

7.24.2024

Genesis

The Breath of God

Chapter 2 (vs.7-8)

We've been going through the Book of Genesis. We're not going really fast, but our desire is to see what in the world is God doing. And we realize that this is a book of beginnings and God is doing the work that is revealing His heart; not just simply conveying things that were done. But clearly what we're seeing is the heart of God in which God is not only "*bārā'*," creating something out of nothing, but He is forming. As an artisan in this skillful way He is bringing things to pass, and He is demonstrating to us what is important to Him.

As we look at the beginning, and I'm having somebody make out some copies of things that we've already gone through, the first seven days, what we see within these first seven days is God is telling us about Himself just as much as He's conveying the creation itself. Once again, as you look at these days and the things that are describing His creation, there's a lot of details that He's leaving out. So once again, we know that the emphasis of this is not scientific, nor is it in the details of what He's conveying in the creation itself, but He's telling us His heart. So, as you look at the very beginning of the Book of Genesis in Chapter 1, you understand that He's conveying, "I did this by Myself, alone." "In the beginning God..." And this is a unilateral act. This is not something that God needed help with.

Isaiah 45, "I did this by Myself, alone." So, you can't get any clearer than that, and in Him, we live and breathe and have our existence. There is not anything without Him. I've oftentimes thought it was just sad if not comical, that somebody would say, "I don't need God." Because once again, you wouldn't be existing. So, the fact that in Him we live and breathe and have our existence, that's pretty clear; by virtue of His name, "I AM" or "*hāyâ*," is the conviction of the sense that He is the only uncaused cause, The fountainhead of life, the "I AM". There's no existence without Him. So, by the transliteration, we use the name "Jehovah" as it's transliterated into English.

The beginning of this book is telling us that day one, it's all about God, and He's the only One that can bring purpose and fulfillment out of meaningless and emptiness. He demonstrates that right at the very beginning, and He's the only One that can bring a light and hope out of darkness and obscurity and depression. So, wonderful picture in the creation itself that is conveying these truths.

In day two, He's demonstrating to us that He's a God that distinguishes. He's a God that separates; a God that divides, alters, duplicates, and He distinguishes things. I think one of the things that when you even think about relationships and you get married, and you make vows, you're distinguishing to that person; you're telling this person, "You're most important to me." You're making distinctions. So, it is in that making distinctions that you actually see the hand of God. When Ephesians 1 tells us that in Him, we were chosen before the foundation of the world, the fact that we were chosen is an amazing thing. Throughout, Scripture conveys that we're clearly not accidents. We're not primordial blobs that just somehow came on the scene, but God, in His wonderful grace chose us, and with forethought, knew who we were before He created us. We go into that wonderful Psalm 139, and before there was a day in my life, He knew it all. So, wonderful pictures of that. In day two, you see that distinguishing that is actually conveyed in the separating of light and darkness, and all these things are revealing this.

Day three, of course, is that God raises up hope. There's a sense of anticipation in which life is coming out of the Earth, and it's appropriate that it would happen on day three, but of course day three is that sense of Resurrection Day, on the third day He rose. So, it shows on day three, that sense of life coming up from the ground, from the Earth, out of the water, and the wonderful things bringing forth.

Day four is conveying the extremities. God is the God that is sovereign over all things. North, south, east, west; four corners of the earth. All of those things convey the fourth day. God appoints signs and seasons, and He's showing that He's sovereign over these great masses of the universe over us, and God is conveying that there's nothing that He's not in charge of. So, it's a great, great passage in that.

The fifth day is referring to the fact that God is a very generous God. So, as He begins to create things on the earth, these things are teeming, they're swarming, they're fluttering, all over the earth. Once again, we talked about the fact that the wording that He uses is not extremely scientific, but the fish squirming and the birds fluttering is very descriptive of what they do. So of course, throughout that day 5, we also use the name in the English, "quintessential," which seems to convey the sense of having everything that you need; great quantity. So, fifth day, water teeming, you see literally the desire of God to give an abundance. I oftentimes think about the cross, as it's described in the Book of Romans that He not only spilled blood for us, but He also literally gave this blood in great generosity to us, and you realize that this is God's nature.

2 Corinthians 8 says that though He were rich, He became poor, that you might have the wealth, and we know that we have a God that would give abundantly above and beyond what we could ask or think. That's who He is, and that's what He desires. All these things are revealing the nature of God as well as what He is doing within these particular days. We've also

aligned the number of the day with the things that also parallel these truths throughout Scripture. Pentecost, of course, being 50, is when the Holy Spirit came in a great abundance and mighty rushing wind.

So, sixth day, life breathing from the ground. So, we see mankind coming up from this as well, and that man is distinguished within the particular text and that God sets him aside to rule creation. Up to this point, we've seen God in the sense of generality, doing these great things, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." The great generality of that particular statement, and in chapter 1 as well towards the end of the passage, God created man in His own image and God blessed him. He created man and woman, male and female, He says in verse 27.

Now, we come into Chapter 2, and it seems like He's doing it all over again, but the point is that He's making that fundamental point in chapter 1 that He created all things and that He created man and woman, but now He's going back and He's giving us the detail of it. Why would He do that? Why doesn't He go back and give us the detail of the little grass sprouting up and fish going through the sea? Because that's not His focus. Once again, when He was talking about the universe, He just simply says, "and He created the stars also." So, what's the point? Man is the point. He's created all these things for us to enjoy. Paul will actually mention this in 1 Timothy 6, for God has created all these things for man to enjoy richly. So, why did God create things? To enjoy. Why did God create me? Well, that's a quandary, but Scripture does tell us that He did these things for His own purpose, and that He has this purpose of relationship. So, what we understand is that God has this great desire for relationship.

You go into Hebrews 1, and it says, "Which of the angels did He ever call son?" But the fact that, "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the power to become sons of God, even to those who believe in His name." Wow. So, He wants me to be a son. Now, what's even more bizarre is we're going to see Him creating man. Once again, we're getting to the details of the creation of man in Chapter 2, and we're going, "So, where did we come from?" He goes, "Dust. You came from dust." So, you know, I was kind of hoping for like gold nuggets or something, but no, just pulverized dust.

So, as we come to this passage, we're going to see in verse 7, as we finished last week in verse 6, that God takes this dust and then He breathes in it. So, it is this one verse that I just want to talk about tonight, and if you look in verse 6, it shows us this interesting picture. You read a verse like verse 6, as it talks about the water and there was no rain at this particular time and how the water came up from the ground and the dew came up and made the earth damp, so to speak, and you go, "Well, that's nice. Anything else?" He goes, "Well, the reason I'm telling you this is because I'm getting ready to make man." So, verse 6 is really preparatory, and we understand that as we come to the passage, here again, I don't want to get too technical, but

what we have is what is called “sequential imperfect,” which means that within the passage, by the time we come to verse 7,

“Then the LORD God formed man of dust...”

That's what's called “sequential imperfect,” which means that it's directly tied to verse 6. So, the things that are happening in verse 7 have a kind of preliminary in verse 6. What's verse 6 talking about? Well, it's talking about the ground getting watered. More specifically, what we're going to see is the dust getting watered. I don't know if you've ever tried to mold anything out of dust? But I would think that you need to add a little water. So, why is He saying that in verse 6? Because He's wanting you to see that all of creation is in preparation for man. That God has had this intent. I mean, there are so many other details He could have talked about. “You know, I could have used some help when I was going through science class, paramecium and amoebas and things like that. Why didn't You tell me about the microbe? You know, why didn't You tell me about the grand of the heavens?”

I think in some way the psalmist felt the same way because if you look with me in Psalm 8, and we're going to be dancing around a little bit, but you see that same sense of “Why us, God?”

(Psalm 8:1) “O LORD, our Lord,
How majestic is Your name in all the earth,
Who have displayed Your splendor above the heavens!

(Psalm 8:2) From the mouth of infants and nursing babes You have established strength...”

As 1 Corinthians 1 would say, “You seem to choose the weak and the foolish things to confound the wise.”

Of course, in Matthew 11, Jesus will say to His Father, “Wow. You gave Me these babes, these fishermen?” And the point obviously is that these are individuals that are not stained by the pride and the arrogance and the wisdom of man, but they just come in simplicity of faith. And God goes, “This is what I use. I use the simple.” You know, it is the mark of God. I don't know why we get so much into the whole complication of we have to have cemeteries, I mean, seminaries, and we have to have all these organizations in order to get a degree, in order for you to somehow have a relationship with God. That's just ludicrous. You know, fishermen, really? Tax collector, really? A zealot, honestly? Think about the twelve disciples. He has a zealot, who hates traitors and then He has a tax collector, who's a traitor. He pulls them together and He says, “We're family.” But none of them really seem to stand out in any way, except, perhaps, maybe Judas Iscariot, because he was of the realm of Judea. So, of all the disciples, he probably would have been perceived as highly esteemed, and probably one of the reasons why he kept the money box. Of course, we know how that turned out, but it's the

simple that God chooses. Even the fact that you read when He came to Earth, I mean, a manger, a feeding trough is where He's born and His family lives in a place called Nazareth. Can anything good come out of Nazareth? I mean, you just go through all these things, and you realize that God is opposed to the proud, but He gives grace to the humble. As James will say, don't you know that it's the poor of this world that is rich in faith? So, there's no doubt that God works in a different way than we do.

(Psalm 8:3) "When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers,
The moon and the stars, which You have ordained,"

Why would You think about me?

(Psalm 8:4) "What is man..."

You could probably put in there the Hebrew word "'*ādām*," where we get the word "Adam." "What is Adam?" "What is man?" Literally the same word that is used for ground or dirt.

So, as we come to this passage, what we're going to be seeing is, not only in verse 6, the preparation for God to begin to mold man and form him, but we're going to see the heart of God in doing this.

If you look with me in Genesis 2:7, it then follows through with the tie from verse 6, with the word "then." So, the tie is that God has been doing preparation for this. This is a monumental moment.

(Genesis 2:7) "Then the LORD God..."

Two words that are being used to describe Him. What we know according to Scripture, the name of God was not known until Moses. Now, we know that Moses wrote the Pentateuch; Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. The point is that in his writing, he puts in the name of God that was not known until we come into Exodus. Remember, Moses goes, "Who do I say You are? What's Your name?" And then God says, "Well, tell them "YHWH." And ultimately, we form out of that Yahweh; a Tetragrammaton. The point is that in the passage we see the name of God being very personal, but throughout the Old Testament, as you go through, even Abraham, the personal name is injected because Scripture is letting us know that God was there in this personal relationship with this person. Every time you see the name "LORD" in your Bible, that's the personal name of God that is being used. The Jews even to this day, perceive the name of God to be so holy that even in their writings, the way they'll put it is they'll put a "G," and they'll put a blank and they'll put a "d," and that's their way of saying, "We don't even pronounce the name of God." Now the name God itself, they just sort of put that in there in place of what we would perceive to be the Tetragrammaton, but they just put that in there to let us know the name is too holy for us to speak. One of the reasons why even

today we have difficulty knowing exactly how to pronounce His name, is because first of all, Hebrew in the beginning didn't really have any vowels in it; it just had the consonants. So, YHWH was basically the name in the English transliteration that we have, but they wouldn't pronounce His name. So then, if you were to ask most people, "What exactly is the name of God?" They'd go, "Well, we don't even know how to pronounce it because we didn't pronounce it. We didn't have the vowels." So, what people have done is they've taken the name Elohim; they've tied the vowels in with that or they tied the vowels from "Adonai," which means Lord, and they tie that in with the consonants of YHWH and you come up with "Yahweh" or Jehovah. So, that's how we come up with that, but do we even know? But the point is, we have this holy relationship with God, the God of the universe.

Scripture is wanting us to know in verse seven that it's actually putting His personal name first which is a personal act. So, if you go back to Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning," what is it? "God". Now, is it "GOD"? No. So, that means that it can't be Yahweh, it can't be Jehovah, it can't be the personal name of God. What is the name that is used? *Elohim*, which is virtually the strong one. Hebrew will sometimes use "*El Elyon*," which is the strongest strong one, but it's a general term. As you read in Scripture that men make gods for themselves, they make strong ones for themselves. So, the name here that is being used, "*Elohim*," is plural which conveys a sense of greatness. Plural can not only mean more than one, of course, we believe that the Trinity was involved in the creation, but it also stands for somebody great. No different than like Henry the Eighth saying we are unhappy. You don't want the king to say "we" anytime, but anyway. When you come to verse 7, it starts off with the personal and then it goes into the powerful, but it's God doing a great work and He wants you to know this is a personal relationship here. All the way through this particular verse, you can't help but feel, even with the sense of detail, if you look,

"Then the Lord God," what? "Formed". Now, what you're going to have in the text is, "*yāšar*," a word that is referring to squeezing. I wonder why I have all these aches and pains. It's God squeezing me, and I know that it must mean that He loves me because He's molding me into something a lot better than I am. The point is making reference to squeezing and it does give the picture of molding clay. As Hebrews will use, in particular, as Isaiah will use, Jeremiah will use, "He is the potter, we are the clay," right? So, it gives that wonderful picture of that.

Psalm 33; this is a way of reminder that obviously, God doesn't have to form or mold or squeeze anything if He doesn't want to. He doesn't have to get His hands dirty. When you think about it, once He started messing with man, He was getting His hands dirty, wasn't He? That's probably a good explanation of what He had to do. If you look with me in Psalm 33, "Sing a new song; the word of the Lord. How wonderful it is," as the psalmist says, "that God loves righteousness and justice." (Psalm 33:5)

And he says in verse five, if you look at the end,

“...The earth is full of the lovingkindness of the LORD.

(Psalm 33:6) By the word of the LORD the heavens were made...”

I don't see Him getting His hands dirty on that. See, I mean, like it states that in the beginning God created, “*bārā'*,” literally out of nothing. Hold your finger here and in Genesis and then go to Hebrews with me.

Hebrews is one of those books you just can't help but keep going back to. I know that, Greg, you're doing a study in Hebrews, aren't you?

(Hebrews 11:1) “Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

(Hebrews 11:2) For by it the men of old gained approval.

(Hebrews 11:3) By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.”

So, hands dirty? No need. He speaks and it's done, and that's reiterated, if you go back to Psalm 33:6,

“By the word of the LORD the heavens were made,
And by the breath of His mouth all their host.”

So, we have not only creative, but we have inspired, or inspirited would probably be the best way of describing it. Those that were given life, we have inanimate objects in space, out there and God creates the physical, but then He creates animate objects, man, life, fish teeming.

“... by the breath of His mouth all their host.

(Psalm 33:7) He gathers the waters of the sea together as a heap;
He lays up the deeps in storehouses.”

Then it says this in verse 9, I just love the clarity of this,

“For He spoke, and it was done;
He commanded, and it stood fast.”

So, who's going to frustrate His plans? So, that particular Psalm is really wanting to emphasize that point, but we see in verse 7 that He's not just speaking and something appearing.

We've already seen, if you go back, living creatures that He created already living and breathing in chapter 1,

(Genesis 1:24) “Then God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth after their kind” ...”

So, we already know there's breathing, living creatures that God brought breath into them, so to speak, but with man, this is very different. With the cattle they were just coming up out of the earth, but with man, He's molding. So, Scripture is wanting us to see the involvement, the personalization, the skillful, intricate forming of man; specifically wanting to focus on that and the sense that man is, of course, clay.

Isaiah 45, if you look there with me. There are a number of passages that we could look at in regard to this, and you know Job will make reference to this as well. In Isaiah Chapter 45, God is reminding us that, I guess sometimes you have to be reminded just who you are because it's really easy to think, “Well, I'm really somebody.” And God goes, “Ok, so, dirt.” I mean, what makes us valuable? This is the great emphasis of Scripture. What makes you valuable is not what you're made of. What makes you valuable is Who made you, and that's going to constantly be the focus of Scripture. In other words, you're as common as dirt. So how wonderful, and how distinct is that? What is wonderful is you take an artful person, skilled person, and they began to form something like an artist can take a rock and chisel it into a masterpiece; a person could take a paintbrush of greasy stuff and all of a sudden it becomes of great value. What brings the value? See, that's the point. So, Isaiah 45, if you look in the passage, there is a tendency of man to get arrogant.

(Isaiah 45:9) ““Woe to the one who quarrels with his Maker—
An earthenware vessel among the vessels of earth!
Will the clay say to the potter, ‘What are you doing?’
Or the thing you are making say, ‘He has no hands’?”

You're not just a blob, you're something made by God, and the fact that God is taking up time to form you. Now, I know we've already kind of touched upon this, and by the time you get to Isaiah 64, Isaiah is going to say, “You're the Potter, we're the clay, we're going to listen to You.” But there has to be that sense of realization that God has a purpose. I mean, an artist doesn't get involved with something unless he has a distinct purpose, and this is what Scripture is wanting us to know. As well as we were talking about this earlier, He is specifically tying in the creation of Adam with all mankind. So as God is forming Adam, He is forming all mankind. I think it's one of the reasons why Romans says as in Adam, all sinned. You go, “How could he say that?” Because you were there; God was forming you at that time as well. It's hard for us to imagine that.

Here again, let me just bring the tie in with this, I've got to stop doing these side trips, but in Psalm 139:13,

"For You formed my inward parts;
You wove me in my mother's womb."

Great picture of DNA, isn't it?

(Psalm 139:14) "I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made;
Wonderful are Your works,
And my soul knows it very well."

(Psalm 139:15) My frame was not hidden from You,
When I was made in secret,
And skillfully wrought in the depths of the earth."

Now, he's not talking about the pregnancy. What he's talking about is the intent of God at the moment that He was forming man. The same thing is true when you go back to Genesis 1, and it talks about that God created man in His image.

(Genesis 1:27) "God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them."

Well, in verse 7, we're going back into the details of creation. We're not even at the point of Eve yet. His point is, "I made them both."

We won't turn there, but in Genesis 5, he says, "and he named them Adam." So, the point is that when God created Adam, she was created from his rib; she's taken out of the side, which once again, is that wonderful picture that we have of the church in which the side of Christ as it is speared on the cross, is really the birth of the church. His blood was shed for the church, and the bride of Christ, the church, was born on the cross. So, it's a great, great picture, but you see this all the way back with Adam. The relationship of the man and the woman is already there, and she comes forth from, but the intent of God from the very beginning, from the molding and making of Adam, was the making of us as well. So, there's a great forming that is involved here and a great personal connection that you see.

(Genesis 2:7) "Then the LORD God formed man of," what?

So, we have the detail of God, the artfulness of God involved in man, and obviously He's very personally involved, but with what? Dust. You can't get any humbler than dust, and word that's used, "*āpār*," is making reference to pulverized dirt. So, it literally has the sense of being so pulverized that it's powder. So thus, that's why it's almost always translated dust. You consider

Psalm 103, where the psalmist says, "He knows our frame, he knows that we're but dust." So, it keeps going back to that sense of "Who am I?" type thing.

There's an interesting passage in Psalm 18, if you look with me. Once again, if you just keep your finger here so we can just jump right back, but in Psalm 18 you see the picture of what we're talking about when we're talking about dust. It reads this way in Psalm 18, and I don't want to go into so much of the context, but it's talking about war and it's talking about the winner and they're coming in and they're going to beat you down to the point of being dust.

(Psalm 18:42) "Then I beat them fine as the dust before the wind; I emptied them out as the mire of the streets."

The point, obviously being, you can't get any smaller than dust. You can't get any more insignificant than dust

Psalm 113:7 is also giving us that sense of the fact that God raises the poor from, where? So, once again, it is showing the humblest of people and using the word "dust" to describe you can't get any lower than that.

(Psalm 113:7) "He (God) raises the poor from the dust And lifts the needy..."

When people say, "I don't know if God would help me, because He just doesn't know how insignificant I am." I'm going, "Yeah, He knows." Here again, just think through the process, what is it that dust contributes to anything? I mean about the only thing that it can do is make things dirty, but it doesn't make anything better. It has no will of its own. It has no ability to do anything. Why is God taking it to that extreme? Because once again, He's not wanting you to perceive that you are loved because of what you're made of. Man is so immersed in this concept of performance and how he looks and his appearance and all these things, and his ability. God goes, "Let not the rich man boast of wealth and let not the powerful man boast in his strength and don't let the wise man boast in his wisdom. Though man has a tendency to perceive that he's somebody, and like Galatians 6 says, when somebody thinks that they are somebody when they're nobody, they deceive themselves. We come back to that fundamental point with the word "dust," and God is wanting us to see the extremity of this and the frailty of man in this. God wants us to come before Him and say, "I'm looking at all this magnificent creation of the stars, the moon, grand and glorious things. Why would You even think about me?" So, wonderful passage that makes reference to this and it is a picture of hopelessness and worthlessness and meaninglessness, but what's going to change is everything because God's going to breathe into dust. So, what we have in in the text is the material, physical things that man is made, and now we're going to have the spiritual. So, the interesting combination of the two.

Now, let me just make a note about this and if you look in Genesis 2:4,

"This is the account..."

Remember, once again some of you have King James, what is the account? How do they translate the word? "This is the generations," right? Both are appropriate. The fact is that he's introducing the account or the generations of all mankind. So, you have to ask yourself, "Why doesn't He say that?" Because He's actually marrying heaven and earth. So, the way it reads is,

"These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth..."

I.e., coming together. God creating mankind, and once again, the relationship that He's building from this. So, what we're going to see is the material, and then we're going to see the ethereal; God literally breathing into man, and the Spirit of God breathing in him.

(Genesis 2:7) "Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the..."

"*Ādāmâ*," the word "Adam." Adam is not as much a proper name as it is what he is. It's just a good reminder, isn't it?

"... from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life..."

Now, he uses two different words, "breathed" and then the "breath of life." "Breathed" is a sense of the blowing that God brings forth, so it gives one word. Then when it talks about the breath, "the breath of life," if you were to take the Hebrew, I don't know if you know this or not, but the Old Testament was written in Hebrew, New Testament is written in Greek. So, you have the two different languages. Well, about 200 years before Christ, the Old Testament Hebrew was translated into Greek. So that is called the Septuagint. The Septuagint Greek is the Old Testament that's translated into Greek. So, I think it was in Alexandria or something like that. What you have is oftentimes much of Scripture that is going to kind of relate to you, if you read the Septuagint, you'll go, "Oh, so that's what he means." Sometimes the Greek gives you even more explanation than the Hebrew. This particular word that is used in "God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life" is actually translated into the Greek, "*theopneustos*," which, if you remember where this is found, it's found in Timothy; that God inspired, or God breathed. So, it talks about all Scripture is "*theopneustos*," God breathed, and you have that sense of the inspiration. We use the phrase, "the inspiration of Scripture." Why is that important to know? It's important to know because what Scripture is telling us is what's making man unique. What makes Man unique is that he's inspired by God. Now, this is very important because of the fact that it's also tied to the nostrils.

I like the verse that is quoted in Isaiah 2, where God's saying, "Everybody that's proud, I'm going to lower." And He ends the chapter this way, "Stop regarding man whose breath is in his

nostrils.” That’s a great way to end, isn’t it? He’s saying two things in that. One is, He’s making clear that “Your significance has nothing to do with you, it has everything to do with My breath in you.” That’s where your value comes from. It also is conveying just how much we are loved; that God would literally breathe within our nostrils, and you don’t see Him doing that with cattle. You don’t see Him doing it with worms. So, what is God doing? Well, He’s showing the closeness and He’s showing the relationship within this. Now, what’s interesting about nostrils is that the nostrils are used by the Hebrew, every time it brings it up, remember reading about God and oftentimes refers to His anger, and actually, if you’re to translate from the Hebrew, it’ll make reference to His nostrils flaring. The picture is almost always a place of passion being shown. So, what you have that distinguishes man is his ability to display passion that goes beyond just a desire for sensory things. In other words, there is a sense of ability to care for somebody, to feel passionate about helping somebody that an animal would go, “What’s the deal?” As well as the ability to reason; the ability to think. I think the focus is largely upon the grand desire, when you consider the psalmist as he writes in Psalm 42, “As the deer pants.” That’s the same word that’s here. So, animals are going to pant for the water, but it’s a metaphor now and different as the man pants for, what? The relationship. Very interesting.

Psalm 119 will give you an interesting picture of this as well.

(Psalm 119:73) “Your hands made me and fashioned me...”

Why do you think the psalmist would put that in there? Well, he’s wanting to show what makes him different, “The involvement of God in making me.” If you drop on down specifically in verse 81,

(Psalm 119:81) “My soul languishes for Your salvation;
I wait for Your word.

(Psalm 119:82) My eyes fail with longing for Your word...”

This is not animalistic. This is something beyond. The ability to have relationships, the ability to care, the ability to feel passionate about things. God was breathing in man the ability to have a relationship with Him. That’s God’s desire. It’s strange when you consider that man feels passion for the things of the world. When John says, “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world,” He uses the word “love.” You go, “Why would I love things?” Yeah, people love money more than they love family. I mean, I’ve seen families break up over stupid, I would emphasize this, money, stupid. Let it go. I’d rather be wrong, Scripture will say. “Oh no, no, no, this is important. This is something worth breaking up a relationship.” See, God created us that we would feel passionate about things, but not about things, about Him, about relationships. He wants us to love one another. He wants us to feel deeply and care. Scripture even tells us He wants us to empathize with other people. “Weep with those who weep; rejoice

with those who rejoice.” It distinguishes us. It is the breath of God. It is the inspiration of God that causes us to think in this way, and Scripture has given us this wonderful picture of that sense of God doing this work in our lives. Without the inspiration of God, we're just basically a lump of clay.

Job 38, if you look there with me. Once again, I bring you to passages like this hopefully just to humble you and me too.

(Job 38:36) “Who has put wisdom in the innermost being
Or given understanding to the mind?”

(Job 38:37) “Who can count the clouds by wisdom,
Or tip the water jars of the heavens,

(Job 38:38) When the dust hardens into a mass
And the clods stick together?”

Ok, so you get a bunch of dust, maybe it got wet, and it comes together, and forms a clod. So, congratulations all of you together are a clod. Moving on up, the east side. The point of this is that you have this picture of a mass of humanity coming together and it just gets hard and it's just formless nothing. It doesn't help anything, and it just takes up space, and in fact, it causes more problems. I mean, at least dust is pliable.

Here again, I don't want to go into too much detail with this, but if you go with me to Isaiah 64. Detail is what I'm going into, I guess I need to quit apologizing for that. It says in Isaiah 64, the realization of the writer is,

(Isaiah 64:8) “But now, O LORD, You are our Father,
We are the clay, and You our potter;
And all of us are the work of Your hand.”

The point is that, left to us, we just become clods, masses of humanity, but in the hands of God, He's making us. We've oftentimes quoted it, but 2 Corinthians 4, where Paul says, “We have this treasure in earthen vessels.” The very fact that God would take this old clay, and He put His Spirit within me, is telling me, “I see My Son in you. I'm not letting you go.” You go, “But I'm just dust.” He goes, “No, you're dust with the hope of glory in you.” And you have this wonderful picture of value written all over you, not because of what you're made of or what you did or what you accomplished, but because of His grace; of His son.

So, in this particular passage, of course, the cry is at the beginning of Isaiah 64,

(Isaiah 64:1) “Oh, that You would rend the heavens and come down...”

You know, that's the cry of man.

Now, what has happened up to this point? I'm not going down a rabbit trail, but if you back up in Isaiah 63:18, it says,

"Your holy people possessed Your sanctuary for a little while,
Our adversaries have trodden it down."

That's an interesting picture of being pulverized. It's kind of the picture of going back to dust. As Scripture will say, you were taken of dust, to dust you will return. In this particular setting, we realize that it was the Babylonians that were coming in. They were going to go into captivity. They're going to be trampled down by virtue of this great, massive army and if you don't think it was an ominous thing, read some of the prophets that just begin to tell you how horrible the captivity was. People were literally being trampled in the streets as well as pulverized, but you have this interesting picture of being trodden down.

You come into Chapter 64, and the cry of Isaiah is, "But You made us. You're not going to leave us here." You know, so a total sense of helpless. Now here's an interesting point, and I won't belabor this, but who were the Babylonians? The Chaldeans, right? What does "Chaldean" mean? Clod breakers. It literally means clod breakers. So, why would God take His own people into captivity? Because He's got to break the clods. They have to be pulverized. Why? Because they're not usable as clods. God humbles us, and then He resurrects us.

As Daniel states in Daniel 12, you who lie in the dust will rise again. I know people go, "You know, I die and just become dust. How can God do that?" He's done it before. It's not like He hasn't done this and it's not like you weren't made from the dust. I mean, you consider man, and they actually say that man, his make-up is carbon, hydrogen, nitrogen, phosphorus, sulfur, potassium and calcium, magnesium, iron, and zinc. Why do you think you take zinc tablets? It's part of dirt. You're eating dirt because that's who you are, but you need that. Literally, scientists say that all of our makeup comes from dirt. They'll say that; they'll admit it. I don't know where they get that whole evolution thing from, but it wasn't from another animal, we came from dirt. Scripture wants you to see the clarity of, "I made the cows. I made the fish. I made all these things." And then He turns and goes, "But I formed man from the dirt." And we see a clear distinction of God being involved in the life of man within the passage.

Strangely enough, man comes from the perspective of he wants to be God. So, what does he start doing? Well, he knows that he was formed by God. So, what does he do? He starts forming idols, and his thought is, "I'm going to beat God on this one. I'm going to make something greater." So, what does he use? Gold and silver. God goes, "If they're so great, why don't they talk? If they're so great, why do you have to carry them? Why don't they save you?" And man makes anything from a statue to a car, to medicine and he elevates it, and he goes, "I've made a god." And God goes, "The only thing you've made is nothing, because nothing that

you make can save you, can redeem you, can rescue you. Man puts all of his efforts in these things, and it really is an assault against God.

You look at passages like Jeremiah 10, and of course, one of the statements that he makes in Jeremiah 10 is, don't listen to the world and don't be afraid of the things that they're afraid of. He states this in Jeremiah 10:3,

“For the customs of the peoples are delusion;
Because it is wood cut from the forest,
The work of the hands of a craftsman with a cutting tool.

(Jeremiah 10:4) “They decorate it with silver and with gold;
They fasten it with nails and with hammers
So that it will not totter.”

I love that phrase. I can just see him interviewing them, “So, what are you making?”

“We’re making a god.”

“And why are you nailing them there?”

“Because they might fall down.”

How does he describe them in verse 5?

“Like a scarecrow in a cucumber field...”

It's a great description.

“...And they cannot speak;
They must be carried,
Because they cannot walk! ...”

What are you afraid of? Why are you afraid of these things?

(Jeremiah 10:6) “There is none like You, O LORD;
You are great...”

(Jeremiah 10:8) “But they are altogether stupid and foolish
In their discipline of delusion—their idol is wood!”

(Jeremiah 10:10) “But the LORD is the true God;
He is the living God and the everlasting King.

At His wrath the earth quakes,
And the nations cannot endure His indignation.

(Jeremiah 10:11) Thus you shall say to them, "The gods that did not make the heavens and the earth will perish from the earth and from under the heavens."

(Jeremiah 10:12) It is He who made the earth by His power..."

(Jeremiah 10:14) "Every man is stupid, devoid of knowledge;
Every goldsmith is put to shame by his idols..."

Here again, it's just a mockery (verse 15) and it is the sense that, "I'm making something greater than God." And God says I used dirt and made you." So, what a wonderful picture this is to me of the fact that I'm so valued by God that He would make man a living being and that He would transform us ultimately into His image and that we would have this wonderful relationship with Him. I think it's also important to note specifically that with God using dust, He is wanting to point to His great ability to raise dust from the dead.

There are just a couple of passages that I want to close with. If you look with me in Isaiah 26, one of the great and hopeful passages because people oftentimes ask, "What happens when I die?" And Scripture will tell you that to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. So, what is that saying? Well, at the time that you die, what happens is the breath separates from the material. Why is that necessary? Well, it's necessary for you to become dust again, because in the becoming dust, then God will resurrect you anew. It would be your dust. I've kind of grown attached to my dust, but it needs some polishing up and it needs a renovation obviously, but more than that, it needs a renewal; needs to be like Him. The fact that He uses the same dust is God saying that He's sentimental; that you're not forgotten. I think one of the wonderful things that we look forward to in heaven is seeing loved ones, and recognizing them, just like how the disciples recognize Moses and Elijah, even though they didn't even know them. They recognized him on the Mount of Transfiguration. You go, "How did you know who these guys were? I mean, how could you distinguish, if we all look the same, Moses from Elijah?" So, there's going to be that wonderful distinction, and yet there's going to be a new body. So, when we die, obviously Scripture tells us that our spirit is at home with the Lord. What a wonderful truth that is. That's not where the story ends. We were made to have the generations of earth and heaven together. So, the body has to resurrect. This is 1 Thessalonians 4, right? The dead in Christ will rise first. I've often said that we're right here next to the cemetery. So, if the rapture happens, we're just going to watch people popping up over there and we're going to go, "We're next!" because the dead in Christ will rise first. We who are alive and remain will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Encourage one another with these words. But that body has to resurrect, and it's the same

picture of our Savior, who resurrected to the point where He could hold out His hand and tell Thomas, "Touch me." He could eat meat and walk through walls. Here again we were meant to touch. We were meant to feel. God made us out of this dust so that we would have a relationship beyond the Spirit, and what a wonderful combination.

Isaiah 26, if you look there with me, states this,

(Isaiah 26:18) "We were pregnant, we writhed in labor,

We gave birth, as it seems, only to wind.

We could not accomplish deliverance for the earth,

Nor were inhabitants of the world born.

(Isaiah 26:19) Your dead will live;

Their corpses will rise.

You who lie in the dust, awake and shout for joy,

For your dew is as the dew of the dawn,

And the earth will give birth to the departed spirits."

What a great picture that is. God is laying the groundwork for dust to be valued, and you go, "How valuable is this dust?" And God goes, "It's so valuable that We're going to come back for it. I've prepared a place for you. Let not your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also Me. In my Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you," what's He going to do? "I will come again. I'll receive you unto Myself; that where I am there you may be also." What a wonderful picture. All the way through creation, God is telling us, "You are loved. You are valuable." We're arguing with Him, "You don't know who I am." God goes, "Dust. Is there any lower you can get?"

Closing Prayer:

Father, we give You thanks for Your love for us, and that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. We realize that our value is not in our intrinsic value, our worth, but the very fact that we were purchased by the blood of Christ. You tell us in Your word that we were not purchased with silver or gold, but with something far more valuable, and this is what brings us into the realm of worthy. Father, we give You thanks for this, because many of us struggle with the sense of esteem. Our thoughts are, "What could we ever do of any value?" Sometimes we get to the lowest part of our sorrows, and You begin to reveal to us in the midst of this that You do love us. You do care for us, and You do save. I give You thanks in Jesus' name. Amen.