the creator of these things. He is the creator of the tiny name, the great sea creatures. And he has broken their heads.

And so these creative acts that we're studying are something that can be a source of application. It's something to remember. God is powerful.

God created all of this that we see. He has authority over it. He controls it.

And in a time of distress and a time of oppression, that's a good thing to remember. As Mike pointed out during the break, Jesus Christ controls history. God is in control of all of these things.

And it's nowhere more clear than in the place where we have the record of God's creation of these. So, we see the tiny name there in Psalm 74, verses 13 and 14. We have it also in Isaiah chapter 27, verse 1. In that day the Lord with his severe sword, great and strong, will punish Leviathan, the fleeing serpent.

Leviathan, that twisted serpent. And he will slay the reptile that is in the sea. And that word reptile in the New King James is Tanim.

And of course, in that day, this is the apocalyptic prophecy. This is in the end time. And what we see is that in the Old Testament, particularly in poetic passages, these great sea creatures, the Tanimim, Leviathan and Behemoth, are used as personifications or representations of the forces of evil.

Now, why is that? Well, this is one of the threads that we see running through the creation account and throughout the Old Testament. Again, especially in poetic passages. And we're going to see it especially when we come to the role that man is assigned by God in creation.

And I'll save the discussion for that. But suffice it now, remember that these great sea creatures, why is it that God breaks their heads? Why is it that God crushes Rahab? As we'll see in our next passage. Turn a few pages over to Isaiah 51.9. Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord.

Awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Are you not the arm that cut Rahab apart and wounded the serpent? That's Tanim. Are you not the one who dried up

the sea, the waters of the great deep, that made the depths of the sea a road for the redeemed to cross over? Reference to the Red Sea episode there.

So the ransom of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with singing, with everlasting joy on their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness. Sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

So the defeat and the putting in its place of evil and of darkness and of chaos, everything that is antithetical to joy and blessedness and redemption is pictured by the crushing of these great sea serpents or the dragon that dwells in the sea, the great sea creature. And so these become a metaphor for Satan, for the forces of darkness in general, those things which are unruly, rebellious, disobedient, and the things that seek to draw us in with them into darkness, into chaos. And, of course, we'll be studying shortly the role of the serpent in the garden.

That's a different word. But Satan, of course, is referred to as that old serpent, the devil. And so we see that the things which are antithetical to God can be personified by a creature name.

Snakes are not inherently evil or more evil than any other creature, but Satan is called the serpent. And in the same way, the forces of darkness in general, with Satan at their head, are referred to by these great sea creatures. And so it is something to remember that God created the great sea creatures, the Tani-nim, and everything that moves with which the waters abound, according to their kind.

And God is in control of them for that reason. Now, we have other references to the Tani-nim. You might take a look at Exodus 7. They're mentioned three times here in verses 9, 10, and 12.

In Exodus 7-9, when Pharaoh speaks to you, this, of course, is God speaking to Moses and Aaron, when Pharaoh speaks to you saying, Show a miracle for yourselves, then you shall say to Aaron, Take your rod and cast it before Pharaoh, and let it become a serpent. And this is not the normal word for serpent. This is Tani-nim.

And there's some conjecture that this may be a reference not to a snake so much as a crocodile. The Nile had crocodiles dwelling in it. I think it still does.

So this is the same word that's used in Genesis 1-21 as a great sea creature. And again in verse 10, Moses and Aaron went into Pharaoh, and they did so, just as the Lord commanded. Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh and before his servants, and it became a Tani-nim.

It became a sea creature. But Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers, so the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments. Every man threw down his rod, and they became Tani-nim.

But Aaron's rods swallowed up their rods. And isn't it interesting that the magicians of Pharaoh, who we know are pagans and not believers in the God of Israel, are able to invoke the power of the sea creature, able to turn their rods into these sea creatures. There's an association there and a limited form of power that goes with Satan and the forces of darkness.

We know that the demons do have power in this earth. There are of demons who can control the speech. And there are whatever you want to call them.

Poltergeists is the common term that's used for demons who can move things around in this earth. You read these stories about teacups flying across the room and smashing against the wall and so forth. There are demons who have power in this world to make an impact.

And so there is a sort of power associated here. And whatever the mechanism was, the Egyptian magicians are able to invoke these sea creatures. But scripture is clear that God has dominion over them.

Aaron's rod devours their rods. God breaks the heads of the Tani-nim. So we have that word used here.

You see it also in Deuteronomy 32, 33. This is another poetic section of scripture. This is Moses singing the words of the Song of Moses.

You could spend hours and hours going through the Song of Moses. It is a very rich poetic expression of theology and of truth in many categories. But you find here, starting in verse 28, They are a nation void of counsel, nor is there understanding in them.

O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider the latter end! How could one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight, unless their rock had sold them, and the Lord had surrendered them? For their rock is not like our rock, even our enemies themselves being judges. For their vine is of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah. Their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter.

Their wine is the poison of serpents, and the cruel venom of cobras. And that word serpents in verse 33 is Tani-nim. Psalm 91.

I'm basically giving you all of the passages where the Tani-nim or Tani-nim occur. Psalm 91, verse 13. The psalmist here says in verse 9, I am saying because you have made the Lord, who is my refuge, even the most high, your dwelling place, no evil shall befall you, nor shall any plague come near your dwelling.

For he shall give his angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways. In their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone. You shall tread upon the lion and the cobra, the young lion and the serpent you shall trample underfoot.

And of course the serpent there is the Tani-nim. Isn't it interesting that the New Testament referenced this passage. Satan himself quotes this verse.

I'm sure it's one that is uppermost in his mind because it predicts his ultimate defeat. But he quotes the first part of this. He doesn't quote the last part, does he? When he has Jesus up there and he says, Go ahead and leap off the pinnacle of the temple here.

Has not God said he will give his angels charge over you? They will bear you up lest you dash your foot against a stone. Can't you apply that passage and go ahead and jump off the pinnacle here? But Jesus remembers the second part of that verse as well. You will tread upon the Tani-nim, the evil one personified here by the great sea creature.

Finally, you see this in Ezekiel 29.3 and also in 32.2. But in Ezekiel 29.3, Speak and say, Thus says the Lord God, Behold, I am against you, O Pharaoh, king of Egypt, O great monster who lies in the midst of his rivers, Who has said, My river is my own, I have made it for myself. Well, the word monster here in the New King James is Tani-nim. And this harks back to the Moses and Aaron episode.

Pharaoh is personified as this creature that the rod turned into. And in 32.2, just a page over from 2, Son of man, take up a lamentation for Pharaoh, king of Egypt, And say to him, You are like a young lion among the nations, And you are like a monster in the seas. Bursting forth in your rivers, troubling the waters with your feet, And fouling their rivers.

You get the idea that this is a big creature. Something along the lines of a giant crocodile or even a dinosaur. One of these aquatic dinosaurs that the waters are stirred up and muddied by its passage.

But this is something that God created. And so back in Genesis 1.21, By virtue of being its creator, the implication is that it is subject to God. It is a creation from the hand of God.

It's not something that can overcome God. It's not a Frankenstein story where you're ultimately overcome by your creation. God is clearly powerful and controls and breaks the head of these creatures when the time comes.

So God created these sea creatures. And every living thing that moves with which the waters abound according to their kind. And every winged bird according to its kind.

And God saw that it was good. Now we are here in the fifth day. We saw where the fourth day corresponds to the first day.

God creates light and God creates the firmament. And so on the fourth day, that corresponds to the first day. Day one and day four correspond.

The sources of light that will dictate the signs and the seasons and the days and the

years are created on day four. Well, day five is going to correspond to day two. What did God do on day two? God gathered the waters above and the waters below.

He divided them and created the firmament. So he creates the water and the sky. And now the inhabitants of those two environments are created on the fifth day.

You have the waters below inhabited by the sea creatures and by the living things that move with which the waters abound according to their kind. And in the firmament, in the sky, you have every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

And God blessed them saying, be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas and let birds multiply on the earth. So the evening and morning were the fifth day. Notice here that this is the first case of direct discourse.

God has said, let there be this and let there be that and it was so. This is the first place in scripture where God speaks to something. God blesses them in verse 22 and he says, you be fruitful, you multiply.

God addresses the creatures, the living things, directly. He doesn't say let them abound, let them multiply. He gives them a command.

And this is an indication that the animals are different by being a living thing. And when something is alive, God speaks to it directly. He doesn't give a command to the inanimate objects.

But he commands the animate. He commands the living things. He commands the nefesh.

And that, by the way, is the word in verse 21, every living thing. They are a living nefesh. And that's important when we get to the creation of man.

And it says man became a living thing. It's the same word. So we don't want to import more into that in the second case than we do here.

God says, be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters and the seas. And what God does is perpetuate the creative act. God creates this first generation of birds and water-dwelling creatures.

And he doesn't create anymore. They self-perpetuate. There is a creative act that takes place every time they reproduce.

And God sets this in motion and then leaves it to run. And this is an interesting concept and an important concept because when we think about Jesus Christ, who holds all things together by the word of his power, and Jesus Christ as the Son, the second person of the Trinity, is involved in this creation, and we have the notion, you may have heard in times past, that when Jesus came to earth as a babe in Bethlehem, the idea that the

babe in the manger was at the same time holding the entire universe together and consciously directing all of its activities and so forth. The word of God, once it is spoken, affects that which God intends it to affect.

And you have the idea that once God issues the command, God doesn't have to continually monitor that command. He speaks it and that happens from now on. God tells the first generation of birds and sea creatures, be fruitful, multiply, fill the waters and fill the skies.

And then God can, as it were, turn his attention to other things and that spoken command is going to affect God's purpose. And in the same way, when Jesus Christ holds all things together by the word of his power, Jesus Christ speaks into existence and into organization, the constellations and the solar systems and the way things are. And that word is binding.

It has its own power to maintain and continue to affect God's purpose. And that's important because we are not encouraged to view God as actively monitoring and supervising everything and constantly making sure that it takes place. God gives a command and that command does the job.

When God speaks a word, something happens and it stays happened. It's like a perfect tense, an action that's completed in past time with results that go on and come up through the present and into the future. And the wonderful thing is that God has spoken a word about us.

When we are saved, God speaks a word and it transforms us, it enters us. He transfers us out of the kingdom of darkness and into the kingdom of the son of his love. We've been transferred out of darkness and into light.

That's a word that's spoken by God and that word is binding. It affects something that continues forward. And we get an idea of the power of the word of God.

When God speaks something, it has inherent power. It has a power and a life of its own. And it is in a way synonymous with God, which is why Jesus Christ is the word.

The word was with God and the word was God. Because it has the power of God inherent in it. God speaks these creatures into existence and he speaks into existence their reproduction.

And they've been reproducing ever since. And they don't deviate. He says, I want you to reproduce after your kind.

And so they don't evolve into some other form of life. The aquatic creatures did not evolve into land creatures. God said, you reproduce after your kind.

And that's a binding word of God. And they don't crawl up on the ground and become something different. They stay what God designed them to be.

That word that he spoke so many years ago is still. There are fish being born this very instant. There are birds hatching.

And it's because God spoke this word. And that word has inherent power. It's a reminder to us that when the word of God enters our soul, that power comes with it.

It is the essence of God's power. It's inherent in his word. It is living and powerful.

And it has a divine energy in it that's different than anything else. You may remember my little excursus on the notion that all truth is God's truth. It's emblazoned on the banner of Christian education.

All truth is God's truth. And so when you're teaching mathematics and when you're teaching biology and so forth, all truth is God's truth. That is not so.

This truth is unique. This is the truth of God. Now, God has spoken things into existence, and you can analyze the result.

We can see cause and effect. We see the laws of physics and the laws of mathematics and so forth. But that's not the word of God.

That's not the truth of God that's contained in the pages of Scripture. That's not Jesus Christ incarnate. He is not the incarnation of the laws of geometry or the laws of physics or astronomical observations.

The truth of God is that which defines the relationship between man and God and defines the purpose of man in God's plan. And it is unique, and it has inherent divine power. It has power that changes things, that makes things happen.

The axiom that if A plus B equals C, then C minus B equals A, that's a wonderful principle of mathematics, but that doesn't carry with it inherent divine power. Mathematicians are not better equipped for life and are not more pleasing to God because they know all of the truths of mathematics. So don't be taken in by the false notion that all truth is God's truth and that learning any kind of truth somehow draws us closer to God.

The word of God is unique and special and carries divine power. We want to remember that. So the evening and morning were the fifth day.

Then in verse 24, God said, Notice he doesn't speak to the earth and say, bring forth. He only speaks to nephesh, he only speaks to living things. And cattle and creeping thing and beast of the earth, each according to its kind.

And it was so. And God made the beast of the earth according to his kind, cattle

according to its kind, and everything that creeps on the earth according to his kind. And God saw that it was good.

Then God said, Let us make man in our image according to our likeness. Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. So God created man in his own image.

In the image of God created he him, male and female. He created them. This is a fascinating day.

Day number six. First of all, God says, Let the earth bring forth the living creature according to its kind, cattle and creeping thing. That's an interesting way to put it.

It doesn't say God created them. But he has had the waters abound with living creatures. In verse 20, he doesn't necessarily say that the waters should bring them forth.

It says that God created the great sea creatures. But here he says, Let the earth bring forth the living creature. And we get the idea that land animals are somehow formed out of the dust of the ground the way that man is.

It's implied in the earth bringing them forth. So God makes them and assigns them categories and roles. He does not tell them here to be fruitful and multiply.

Yet, they are included in the general command in verse 28, which includes both these animals and man. God blesses them. God says to them, Let them be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, and subdue it.

Have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth. So, there is a difference here between animals on land versus the ones that are in the sky and in the sea. There's a difference.

The way that they come into being is different. God creates the birds and the fish, the sea creatures. But God has the earth bring forth the land animals.

And with that, we assume the insects and the reptiles and all of your other categories of land-dwelling life. So, we see there's a distinction. Sea and sky are somehow different than the earth.

And this is important. We're going to see why this is. But God creates the things that dwell on the earth according to their kind.

But He doesn't speak to them the way that He speaks to the sky and sea-dwelling creatures. He doesn't tell them, You be fruitful and multiply and reproduce according to your kind and so forth like He does in verse 22. Instead, in verse 26, He creates man.

God says, Let us make man in our image according to our likeness. Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. So, God created man in His own image.

This is what we're going to study next time. I'm not going to even attempt to cover two of the things that we see in this passage. One of them is God saying, Let us make man in our image, using the plural, where we have had singular verbs for God all this time.

We're also going to look at, next time, what does it mean to be image and likeness of God. What I want to note here, in connection with creation, is the relationship of the creatures, the relationship of living things and man. Let me ask you this.

How much dominion do you feel over birds and fish? The only way we can get dominion over them is to trap them. We've got a little aquarium over here. We've got a few fish, and we pretty much control those fish, where they go, and when they eat, and that kind of thing.

You can put a bird in a cage. There's a little parakeet in my grandmother's room, in a cage, and you can exercise dominion. You tell it where it can only move about in that limited space.

You give it its food and water. But in creation at large, there's much of it that man has dominion over only by title. We don't really control the birds and where they fly.

There's just no mechanism for it. You can't build a fence and fence in the birds. You can't build a pen or a corral and fence in the fish.

We can fence them out. We have beaches where we fence them out. But in the great sea and in the sky, God has assigned us dominion over that, but we recognize that we have very little ability to exercise that dominion.

We have the title of authority over the fish and over the birds, but we don't have much of a means of exercising that authority. It's very limited. And that is significant.

Because when God says, let us make man in our image according to our likeness, let him have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air, we've already seen this morning God's dominion over everything that he has created. He creates it and he has dominion over it. He can break the heads of the sea serpents.

He is in control. He establishes his throne upon the seas. But the seas are a place of chaos.

The sea covers the depths of Sheol. The gates of Sheol are thought to be at the bottom of the sea. You can read Jonah, and he talks about this when he recounts his experience

inside the great fish, that he was carried down, the seaweed wrapped around his head, and he was carried down to the depths, to the gates of Sheol.

And it is a place where there is no control, where there is chaos, and that's where the beast and Leviathan and the sea serpent dwells. It's chaotic. It's uncontrollable.

We've been given dominion over it, but we can't really exercise that dominion very well. Well, we're in the image of God, and God has dominion over everything, and yet there seem to be chaotic forces at work in our world. What about the Holocaust? What about evil? What about these people who seem to run amok and don't seem to be under the control of God? What about the forces of darkness themselves? Satan and his demons seem to run free and to work their will.

Satan is called the God of this world, and God has dominion over those forces of darkness by virtue of being their creator and entitled, and yet God, in some ways, seems to not control them. And there is a parallel. God makes that parallel when he says that we are created in his image and after his likeness, and it is to give us some idea.

When we look at the birds and look at the fish and see them running loose, they don't enter into our plans. We don't accomplish a meaningful goal with these things that don't submit to our dominion. If the creatures of the earth are not submissive to us, like cattle and the other land creatures are, then we can't incorporate them into our purpose.

When we engage in industry and commerce and so forth, we don't plan on the birds cooperating or the fish cooperating and accomplishing our purpose. It helps us to understand God's plan. God has dominion over everything, but only the portion of his creation that submits to him can accomplish the positive side of his purpose.

Submission to God, coming to God and participating in his plan, he values that and he values us when we do it, in the same way that we value the things that submit to our authority and that fulfill our responsibility for dominion. There is a loose parallel there. There is a lesson in what submits to us and what does not, in what we can control and what we cannot control.

We know that God could at any moment take complete control of everything in the universe. He could right away squash the evil and the dark and the rebellious, but he lets it run free. The great question is asked, why does God allow suffering? Why does God allow evil? Why does God allow these things to run rampant? Why did Sodom and Gomorrah go on as long as they did? Why do our modern-day evils seem to perpetuate themselves and God doesn't seem to act and exercise his dominion over those? The existence of these unruly, non-submissive things, God accomplishes his purpose with what is submissive and he will ultimately take care of these others.

In the same way, there are things that we can control in our lives and there are things

that we cannot. We have to work with what we can control, what is within the sphere of our control and our authority and what does submit. Being in the image and likeness of God, one aspect of that is seeing that that's enough.

We don't have to control everything. We don't have to have everything submit to us for our purposes to be accomplished because we've been given dominion over all and ultimately everything will come under our feet just as it has all been placed under Christ's feet. In Ephesians chapter 1, the end of the chapter, it says he has placed all things under his feet.

That's everything, even the unruly and the rebellious. But God accomplishes his purpose just by working with what submits to him. God with great patience endures the vessels of wrath fitted for destruction so that he can show his glory to the vessels of honor, to the ones who submit, the ones who come and who participate in the positive side of God's plan.

So it's a reminder to us not to worry about what we can't control. You know, they have that old song, God grant me the ability to change the things I can and to not worry about the things that I can't control and the wisdom to know the difference. That's the idea here.

It is clear that when God gives man dominion over all of the creatures of the sea and over the sky, that's a dominion in name only. There are land creatures that he's going to actually have dominion over and accomplish purposes with. He's going to plow the ground with oxen and so on, but he's not going to plow the ground with sea creatures and birds and so on.

He can't exercise the dominion he's been granted. But we can do with what God has given us everything we need to do, and we shouldn't worry about what we can't control. That's the idea.

God isn't worried about the things that he's letting run loose and is not actively controlling. These forces of darkness are ultimately going to be resolved, and the circumstances in our life that we can't control are ultimately going to be resolved if we concentrate on doing what we're supposed to do with what we can control. I can't control the mental attitudes and the actions and decisions of people around me, but I can control my own.

I have dominion over my own. I'm captain of my own ship and master of my own fate, and I can choose to think the thoughts that concentrate on what is good and noble and lovely and right and of good report. I can't help what people are going to have by way of impressions and opinions and what they're going to say and do.

So don't worry about that. Concentrate on the dominion that I can exercise and that I

can control. God, notice, he speaks directly to the birds and to the fish and tells them what to do.

Why? Because man's dominion isn't actually, in practice, going to extend that far. So God gives them a direct command and puts his word on them to control their actions. But the land creatures, the idea here is man can control them, so God doesn't speak directly to them.

He's going to delegate dominion to man, and man is going to work out their multiplication and filling the earth and so forth. There's the idea of delegation to these land creatures. But we're going to take a look.

In fact, I'll give you a start here on the image of God and the likeness of God that he says in verse 26, Let us make man in our image according to our likeness. I take it back. I've just looked, and we don't have time either.

So I'm just going to have to tantalize you with that. We're going to see the Hebrew words here and how they're used elsewhere in scripture because this has been abused, the image of God idea that God sort of dwells in the heart of every man, believer or unbeliever, and that certain things come to man by right because he's in the image of God and so forth. That's what we're going to tackle when we come back to this next time.

But I'm going to try to do better as far as not running off the ends of the tape here. But let me just say in closing that there is a wonderful amount of truth that we can apply in the creation story. It's not just a story to tell us how things got here.

It's worthy of our meditation. It's worthy of our reflection. You can see it in the Psalms.

You can see it in the Proverbs and in Isaiah. When people are in distress, they say, you're the God that created these things. You're the God that subdued them.

You break the heads of the sea serpents. So I know you're not going to leave us in distress. We feel like we're the victims of these chaotic, rebellious forces of darkness.

But I remember that God created these. God subdues them at will. He can break them in pieces.

And that's the God who shines as a light. That's the God in whose light I want to walk. That's the light that I want to share and the power that is available through God's Word and God's Spirit in my life to subdue any of these unruly forces.

And we can fulfill this idea of dominion through the power that God grants. And there should be nothing that discourages us, nothing that defeats us, nothing that renders us powerless or hopeless in this life because we have a permanent, eternal connection that

has been spoken into existence by God and will never change. And that connection with God grants us delegated power and delegated authority over even these unruly things.

And it's a wonderful comfort to know that the things in life are just input. They're just grist for our mill. They're just there to provide us an opportunity to learn and to grow and to reflect the glory of our Savior.

They should not concern us as realities in themselves. They are just there for the purpose of God working in us to work out His will and His purpose. Let's close.

Father, we thank you for the privilege we have of calling you by that name of not only being creatures from your hand but of being sons in your family. And we can come boldly before the throne of grace with our hearts having been sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies having been washed with pure water, as it says over in Hebrews. We have access into the holy place, into the place where you dwell in unapproachable light because of what Jesus Christ has done on our behalf and because of the permanent relationship that we have with you through Him.

We pray that these truths will be real to us, more real than the circumstances of life, the people that surround us, the issues that come up in our days as we try to complete tasks. We pray that as a result, our lives will more truly reflect the light of your truth and that we will...