Turn off the outside "noise" for a couple of minutes and consider this message from God's Word.

I am praying that it calms your spirit and encourages your heart.

PSALM 36 (NIV)

⁵ Your love, Lord, reaches to the heavens,
your faithfulness to the skies.

⁶ Your righteousness is like the highest mountains,
your justice like the great deep.
YOU, LORD, PRESERVE BOTH PEOPLE AND ANIMALS.

How priceless is your unfailing love, O God!
 People take refuge in the shadow of your wings.
 They feast on the abundance of your house;
 you give them drink from your river of delights.
 For with you is the fountain of life;
 in your light we see light.

— PART 4 —

I found that when a passage of Scripture has been very familiar to me for a long time — such as this passage! — if I will simply $slow\ down \dots take\ my\ time \dots$ and read thoughtfully and reflectively, it can become alive to me in new and fresh ways.

— CONTINUED —

"You, Lord, preserve both people and animals" — Let's continue to look at how beautifully this simple sentence is unpacked in Psalm 104:



PSALM 104 (NIV)

19 He made the moon to mark the seasons, and the sun knows when to go down.

20 You bring darkness, it becomes night, and all the beasts of the forest prowl.

21 The lions roar for their prey and seek their food from God.

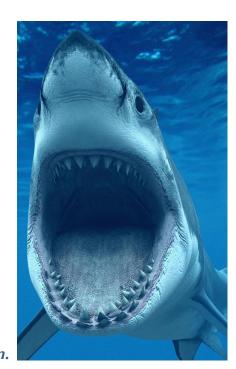
22 The sun rises, and they steal away; they return and lie down in their dens.

23 Then people go out to their work, to their labor until evening.

²⁴ How many are your works, Lord!
In wisdom you made them all;
the earth is full of your creatures.

²⁵ There is the sea, vast and spacious,
teeming with creatures beyond number—
living things both large and small.

²⁶ There the ships go to and fro,
and LEVIATHAN, which you formed to delight in.





²⁷ All creatures look to you to give them their food at the proper time.

28 When you give it to them,
they gather it up;
when you open your hand,
they are satisfied with good things.
29 When you hide your face,
they are terrified;
when you take away their breath,
they die and return to the dust.
30 When you send your Spirit,
they are created,
and you renew the face of the ground.

May the glory of the Lord endure forever; MAY THE LORD REJOICE IN HIS WORKS—

32 he who looks at the earth, and it trembles, who touches the mountains, and they smoke.



Watch the Lord's loving provision continue in vv. 19-26 — and it is now extended even to **lions!** The predatory beasts of the forest! The infinite variety of sea creatures. ("There is the sea, vast and spacious, teeming with creatures beyond number.") Even the LEVIATHAN! They terrorize us...but bring delight to their Creator!

"Leviathan is not a fearsome, mythic monster to be conquered, but is just another creature of the Lord — *most likely understood here as the whale or the shark*. The [verb is open to a variety of interpretations....but the most common sense is 'TO LAUGH AT,' with TO DELIGHT IN HIM as the most dynamically equivalent translation available. A comparison with Job 41:5 is instructive. There, God asks Job regarding Leviathan, "Do you DELIGHT IN HIM as with a bird?" God's rhetorical question in the book of Job expects the "no" answer — Job does not (or cannot) delight in Leviathan. In Psalm 104 the point scored here goes to the Lord's power (greatness, v. 1) and the Lord's intention for creation. The Lord easily manages what no human can achieve — TO LAUGH AT/DELIGHT IN Leviathan, the most fearsome of beasts (a whale, shark, or crocodile). As for God's intention for creation, the point is made that GOD DELIGHTS IN CREATION. God has fashioned even the most fearsome creatures of the earth AS SOURCES OF DIVINE JOY AND DELIGHT."

NANCY L. DECLAISSÉ-WALFORD, ROLF A. JACOBSON, & BETH LANEEL TANNER, The Book of Psalms (NICOT).

Can you imagine! "God has fashioned even the most fearsome creatures of the earth as sources of divine joy and delight." What a magnificent, majestic God! And what a compassionate, caring God to provide for each of his creatures precisely what they need. (To be continued.)

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Loving Father, we **delight** in you. And we thank you today for **providing** so beautifully, bountifully and **specifically** for your creatures, "both people and animals" — and for **delighting** in us!

Pastor Doug