

# H2R P21: Metaphor E3

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## Chaotic Waters

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### Speakers in the audio file:

1. Jon Collins
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- Jon: We've been talking about metaphors and symbolism in biblical poetry. Metaphors are a way to talk about something, something that's usually profound or hard to explain by comparing it to something else more tangible. Mapping the elements of one idea on to another. And metaphors are powerful. They allow you to begin to understand things that are ultimately beyond our understanding or as TS Eliot put it.
- Tim: Poetry is the kind of language that performs raids on the inarticulate.
- Jon: The Bible uses metaphors and some of them are hard for us to appreciate because there are metaphors that we don't commonly use in the modern western world. But it's important for us to understand them because we want to think about the world the way the Bible thinks about the world. We want to...
- Tim: ...Learn how to adopt the biblical visual imagination.
- Jon: In the last episode, we talked about how the biblical metaphor for the human ideal is a mountain, dry land, high above everything else. And not just any mountain, but a mountain garden. It's Eden formed on the ground that emerged out of the chaotic waters. It's the temple high on the hill.
- Today, we're going to look at companion metaphor. We're going to turn our attention to the chaotic waters that God separated in order for the dryland to emerge.
- Tim: The uncreated state that's uninhabitable for humans, chaotic watery wilderness, it's an obstacle to the emergence of human life.
- Jon: Throughout the Bible, chaotic waters is a metaphor for danger and death. And this makes sense. Humans, we live on land. The sea is dangerous: it's full of dangerous creatures, it's unruly, it's powerful, it can destroy you. So for the ancient thinker, a common metaphor is...
- Tim: Danger and evil are chaotic waters.
- Jon: Genesis 1, the chaotic waters is something God had to tame in order for creation to flourish. But as the story of the Bible continues, the ones that are creating the most danger and death are us, human. And so it's no surprise to find the biblical authors talking about people like dangerous waters.
- Tim: Humans who hate each other, kill each other, are like the chaotic waters. And so when Isaiah envisions the new creation, he envisions the new Eden temple mountain garden and the river returning, it's the violent nations finally becoming at one in peace and rivering back into the new Eden. It's so good.

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Jon: Thanks for joining us. Here we go.

All right. We're talking metaphor in biblical poetry, and this is our third conversation. So let's just do a little summary of where we've been.

Tim: Let us.

Jon: Let us.

Tim: Let you. When I say let us, I mean, let you.

Jon: Let me try. And the first step, so we looked at Psalm 46 just a teaser, wet our appetite for poetry. We started just talking about why symbolism and metaphor are important. And at its kind of foundation, we were trying to wrestle through how the way that we understand almost anything is by associating it with something else. Especially when it's something very abstract, not concrete.

So we went through a lot of examples of how metaphor is embedded into our everyday language. And this comes from Lakoff about how there's these underlying bedrock metaphors that he calls schemes.

Tim: Basic conceptual metaphors.

Jon: Basic conceptual metaphors. But someone else uses the word...

Tim: And then what he said was, each of those has a scheme which is like a series of rolls. They create—

Jon: I thought those were the slots.

Tim: Correct. The scheme is made up of the slots.

Jon: So the basic metaphor is the scheme.

Tim: The basic metaphor is the scheme. That's right. "Life is a journey" is a basic metaphor scheme.

Jon: And when you have the "life is a journey" metaphor—

Tim: It creates all different roles you can spend metaphor out of.

Jon: "Life is a journey" as a metaphor is the schema, the scheme, and then there's always what they call slots. And so "here's some slots". The person leading a life is a traveler,

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his purposes are his destinations, the means for achieving his purposes are his routes along the way...

Tim: Oh yeah, that's right.

Jon: ...difficulties in life are obstacles or impediments to the travel, counselors are guides to traveling, progress is the distance traveled. So all these things. And then those specific, what I guess we're calling slots—

Tim: Oh, that's right. "I made a lot of progress this year on whatever."

[00:05:01]

Jon: Right.

Tim: ...Learning to play the flute.

Jon: Right.

Tim: So I talk about my increase in skill level...

Jon: As like distance travel.

Tim: ...as if it was a distance traveled.

Jon: Yes, right.

Tim: That's right.

Jon: Yeah. And so you can find those embedded in so many turns of phrases.

Tim: And Lakoff's point isn't just that we talk in metaphors, it's that those metaphors actually go on to affect how our brains interpret our life experience. So I actually experience my increasing skill of the flute as if I'm traveling.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: And making progress. I actually conceive of it that way.

Jon: Becomes your mental map for reality.

Tim: That's right.

Jon: And one really great example of that is, talking about arguments. When you're having a disagreement with someone, predominant metaphor is, "argument is war".

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Tim: Yeah.

Jon: And that mental schema really changes the way you think about how you engage in a conversation with someone.

Tim: Yeah. It predisposes people towards more aggressive...

Jon: Right. "I've got to win." There's a winner or loser.

Tim: Yeah, that's right. "I'm going to defeat you and beat you."

Jon: So, all to say the bible has a lot of imagery and metaphors, but often—

Tim: It's an act of communication.

Jon: It's an act of communication. Often times, the metaphors used which are embedded deeply into the biblical writer's imagination, are not metaphors that we in the modern world are familiar with.

Tim: Some are universal and they're pre-intuitive to get.

Jon: Some metaphors in general?

Tim: Some of the biblical imagery. So light, dark, thirsty, hungry. That kind of thing.

Jon: Yeah, right, right, right. "I'm blind but now I see." That kind of stuff.

Tim: Yeah. But others—

Jon: Taste and see that the Lord is good.

Tim: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Jon: These are just basic sensory metaphors that everyone can experience.

Tim: Yeah. But then there's a whole set of real, particular types of images that have specific meaning and associations for people living in the ancient Israel that just don't resonate or they mean different things in our imagery.

Jon: Oh, interesting.

Tim: And so that's what we want this video to help us learn how to adopt the biblical visual imagination, so to speak.

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Jon: You brought up four basic metaphorical schemes that are in the first few chapters of the Bible and carry on throughout the whole Bible.

Tim: Correct.

Jon: And these schemes are very important to have the Bible talk symbolically and these schemes are very foreign to us modern Westerners.

Tim: Yeah. Most modern readers across the world are going to find different ones at least to feel kind of strange.

Jon: And we're wrestling through this in real time and that you know the categories but we don't actually know the best way to phrase them as schemes.

Tim: Yeah. In George Lakoff's term, you boil it down to short little sentence, phrase. Like "Life is a journey," "People are plants." "Time is a possession."

Jon: Right.

Tim: So that's what we're trying to do with these four.

Jon: And so the first one we did in the last episode, and the sentence now is, the ideal state is a mountain garden temple.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: You know, I've been shewing on this since we talked about it because I was taught that the ideal state is some disembodied...

Tim: Heaven.

Jon: ...cloudy harps, white robes.

Tim: Yeah, interesting.

Jon: That's the mental image. And to have this very earthy garden mound, you know, that's not in any of our imagination. I mean, it wasn't—

Tim: Maybe if you grew up in Hawaii or maybe in any island.

Jon: Oh, man, it feels very much like Kauai. That's what it kind of feels like.

Tim: There you go, yes.

Jon: Just this big mountain garden. Oh, man, Kauai is very beautiful.

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Tim: Yeah, I've never been.

Jon: It's literally an island that's all...it rains the most of any Hawaiian island.

Tim: Wow.

Jon: It's super green and lush and it's one big mountain that you can hike up to. I haven't done it.

Tim: Well, there you go. That's a lot like Genesis 1 too.

Jon: So this idea of the cosmic garden temple mountain as the ideal state, you see that all throughout the Bible.

Tim: It actually ties the whole biblical narrative together because that's where Revelation ends with the new Jerusalem descending from heaven to earth. It's about Heaven and Earth...

Jon: Reuniting.

Tim: ...getting married. And what John sees is the city garden on top of the tall mountain.

[00:10:02]

Jon: Now, by calling it a metaphor, are you saying then there isn't going to be an actual garden city one day?

Tim: No. No more than saying "my wife is a fireball" means "my wife doesn't exist". My point is, she does exist and the only adequate way to talk about her qualities is metaphorical.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: So you're not—

Tim: But I know for sure that your wife isn't a ball of fire.

Tim: Totally.

Jon: But I don't know for sure that the new creation will actually have a garden city.

Tim: Well, okay. So I think this is fundamental principle of how biblical imagery works then. We shouldn't mistake the image for the reality to which the image points, and especially when we're talking about new creation which is an ultimate fulfillment of the primal ideal state on pages 1 and 2. To what do these images actually refer in

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what we call reality? The biblical authors clearly aren't interested in giving us that information because all their language about it is image driven.

I guess it's taken me a while to come to peace with that. But all we're coming to piece with is that the most important experiences and ideas that humans come into touch with can't be described in a matter of fact plain way. Which to me, that's the essence of poetry.

Jon: Right.

Tim: Oohh, I came across this great amazing phrase, TS Eliot, and is a famous one. Sorry, I'm reading it but I can't even remember it right one. I think it's the "Four Quartets". Yeah, the "Four Quartets". He has this phrase about how the poet is someone who performs a raid on the inarticulate.

Jon: What does that mean? A raid on the inarticulate.

Tim: Performing poetry is the kind of language that performs raids on the inarticulate.

Jon: Like? So someone who can't explain themselves is—

Tim: There are things that you find very difficult to explain.

Jon: So things that are difficult to explain can still be eluded.

Tim: Can still... yeah. You can, you can—

Jon: You can still grab—

Tim: You can sneak in...

Jon: Sneak in and grab their value.

Tim: ...and grab on to something of the ultimate transcendent and bring it back out for yourself. It's just a tiny little piece of plunder. Poetry is language that performs raids on the inarticulate.

Jon: Wow.

Tim: It was such a great image, and it's doing the very thing that it's talking about.

Jon: Yeah, totally. It's a meta.

Tim: Yeah, super meta. So that's the idea. That's right. Okay.



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- Jon: Love it. So we did that first one, if you want to dig into it more, that's in the previous episode. Let's look at the second one.
- Tim: Correct.
- Jon: Why don't we do this way? Why don't we just look at the verses, talk about them, and then try to summarize everything in a sentence?
- Tim: Good. I like that mission. Let's do that. The one we just did was about the dry land, mound, rocks, fortress temple. So now let's talk about the waters...
- Jon: The waters.
- Tim: ...out of which the ground emerges.
- Jon: Okay.
- Tim: On page 1, Genesis 1, the uncreated state that's described as wild and waste, disoriented and inhabited, it's described as, wild and waste. This is Genesis 1 Verse 2. "The land was wild and waste and darkness was over the surface of the deep." Then the deep is—
- Jon: The sea. The ocean
- Tim: Yeah, totally. The abysmal deep. The deep to which—
- Jon: The abysmal deep?
- Tim: Abyss.
- Jon: You go down and down and down and you are in?
- Tim: Yeah, that's right. And again, the ancient author's conception it's the bottomless deep on which the land now emerges out of. And the spirit of God is there. So that's the uncreated state that's uninhabitable for humans.
- Jon: Chaotic waters.
- Tim: Chaotic watery wilderness. So the dry land emerges out of that. And notice, it's very important. In contrast to your Canaanite neighbors and your Babylonian neighbors, if your nation is Israelite, they have all kinds of mythologies and stories about how the waters are these hostile powers to whatever their patron God is, Baal or Marduk. And so they all have these stories about how their God had to engage the chaotic waters in a battle. Yam or Tiamat, and this is the dragon, the sea dragon.

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Jon: They're fighting the dragon.

Tim: The chaos dragon is the chaotic water.

Jon: Is the chaotic waters personified as a monster?

Tim: As a monster. Correct, yeah. In Genesis, there's no trace of that.

Jon: There's no trace of what? There is the sea monster.

Tim: Totally. The sea monster's there, and the chaotic waters—

[15:00]

Jon: Which, by the way, is very surprising. I bet you...

Tim: The sea monster?

Jon: ...if you walk up to almost anyone, I missed it my whole life. You walk up to anyone you're like, "There's a sea monster in Page 1 of your Bible." They'll be like, "No there's not."

Tim: Well let's see. Genesis Chapter 1:21. "God created the great sea monsters." That's the New American Standard. Let's read the English Standard Version. Genesis 1:21, "God created the great sea creatures."

Jon: Sea creatures. I think that's how I genuinely read it, and I was just like, "Yeah, cool. There's big sea creatures in the water."

Tim: No, there's the tannin. It's a reptile and it's got crazy heads and teeth—

Jon: How do you know that's what they're referring to there?

Tim: Because read Job, it's Leviathan.

Jon: What do you mean?

Tim: What I mean is, the biblical authors are expressing and sharing with their neighbors because this is a common cultural perception. Just like we say, "The sun sets," and we know it doesn't set.

Jon: Right

Tim: Right.

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- Jon: But it seems that way.
- Tim: And so there is a common cultural conception that the deep has great monsters in it. And so if you want to talk about the chaotic waters as the symbol, one of the ways you can do it is talking about the great sea monster that lives in it.
- Jon: So we know for sure they're talking about monsters in Job. How do we know for sure here in Genesis 1, it's not just whales and...?
- Tim: Oh, it's what the word, the word tannin.
- Jon: The word tannin doesn't mean just large whale or squid or something?
- Tim: Oh, it's the word for serpent or reptile.
- Jon: Oh, it is?
- Tim: Yeah.
- Jon: It is the word for serpent reptile?
- Tim: That's right, yeah. When Moses says, "How can I get the Israelites and Pharaoh to believe," and God says, "Yeah, throw your staff on the ground and it will become a tannin."
- Jon: So it's literally the sea reptile here?
- Tim: Yeah.
- Jon: Okay.
- Tim: Yeah.
- Jon: It's here.
- Tim: Aquatic reptile.
- Jon: Nice. And this was a mythological creature in Mesopotamian mythology?
- Tim: Correct, yes. Yeah, but in Israelites worldview, it's just a creature...
- Jon: It's just a creature.
- Tim: ...made by God. God loves it. It's good.

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Jon: And in Job, you learn that God loves it.

Tim: Yeah. He's proud of it in Job, yeah. Genesis 1 is working out of monotheism, one true creator, good, beautiful mind. And so in that world, the giant sea creatures, I mean, there may be monsters to humans, but to God, they're just beautiful creatures. And the waters, they're just tame. They do what God says they're going to do. And that's the waters in Genesis 1.

However, they are still described as this obstacle out of which dry land has to emerge. If God didn't do anything, it would just be chaotic waters. Okay, there we go. So that's important. So the first image of waters it's an obstacle to the emergence of human life. Okay?

Second association of waters is on page 2, and it's different. And we've never talked about it before.

Jon: I'm ready.

Tim: So Genesis 2 is a parallel narrative from wild and waste to humans reeling the garden. And it uses gardening imagery. So instead of the chaotic, dark, wild and waste of Genesis 1, Genesis 2...

Jon: Is a barren field.

Tim: ...begins with a barren, uncultivated field. Genesis 2:5, "No shrub of the field was yet on the earth, no plant of the field has been sprouted for, there hadn't been any rain, and there were no humans do any farming." So the assumption is, of course, there's no farms yet because there's no humans.

So verse 6, "God sent a mist - and Hebrew word is [unintelligible 00:18:53] - to rise up out of the earth and water the surface of the ground." So an ad. Then the Lord God formed Adam. It's the same first two letters that ad—

Jon: By the way, is that...mist doesn't come from the ground?

Tim: Oh, it's some kind of a subterranean spring. Oh yeah, mist is not helpful here. You're right, I'm sorry. I totally forgot. The English word mist is not helping us here. No, it's referring to some kind of subterranean spring. Natural springs. It's the water under the earth.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: So the idea is, God separated the waters above from the waters below.

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Jon: So there's waters below that can—

Tim: At this point, the waters above hadn't come down yet. It was just the waters below.

Jon: Yeah. Springing up.

Tim: Springing up. Yeah. And that water springing up is called id.

Jon: Why don't we just call them fountains or can we say...

Tim: Yeah, that's a good question.

Jon: ...a spring?

[20:00]

Tim: Maybe Genesis 2:6.

Jon: I bet there's a translation that—

Tim: Mist, a flow. NSB has flow, ESV has spring, mist or spring. They all have footnotes that say, mist or spring. But this is the only time this word occurs in the whole Hebrew Bible, and I think because it's a word play on... Just watch where this is going.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: All right. So, but an id used to come up the Earth. Verse 7. "Then the Lord God formed Adam." The first two letters are the same as the word ad. Ad, Adam.

Jon: Oh, okay.

Tim: [unintelligible 00:20:42]. Man, adam. Then keep watching. "He formed an Adam from the dust of the adama. So within two sentences, you have these consonants keep reappearing here. Ad, Adam, adama. And if you're reading Hebrew it's clearly like a word play developing.

So what's it connecting? It's connecting the water springing up out of the ground to the human that is made from the dust of the ground. And those three words are all related. The ad, the Adam, the adama. The spring, the man, and the ground. So already, right now you have this connection between ground and water and humans.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: Then the Lord God planted the garden in Eden on top of the cosmic mountain, and all kinds of trees. It's awesome there. Go down to verse 10. "A river that watered the

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garden was flowing out from Eden." So let's just pause there. So before God planted the garden there were just water springs—

Jon: Yeah, in a barren field.

Tim: In a barren field. But now we're going to cultivate. God is going to take action to cultivate one specific spot. He puts the man there, and then God provides the ultimate water source. The divinely provided water source which is a river. Not just slope, bubbling brook, but a river. And it's a single river.

So it's one river watering Eden. And then once it leaves Eden, it says from there then it divides. It divides into four headwaters. And then what it describes is rivers that are actually really far apart from each other. So one's the Gihon down in Egypt in Kush, two are the Tigris and Euphrates—

Jon: Which are closer to each other.

Tim: Well, they're on the same kind of continent, but not really.

Jon: I don't know.

Tim: Nile's in Northern Africa.

Jon: I haven't been over there so I don't know.

Tim: The Nile's in Northern Africa.

Jon: I'm not talking about Niles, I'm talking about Euphrates and Tigris.

Tim: Oh, Euphrates and Tigris are next to each other.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: Yeah, they're parallel to each other, but they're nowhere...

Jon: Near the Nile.

Tim: ...near the Nile.

Jon: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Tim: And then the fourth—

Jon: These four rivers do not come from the same source?

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Tim: Correct.

Jon: Maybe at one time in continental drift they may have but...

Tim: And that's the wrong question I think is to ask was there a time on planet Earth when these rivers...? It's just the wrong question. The point is, this is an author's mental map of if the garden is at the center of the mount that emerges out of the waters—

Jon: Then every civilization around every river is from that.

Tim: It's the symbolic center of the Earth. And we know this is because the biblical poets are going to talk about Jerusalem with precisely this language. They're going to talk about the river flowing out of Jerusalem to water the whole Earth.

Jon: Which there is none.

Tim: Yeah, totally. It's symbolism.

Jon: I don't know what else to say.

Tim: It's poetic symbolism. And all of those...Well, we're getting ahead of ourselves. Sorry. First, here's what's interesting about his image. We already through the wordplay, the water coming out of the ground has been connected to the humans coming out of the ground through that wordplay. Now we've got a river, a single river coming up out of the garden of Eden and it stays one river in Eden, but when it leaves, that's when it divides.

What's interesting is that that word divide only appears only a couple of other times in the Book of Genesis and it always described humans. So once Noah's family gets off the ark, his sons divide into the table of nations in Genesis 3. And what do they divide into? The three families of Shem, Ham, and Japheth. So humanity, the nations are dividing. It's sort of like, as humans get farther away from Eden, the more and more they divide.

So the river and humans, the one humanity in Eden and the one river in Eden are connected images, that once they leave Eden, divided humanity and the divided river.

Jon: Interesting.

Tim: They're connected images. Again, you might think, "What? Why is Tim doing this?" So I'm doing this because you just track later biblical authors are tracking with this and they're taking places.

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So for example, what's the next story where people like Noah and his family come through chaotic waters unto the dry land as God saves them evil and chaos?

[crosstalk 00:26:33]

Jon: Yeah, Moses and the Israelites.

Tim: Yeah. We made a video about this. So in the song of the sea, Exodus 15, this is the next example. "Pharaoh and his armies perish in the waters but they are also made parallel to the waters." This is in Exodus 15, verse 4 where that quote begins. "So Pharaoh's chariots and his army, he cast into the sea. The choices of his officers drowned in the sea. In the greatness of Your excellence, You overthrow those who rise up against You, humans."

So what did God do at the Red Sea? Well, first of all, he overthrew his enemies. "Those who rise up against You, You send forth Your burning anger, consumes them like chaff. At the blast of Your nostrils..." What else is God opposing...

Jon: With water.

Tim: ...with wind and breath? The waters. It's depicting God almost having two enemies at the Red Sea scene. One is the wind blowing back the waters because the waters could consume his people, couldn't they? Like the flood. Yeah, the waters could consume anybody.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: And so, God's fighting back the waters, so to speak and he's fighting back the Egyptians. The Egyptians and the waters are both dangerous and—

Jon: Hey, you know, what's interesting in this poem it's like out of order.

Tim: Oh, yes, yes.

Jon: Like literally, right?

Tim: That's a good point.

Jon: He drowns Pharaoh and his choicest officers. His fine officers drown and then he talks about him piling up the waters. But in the story, you got to pile up the waters first, let the Israelites through and then the walls of water come down and drown them.

Tim: Yes, yes. Good.



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- Jon: So why poetically does he mix it up?
- Tim: Yeah, yeah. I think because who are the enemies in the story? It's the waters and the armies of the Pharaoh. They're associated.
- Jon: Well, I never would think of the waters as the enemy. As a barrier maybe.
- Tim: Yes, yes, yeah. Okay.
- Jon: But you're saying, it's even deeper than that. In the biblical imagination, the chaotic waters are also an enemy to humanity?
- Tim: Yeah. At least there's two dangers.
- Jon: There's two dangers.
- Tim: There's two dangers in the story.
- Jon: Okay.
- Tim: The Israelites could be consumed by the waters or killed by Pharaoh's army. And what God does is, fight back both of them. And in fact, He then turns the chaotic waters on to the enemies in this act of like self-destruction or chaos destroying itself, that kind of thing. Once again, it's a poem that associates human enemies with dangerous waters.
- Jon: It associates. I mean, the skeptic inside me is saying, "It may be associating them."
- Tim: Yeah. Even in poetic parallelism, right? "You sent forth burning anger and overthrow those who rise up against You. At the back of Your nostrils, You pile up the waters."
- Jon: I see.
- Tim: It's just in poetic parallelism.
- Jon: It's making those two things symmetrical.
- Tim: Yeah. Putting them in parallel.
- Jon: Hebrew poetry, that's how it works.
- Tim: That's right.
- Jon: Okay. Got it.

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Tim: Enemies is parallel to water.

Jon: Forgot about Hebrew couplets.

Tim: Let's go to another one.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: Psalm 89. It's David Victory poem once he's delivered from Saul. And here, they're going to combine with our previous discussion. So he begins, "The Lord is my rock and my fortress."

Jon: A high place to be safe.

[30:03]

Tim: The high place, yeah. "My rock in whom I take refuge, my shield, my stronghold. I call upon the Lord, He's worthy to be praised and I'm safe from my enemies." So here it's, you go up to the high rock to be saved from your enemies below. That's the metaphor.

Jon: The imagery.

Tim: Yeah. Later on in the poem, it says, "O, Lord God of host who's like You. your faithfulness surrounds You. You rule the swelling of the sea when its waves rise, You still them. You yourself crushed Rahab like one who is slain, You scattered Your enemies with Your mighty arm. The heavens are Yours, the earth is Yours, the world and all it contains, You founded all of it." You looked at me funny at some point.

Jon: Yeah, "Oh, Rahab." Are we talking about...?

Tim: Rahab.

Jon: Who we talking about?

Tim: Rahav is an ancient...it's referring to Egypt as a mythological character. Rahav is an Israelite name for talking about the God of Egypt.

Jon: Ok, okay.

Jon: Referring to Egypt's deity, Rahav. Essentially, in Israel versus Egypt, it was Israel's God versus Egypt's God. And Israelites call that, Egypt's God, Rahav.

Jon: The Egyptians didn't call it Rahav?

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Tim: No, as far as we can tell.

Jon: What do they call their God?

Tim: It's a uniquely Israelite name for The God of Egypt. Well, the Egyptians themselves were Polytheists.

Jon: So they had many Gods.

Tim: They had tons of Gods. But in quite a number of places, in biblical poetry, Egypt and its God together are called Rahav. And there's probably something going on there that I still don't understand yet. So notice in this poem, it opens with David being on the high rock with his enemies down below. Then he moves and talks about God stilling the swelling chaotic sea. Well, who or what is the swelling chaotic sea? The God of Egypt.

Jon: Which is his enemies.

Tim: Which is his enemies. So God stilling the sea is the same as scattering His enemies. So it's crystal clear here now. The enemies are chaotic waters. Danger is chaotic water.

Jon: Danger is chaotic water.

Tim: Danger and evil are chaotic waters.

Jon: This is the scheme. The metaphorical scheme.

Tim: Yeah, yeah. And it's all the way back up to Genesis 2 where humans are water. Remember? The ad comes out of the ground and adam comes up out of the ground.

Jon: But in that story, the humans aren't evil at this point.

Tim: No. No, they're not.

Jon: So if the scheme is that chaotic waters is evil, why use water for humanity?

Tim: Well, there's the chaotic waters out here and the rivers obviously drain out into the sea. So once humans leave Eden, they divide, they join the chaotic sea in its assault upon Eden. Ideal of God's...because the ideal state is the garden temple fortress, it's core metaphor number one.

Core metaphor number 2 is humans are either in Eden and they're one unified, or when they leave Eden like that river, they divide and join the chaotic.

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Jon: So by associating them with the spring and using the wordplay, it's tipping a hat to what's going to happen.

Tim: Correct. Yeah, the river leaving Eden and separating and dividing, it's a metaphorical preview of humanity's fate when it leaves the garden and then divides and unleashes chaos and death upon itself. Again, just wait for it because later biblical authors are going to see all this and pick it up.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: But here it's crystal clear. The enemies and the chaotic waters are images of each other.

Jon: So maybe the schema or the scheme is danger and enemies or death and enemies or...?

Tim: Well, I think I hear danger and death. It could be death by...because natural disasters—

Jon: When you say danger and death, I guess I don't think of people but maybe I should.

Tim: Oh, maybe danger and evil. Danger and—

Jon: Danger and death sounds, you know—

Tim: Yeah. It kind of like the double D. Yeah, because death can be...it happens to you or I can make it happen to you.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: Right? You can die of ripe old age and that's still a tragedy.

Jon: So danger and death are the key cores, just the of the scheme. The slots are the sea dragon, it's part of it.

[00:35:01]

Tim: Yeah. Or actual creatures.

Jon: Creatures?

Tim: Yeah, which we'll be talking about in the next one.

## Chaotic Waters

Jon: Oh, cool.

Tim: But other humans killing you.

Jon: The danger of a human killing you or being your enemy...

Tim: Can be described as chaotic.

Jon: ...also is chaotic waters.

Tim: That's right.

Jon: And that would make the perfect intuitious sense for someone who has the scheme in their psyche.

Tim: Correct.

Jon: But for us, we have to kind of go, "Oh, wait, I got to remember people are chaotic waters."

Tim: That's right.

Jon: Because people are dangerous.

Tim: Let's read a poem by somebody who has this metaphor in their psyche. It's called Psalm 69. "Save me, O God for the waters have threatened my life. I have sunk in deep mire; there's no foothold. I have come into deep waters; the torrent overflows me. I'm weary with crying; my throat is parched. My eyes fail while I wait for God." Let's just stop right there.

You are drowning in waters and your throat is parched?

Jon: Yeah, that's the last thing you're worried about when you're drowning.

Tim: Yeah. This is one of my favorite examples. So he's drawing upon two different metaphorical schemes but they're related in association with death and danger.

Jon: Yeah, being dehydrated in some—

Tim: The wilderness.

Jon: Yeah, the wilderness.

Tim: The wilderness.

## Chaotic Waters

Jon: And sinking into the ocean.

Tim: That's right. And think of the second sentence of Genesis 1. What was the land? It was wild and waste...

Jon: Watery wilderness.

Tim: ...like a dessert and it was the deep abyss. Dark, like the ocean. And here's the poet who's combining the same two metaphors again to describe one reality. Danger. Actually, what is he describing? Let's read on.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: "Those who hate me without cause are more than the hairs of my head. They would destroy me, those who are powerful, they are wrongfully my enemies. Deliver me from the mire, don't let me sink."

Jon: What is mire?

Tim: The mud.

Jon: Like in a delta.

Tim: In the water. Think of when you're in a lake and your feet and you start to sink.

Jon: Yeah, like a really muddy lake.

Tim: Yeah

Jon: That's the mire.

Tim: And look at this. "Deliver me from the mire that I might not sink. May I be delivered from my foes and from the deep waters." You can just see it.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: His human enemies are being described as—

Jon: Deep waters.

Tim: ...chaotic deep waters, or the mud in which he sinks in the water, or the dessert that gives him a dry throat. I don't know. For a long time, I just thought...I just have a colorful imagination. But these are all deeply associated ways of talking about the same thing. "Don't let the flood of water overflow me, the deep seas swallow me up." Oh, here's a new one. "Don't let the pit shut its mouth on me."

# Chaotic Waters

Jon: Yeah, like grave?

Tim: Yes, so the grave, but actually, this is interesting. The word 'for cistern' and the word 'for pit,' as grave is the same word, 'bor' in Hebrew.

Jon: It's the hole in the ground.

Tim: It's the hole in the ground. And you can use that hole to collect water or you can use the hole to...

[crosstalk 00:38:27]

Jon: If it closes up, it's a grave.

Tim: It's a grave. Totally. So once again you're under the land. So humans belong here, on top of the land, on the garden temple, rock mountain. That's the ideal state. And so to be under the ground, not our place. To be out in the water, that's not our place. You get the idea?

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: So that was the poet who can talk about...I mean, who knows what he's talking about. The fact that the enemies aren't described in any detail is what makes these poems speak.

Jon: You just know there is lots of them.

Tim: Totally.

Jon: It's a nation full of them. How many hairs are on a human head?

Tim: I don't know.

Jon: Is it calculated?

Tim: Oh, mighty Google.

Jon: Hey, Google.

Tim: Oh, Siri. Should I ask Siri?

Jon; Sure.

Tim: Hold on. You Google, I'll ask Siri. Let's see if it comes up with the same thing. How many hairs are on a human head, Siri?

## Chaotic Waters

Siri: 90,000 to 150,000.

Jon: Yeah. I got 100,000.

Tim: Wow. So Siri...

Jon: 120 square inches of headspace.

Tim: Wow.

Jon: Each follicle can grow about 20 individual hairs in a person's lifetime.

Tim: Wow.

Jon: Oh, there's 100,000 follicles and each follicle can have 20 individual hairs come out of it but not all at once.

Tim: Wow.

Jon: Guess how many hairs you lose on an average day?

Tim: 30.

Jon: A hundred.

Tim: No.

Jon: Yeah.

[00:40:01]

Tim: Wow. Yeah, that's what my wife would say. I think I leave it all in the shower, which bums her out.

Jon: I guess the question is, is how many hairs did an Ancient Israelite think they had on their head? That's the question.

Tim: Totally.

Jon: A nation's worth.

Tim: Apparently.

Jon: Yeah.



## Chaotic Waters

- Tim: So Psalm 69 begins to really make it clear. Again, all these images are associated. Look at this one from Isaiah 17. Here, I'll let you read aloud. I'm tired of reading everything aloud. This is Isaiah 17.
- Jon: "Woe to the many nations that rage-- they rage like the raging sea! Woe to the peoples who roar-- they roar like the roaring of great waters! Although the peoples roar like the roar of surging waters, when he rebukes them they flee far away, driven before the wind like chaff on the hills, like tumbleweed before a gale. In the evening, sudden terror! Before the morning, they are gone! This is the portion of those who loot us, the lot of those who plunder us.
- Tim: So on the surface, the images, I mean, it just says it.
- Jon: Yeah, yeah.
- Tim: The people are like—
- Jon: It's a simile this time.
- Tim: Yeah, correct. Now notice also what narratives are grounding these metaphorical connections, however. Evening and morning. In the evening, terror, in the morning, still waters, no danger.
- Jon: I don't know.
- Tim: And there was evening and there was morning. And there was evening and there was morning. And there was evening, oh you didn't get it? Let me repeat it, seven times in the narrative. And there was evening and there was morning.
- Jon: So he's calling back to Genesis 1.
- Tim: So Genesis 1, right, that there's the dangerous waters and God totally, no threat to God. His wind, right?
- Jon: The spirit.
- Tim: The spirit drives them back and the dry land emerges. But there's also another important narrative when we even thought about it, which is the Exodus narrative where it's in the night. It's very specific in the narrative. It's in the night that Pharaoh comes, they set out and it's in the morning watch that the waters close over Pharaoh and the winds drive the waters back. So Exodus, creation...
- Jon: Genesis 1.

## Chaotic Waters

- Tim: ...it's all connected, all these images here. And so in Psalm 69, I can talk about my own personal bad day in this cosmic language. Or I can talk about in Isaiah - we are reflecting back on the invasion of a Syria, probably I think also Babylon. And we can talk about my bad day or enemy army invasion with the same metaphors. Isn't that interesting? I mean these is a buried deep in these people's minds and hearts.
- Jon: Yeah.
- Tim: Okay. So if the scheme is danger and death are chaotic waters—
- Jon: The metaphorical scheme, fabric, the underlying foundational image.
- Tim: Let's flip it over then. Let's flip over the scheme. Danger and death are chaotic waters.
- Jon: He just used the metaphor.
- Tim: Water flip it over.
- Jon: The scheme is something that has two sides all of a sudden that we can flip like a pancake.
- Tim: It does. Yeah, that's right. Metaphorical schemes are pancakes. Let's flip it over. If danger and death are chaotic waters, safety and life are—
- Jon: Yeah, the land, the fortress.
- Tim: No, let's keep going down the list of examples here. Let's read Joel Chapter 4. "In that day, which is the day of the Lord, the mountains will drip of sweet wine."
- Jon: Sweet, berry wine.
- Tim: "And the hills will flow with milk and the brook of Judah will flow with water and a spring will go out from the house of the Lord to water the valley of Shittim." So, safety—
- Jon: "In that day," being the day of new creation, the day of restoration.
- Tim: Day of the Lord. When He confronts the Pharaoh and restores the ideal.
- Jon: And Rescues...
- Tim: Because where is the house of the Lord? It's on the mountain temple rock. Right? The new Eden.

[00:45:02]

# Chaotic Waters

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: So of course, there's going to be that spring coming out of the temple. Just like there was that river coming out of Eden. Zachariah 14. "Again, on that day, the day of the Lord," track with what narratives are drowning images here. It's a poem from Zachariah 14. "On that day, there will be neither sunlight nor cold frosty darkness. It will be a unique day known only to the Lord. No distinction between day or night."

Jon: Just a twilight.

Tim: "When evening comes, pure light. On that day, living water will flow out of Jerusalem, half to the dead sea - the deepest - deadeast place on Earth - half to the Mediterranean Sea, in summer and in winter. The Lord will be king over the whole Earth. On that day there will be one Lord and His name, the one name." That's the Shema right there. This poem is so unbelievable. No sunlight, no dark, no day, no night.

Jon: No seasons.

Tim: Just pure light. And seasons. Just pure light. And living water flowing out of the temple in Jerusalem.

Jon: I mean, there are seasons, but if it's flowing in summer and in winter, that means there's really no distinction between the seasons.

Tim: Yeah. Just purely light and pure life flowing out of the Jerusalem temple. So what we're doing is, we're painting safety and life in the future ideal as a renewed Garden of Eden. And notice it's focused on this river.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: It just really care about this river coming out of the temple.

Jon: Yeah, the river of life.

Tim: Okay. So that prepares us for this last one. This is going to land the plane. Isaiah Chapter 2, is very similar. Now, it will come about in the last days, in the final days, the mountain of the house of the Lord will be established as the chief of the mountains raised up above the hills." So we're back to the...

Jon: The mountain.

Tim: ...the high rock, the mountain fortress temple. And this is especially, you know, anybody who's ever been to Jerusalem, even if you're on like on Mount Zion, which is

## Chaotic Waters

a hill to a bit to the west of where the temple mountain is or if you're there near the dome of the rock, you just look across the valley and you see the Mount of Olives, it's higher than here.

So clearly we're talking about its cosmic metaphorical significance. It becomes the center of the universe. So that mountain is raised up and all of the nations will river into it. Most of our translations read, "They will stream into it." But it's the word river turned into a verb.

Jon: We've turned stream into a verb...

Tim: We have. Actually, yeah.

Jon: ...but we haven't turned river into a verb.

Tim: That's a good point. That's right. so it's the same concept. You can see a stream—

Jon: Something can stream, something can't river.

Tim: Or the stream can stream.

Jon: Stream can stream but a river doesn't river.

Tim: In Hebrew, rivers can river.

Jon: [inaudible 00:48:26] Why can't rivers river if stream can stream?

Tim: Yeah, if streams can stream, why goose and geese but not moose and meese. That's strange language. So anyhow, catch the image here. The nations are rivering uphill. The river's going uphill.

Jon: Yeah, not physically possible.

Tim: And all these other images, the rivers coming out. But now, the river's going back and it's people. The nations. And what are they doing? "They hammer their swords in the plowshare, their spears in the pruning hooks." They turn their AK 47 into combined harvesters. Right? Farming.

"Nation won't lift up swords against nation nor will they ever again learn war." So it's shalom. Peace between humans. So just like when the river left Eden and separated and divided, so also humanity left Eden and separated and divided. And then humans who hate each other and kill each other are like the chaotic waters. That's the fundamental metaphor. Danger and death are chaotic waters.

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And so when Isaiah envisions the new creation, he envisions a new Eden temple mountains garden and the river returning, but he's seen the metaphorical link between humans and the river in Genesis 2. And so it's—

Jon: The river are the people—

Tim: The violent nations finally becoming at one in peace and rivering back into the new Eden. It's so good.

[00:50:04]

Jon: Yeah. So for one side of the metaphor is danger and death are chaotic waters. You're saying the other side is that when danger and death are overcome then it's living water?

Tim: Yeah. The fundamental image, again if we're thinking in terms of schemes is danger and death are chaotic waters, so that also creates a slot for the opposite that safety and life can be depicted as the river of life in Eden.

Jon: The river of life.

Tim: Yeah. If the chaotic waters are danger and death, then safety and life which can be created by humans can be depicted as the river of Eden, the Eden river. Is that right? Does that work? Would George Lakoff be proud of us?

Jon: We should bring him in. Lakoff, help us out. So the scheme, the underlying scheme is like chaos water.

Tim: You know what? Maybe the more underlying imagery is that humans are water. And so, if it's dangerous, violent humans, they're chaotic waters. But if they're shalom creating new Jerusalem seeking humans...

Jon: That's peaceful river.

Tim: ...then they're the river of Eden. Humans are water. Because other things can be the chaotic waters too, like sea creatures.

Jon: The underlying schema would actually be danger is water, but no.

Tim: But it's—

Jon: But it's also danger—

Tim: Here, there's always the dangers that human oppose to each other.

## Chaotic Waters

Jon: It's always that?

Tim: Well.

Jon: It seems like it was always that, wasn't it?

Tim: I mean, in Psalm 69, "my enemies are the waters". Isaiah 17, "the nations are the raging waters".

Jon: Is anything else described as raging waters?

Tim: Oh, Psalm 46. We opened the series with, "God is our fortress when the mountains totter into the seas when the waters roar." Second stanza, "when the nations roar, and the kingdoms totter. So, yeah. You know, it's just occurred to me - the humans." And that's the wordplay on the bubbling spring...

Jon: Oh, yeah, that is right there.

Tim: ...and the humans. the ad, adam.

Jon: The ad adam. Humans are water.

Tim: The humans are water on page 2. Humans are water.

Jon: So the threat that humans pose can be described as chaotic waters.

Tim: Yeah, chaotic waters. And the peace that humans will experience and create can be described as the river of Eden. But that deeper underlying metaphor—

Jon: Doesn't God provide the river of life?

Tim: Yeah, He does. I think that's why I'm getting hung up here. In Isaiah 2, the nations are the water.

Jon: Yeah. But it's not always.

Tim: No. In fact, I think it's the unique one. I could be wrong about that and the others. As we are going to actually see in the later ones, usually the Torah in God's will and spirit are the waters.

Jon: Maybe the schema is just like the evil of humans is chaotic waters. And then this is kind of an exception on where that ideas flips on its head.

## Chaotic Waters

Tim: Yeah, meaning that safety and life can be described as the river of Eden whether that's metaphorically describing humans or...because in Joel and Zachariah, it's just the river flowing out of the temple bringing life to other people.

Jon: So are we saying that it's danger and death, in general, are chaotic waters or dangers that humans pose are chaotic waters?

Tim: Well, in the examples that we looked at—

Jon: It was all are human.

Tim: ...scanning through other passages in my head because as we're going to see beasts, wild animals pose their own threat. They don't need to be described metaphorically.

Jon: We get it.

Tim: They are their own [inaudible 00:54:30]. In fact, humans can be described as dangerous animals. That's another key image here. How are you feeling about this one? About the waters.

Jon: Good. I just want to know whether it's danger death in general or humans danger in specific.

Tim: I want to stick with how I first formed it...

Jon: Danger and death?

Tim: ...until I looked at a bunch of more examples there. That danger and death can be described as chaotic waters. Sometimes humans are the agents of that. But other times—

Jon: Sometimes it's water.

Tim: Yeah. Or sometimes it's just death itself.

[00:55:03]

Jon: Is death itself described as waters? Probably. It sounds biblical.

Tim: Yeah, I'm trying to think. Yeah, yeah. Gosh, I need to think about it more now. But at least, in this example and the majority coming to my mind, it's usually people who pose the danger. Whereas on the opposite, safety and life is usually provided by God and sometimes through humans. And so that's depicted as the Eden.

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- Jon: So how does this rivering up Isaiah 2 fit into the scheme of that? It seems like it breaks it a little bit.
- Tim: Well, already in Genesis 2, humans are connected metaphorically to the spring bubbling up to the ground. and so it seems like Isaiah, he's paid attention to that and now he is—
- Jon: Reversing it.
- Tim: Yeah, and creating a new image out of that narrative. Parallelism between the human and the spring.
- Jon: He's taking a slot of the metaphorical scheme, and then he's turning it upside down in order to make a point.
- Tim: Well, but in Eden, the bubbling waters and the humans aren't bad. He's just reversing the direction of the river.
- Jon: Yeah.
- Tim: That's right because there's already an existing idea that the unification of humanity will be this great humanity's pilgrimage to the new Jerusalem, and this is the first place where it's expressed. So let's just back up. We're going to go through more examples. These images are powerful. Like they're talking about deep transcendent hopes and longing.
- Jon: Yeah. Peace with mankind, and—
- Tim: Safety and stability in the world. Peace with God. Peace with each other. Hope that one day, humans will stop killing each other. And these poems, like T.S. Eliot, would say, are performing raids on the inarticulate. These images are putting things in a way that you couldn't try and explain straightforwardly if you wanted to. The poem does even more than what normal words could say, and there's the power of metaphorical imagery in biblical poetry.
- Jon: Okay. So we said we're going to go through four but for the sake of the podcast and ourselves, we're just going to go through the two.
- Tim: Yeah, those two.
- Jon: The two are really good ones, and they work together really well. And I think we're only going to have time for two in the video.
- Tim: In the video.



# Chaotic Waters

Jon: I feel a little overloaded, and I think this would be a good place to stop and try to distill all of this that we've been putting all together. So we'll write this video and it will come out in how to read the bible series, how to read biblical poetry metaphor. And I'm looking forward to it.

Tim: Yeah, me too. I think for me, the hope is that the video and the podcast help us see that metaphors aren't just like a way of being artsy. They're first of all, fundamental to how we perceive reality. I think an impoverished human doesn't have enough metaphors to live by in their life. So I think these images enrich our experience in the world.

And two, for me the thing about Lakoff that was so helpful was the deep interconnections of metaphors that we think in and speak in. And so then, of course, that's true how imagery works in the Bible, that it's all interconnected. There's really just a handful basic concept metaphors that drive a vast majority of all of the different varieties of imagery.

Jon: These two are going to cover so much of the bible because they are all over

Tim: Yeah, totally.

Jon: They're all over.

Tim: Yeah. Whether it's God as a rock, refuge, fortress, the high rock, the temple garden. And it's all connected. Yeah, that kind of thing. This is so helpful.

Jon: Actually, that leads me to your question then. Do you think the value of us seeing these two metaphors in specific that we gone over is that now we can understand more of what the Bible's doing and see as reading the bible so we can appreciate it more, or is it it needs to actually become a metaphor that we live by?

[1:00:09]

Tim: Oh, I see.

Jon: You know?

Tim: Yeah, yeah, yeah, I hear that.

Jon: I guess it's important that I start thinking about danger and death like chaotic waters. I do a little bit. I mean you get an idea when you're standing by a raging sea that you feel the power and stuff. And so it doesn't get that far and it's not that far from my

## Chaotic Waters

imagination, but it doesn't saturate my experience in the way it does these biblical authors. I mean that obviously is very immersed in this metaphor.

Tim: Yeah, sure, There's one level just the biblical authors, it certainly expands and enriches our humanity to have another culture's set of imagery. So that's one level on which it works. You don't even have to be religious to let the Bible enrich your life on that level. But yeah, I think the point when use metaphor is, also isn't the metaphor itself it's trying to draw people towards the reality. And in this case, it's realities of peace with God, safety, and stability, what we hope for in the future, whether the future has anything worth hoping for in it. And so man, throw every metaphor you want at those, I think.

Jon: Well, because we have said that, the metaphor you use does shape the way you think about things.

Tim: I understand.

Jon: Which then can make you act differently.

Tim: I see.

Jon: So there are better metaphors than other.

Tim: Yeah, go it.

Jon: But not always, I supposed.

Tim: Well, personally, I have found - we didn't talk about this, this is the third example, the one we didn't talk about, but the depiction of humans are animals—

Jon: We are.

Tim: We are.

Jon: Mammals.

Tim: And then also, that humans at their worst can become like animals. And that's all through the Psalms, you can describe your enemies like animals. In the book of Daniel, the true, the human one is somebody who allows themselves to be trampled by the animal instincts of humanity that are depicted like wild beasts trampling through the human ones. And to be truly human is to rule the beasts. That's the way that one goes and I found that personally very helpful.

Jon: Rule the beast.

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- Tim: Yes, yeah. I've got a beast inside me that needs to mature if I'm going to reflect God's image very well. To be honest, adopting that my base or instincts are, they're beneath me. They're literally less than human part of me.
- Jon: It's kind of dualistic way of thinking.
- Tim: You think?
- Jon: Yeah, like the instinctual kind of mammalian part of me needs to be subdued by some more divine—
- Tim: Well, may I'll say redirected and matured. Matured. But like if I ate all the sugar and fat...
- Jon: That I want to eat
- Tim: ...that my body wants to consume when I taste it, that's what I'm talking about. Whether it's sex, sleep, food, just selfishness. So, the biblical imagery depicts all of that.
- Jon: It's about ruling over yourself.
- Tim: Correct. That's right. So humans are animals. To me, that's been an immensely helpful metaphorical scheme that's helped me make sense of my own life.
- Jon: I like it too. In fact, I told Tristan the other year, we're driving, and I said, "You know, humans are animals." I was actually thinking about how that something that I never really thought about—
- Tim: Sure.
- Jon: But we are. But we're also—
- Tim: We're unique creatures among the animals.
- Jon: Creature among the animals.
- Tim: Totally.
- Jon: Given the [unintelligible 01:04:18] day, but we are animals and it was super helpful for me to deal with all these impulses, all this biology, all this stuff. It was a revelation for me. I'm an animal.
- Tim: No wonder I behave like one.

# Chaotic Waters

Jon: Rule the beast.

Tim: Yeah, totally. So that's one that's been really helpful for me. We've both talked about the gardening human life as a garden. Let's define the mental biblical image and idea of cultivating your life, all this stuff about gardening. The human calling is gardening.

Jon: That's really good.

Tim: I feel like this has been helpful for both of us. Vocation as gardening.

[1:05:00]

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: So, I do think that these biblical metaphors, there's a reason why the Spirit I think, I assume, has guided the authors to write the Scriptures.

Jon: I guess it makes me wonder if we shouldn't use the metaphors we use to explain what we're talking about. The illustration. The metaphors we use as illustrations. If they shouldn't be metaphors that are good to adopt...Because they chaos waters ones to me kind of feels like it's helpful because now you can unders—

Tim: Makes sense of the Bible.

Jon: Makes sense so much more for the Bible.

Tim: Yes.

Jon: It's like, "Why are they talking about waters there? Oh, okay." But it doesn't have the same oomph as gardening as vocation.

Tim: I understand. You're less likely to introduce that into a more public conversation.

Jon: Right.

Tim: Like if you're doing a Ted Talk or something. So are you trying to connect with people who aren't religious but if you feel like, 'Yeah, this biblical image is compelling and could bring in non-religious people to speak their language.'

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: Although there is something about, I don't know man, it really depends on where you live, I think because the danger of the waters is a really basic...

Jon: It's a real threat.

## Chaotic Waters

- Tim: ...human experience for many humans for a lot of human history. And it is today still. Whatever you think about the debate of the oceans rising and what that means for erosion and stuff like that.
- Jon: I'm going to sit with this. I'm going to try to think about every conflict in metaphorical language of drowning and see what it does.
- Tim: Yeah, that's interesting. Sure, do that. Have you ever, not drowned, but always drowned? Have you ever been drowning?
- Jon: No. I don't think so. I've been held underwater uncomfortably long. Like you're wrestling with someone in a pool as a kid and you get stuck for a little too long. Just that panic.
- Tim: Yeah, it kicks in. You realize I am overpowered here.
- Jon: Yeah. And I've been out surfing or something where I'm like, "Am I going to get back to shore? I'm getting pulled out pretty far, pretty fast." But I never really actually almost drowned. Have you? You saved a kid from drowning.
- Tim: I did. That was terrifying. I don't know. I don't remember very much of it, to be honest. I think my body just kicked in. Yeah, it was this tall wave on the Oregon coast.
- Jon: Sneaker wave.
- Tim: Sneaker wave. There wasn't one like it before, there wasn't one like it after. But man, and it carried all of everybody's stuff away and some little kids, and I grabbed one. What I remember was, I was like, this water is only up to my waist and that kid's going out and just once I grabbed him and tried to stay planted while the water was receding. It was very difficult. It was so freaky.
- Jon: You would have gone sucked right up.
- Tim: It was just waist-high water. And then when the mom was describing what it was like when she was running from the wave, overtaken her baby's swept away, she was describing what it was like to try and grab her baby and overpowered by the water. She was describing that experience.
- Jon: Oh, my gosh. You know what?
- Tim: It was terrible.
- Jon: Being overpowered by water, that is...I've experienced that in a river.

## Chaotic Waters

Tim: Oh, sure. It's deceiving.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: Yeah, it's deceiving.

Jon: All of a sudden you're like, "Woo, this is..."

Tim: So much energy.

Jon: So much energy. There's nothing I can do.

Tim: Yeah, totally helpless. Yeah so, yeah, those kinds of experiences is really intense. And so for the most part, we stay away from the waters. Like it's just buried inside of us, like we just know how to stay away. It's the fundamental image of the threat to human life on page 1 of the Bible. So, speaking of the human condition.

Jon: I've spent a lot of time in pools as far as water goes.

Tim: A little different.

Jon: A little different. Not much chaos.

Tim: Yeah, totally.

Jon: Not much threat.

Tim: Yeah. Chaotic waters. So, the story of Jesus calming the waters, it's tapping into all of this - the Gospel Narratives.

Jon: It's not just like, "Hey, that was a cool miracle. Let's add that one."

Tim: No, no. It's very specifically chosen, that memory from the Apostles. There's a reason why it's in all the Gospels. It's tapping into both Genesis 1 and Exodus 15.

[1:10:00]

Jon: And walking on the water?

Tim: Yeah, and walking on the water. Yeah, totally. It's all of this command over the chaotic waters. And this time it's not Yahweh the cloud rider, right? It's the man, Jesus. That's story's awesome.

## Chaotic Waters

Jon: Thank you for listening to this episode of The Bible Project podcast. We're going to do a question and response episode about biblical metaphors, biblical imagery, so, if you have a question, send it to [info@jointhebibleproject.com](mailto:info@jointhebibleproject.com).

Please make an audio recording of your question. You can use your phone or computer or whatever you have and try to keep it to that twenty-second. Also, make sure to give us your name, where you're from. You can send that again to [info@jointhebibleproject.com](mailto:info@jointhebibleproject.com).

This episode was produced by Dan Gummel and he's part of all the free resources that we have at the Bible Project. We have videos that explore the Bible and show how it's one unified story that leads to Jesus.

You could find those videos at [YouTube.com/thebibleproject](https://YouTube.com/thebibleproject). You can also find everything we've got, it's at [thebibleproject.com](https://thebibleproject.com). Thanks for being part of this with us.

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