

Navigating the Ocean of Life



THE THIRD DAY
“the gathered waters
he called ‘seas.’
And God saw that
it was good.”

Genesis 1:11

*“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.”
Genesis 1:1-2*

The Ocean.

It has depths that cannot be plumbed but also shallow shores that blend seamlessly into land. Yet even the shores have great variations: rocky and overhung by huge cliffs or silken smooth with the finest particles of sand. It is dark and impenetrable so that even in the shallows the bottom cannot be seen, but at times so clear that sea floors of great depths are visible. This is the ocean of life, the sea of humanity: mysterious and compelling, with treasures to be plumbed and wisdom to be prized.

The Ocean as Life’s Mirror

Life is often compared to a journey, but perhaps no metaphor captures its vastness, unpredictability, and beauty quite like the ocean. Storms give way to calms; it harbors mysteries and yields revelations; hides treasures yet beckons the treasure seeker—all speaking to the emotional and spiritual waters we navigate each day.

A Landscape of Contrasts and Contradictions

Standing at ocean's edge, one may be greeted by the rhythmic crash of waves or the gentle whisper of the breeze. Just as the shoreline changes—from jagged cliffs that echo with the roar of waves to stretches of soft, warm sand that invite bare feet—life itself presents us with varied landscapes, each holding its own challenges and comforts.

A Reflection of Our Inner Lives

The ocean's moods often mirror our emotional landscapes. Mountain-high waves and thunderous, crashing surf resemble moments of sudden loss, difficult decisions, and unforeseen setbacks. Anxiety and uncertainty roar like breakers on a rocky coast.

At other times, the ocean becomes glassy and serene. Peace settles in—much like quiet mornings, time with loved ones, or moments of prayer that anchor and restore us. We find peace and restoration.

Sometimes the water is dark and impenetrable, hiding the ocean floor just as life sometimes hides its meaning. Other times, startling clarity reveals the depths beneath, much like those rare moments when purpose becomes unmistakable.

These changing waters remind us that life oscillates between the predictable rhythm of tides and the sudden chaos of storms.

Faith—Our Anchor and Compass

Life's emotional tides — joy, grief, hope, and doubt — rise and fall much like the tides. Navigating them requires more than instinct.

Just as sailors once followed the stars or a trusted compass, we too need guidance. Trusting in our Creator, the architect of the sea and the Author of life, we are anchored when waves of fear threaten to overwhelm, given direction when the fog of anxiety blurs the mind, and reassured of companionship when feeling adrift and alone.

Faith steadies us, reminding us we are never abandoned in the vast waters.

Listening with the Soul

When we tune into the ocean's sounds and scents and reflect on its ever-shifting moods, we gain insight into our own emotional and spiritual voyages. It's listening with the soul.

The ocean of life is a journey across these stunning contrasts; jarring crises and soothing thoughts, demonic fears and peaceful acceptance.

Navigating this vast ocean with trust in God builds resilience, invites peace, and strengthens hope. Like the Psalms, the ocean teaches us to embrace both the wild beauty and the calm depths of life.

How to Navigate This Ocean of Life

Life unfolds along oceanic extremes—between the frightening and the beautiful, the visible and the hidden, the simple and the mysterious.

Navigating these extremes with trust in the Creator not only provides us with comfort but also empowers us to face life's storms with resilience and hope.

To navigate these waters we must rely on the Giver of Life. Humanity builds lighthouses, sets buoys, and draws charts to guide vessels safely. Scripture is all of these and more, spoken by omniscience, sustained by omnipotence, offered in divine love.

The third day “the gathered waters he called ‘seas.’ And God saw that it was good.”

Genesis 1:11

The ocean of our life hovers between chaotic, empty darkness and what is Godly good. It is God the Holy Spirit that brings us from one to the other.

Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distress.

He turneth the storm to calm, so that the waves thereof are still.

When they are quieted, they are glad, and he bringeth them unto the haven, where they would be.

Let them therefore confess before the Lord his loving kindness, and his wonderful works before the sons of men.

Psalms 107:28-31, 1599 Geneva Bible

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