

# *He Spoke of Fish*

TESTIMONIES OF WISDOM

by

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*Creation Speech* 

*Testimonies of Wisdom*



Streams and everything in them were made by Jesus and upheld so we may know Him.

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**COVER PHOTO:** Rainbow trout, April 12, 2023

TO THE PRAISE OF THE  
*Multi-Splendor of God's Wisdom*  
*and the Glory of His Grace*



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# Introduction

God pours out speech every day to us through His creation (Psalm 19). He reveals the truth of His Word in the things that He causes as testimonies of wisdom. This book is laid out as a story of how God inspired a year of knowing Him better through fishing. He spoke in each part of the journey with illustrations of His Word. For example, salmon swimming through shallow streams to their spawning grounds illustrated the Christian life of pressing on for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. I had great expectations through the adventure because Solomon spoke of fish as he taught others with wisdom.

*“And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding beyond measure. ... He also spoke 3,000 proverbs, and his songs were 1,005. He spoke of trees. ... He spoke also of beasts, and of birds, and of reptiles, and of fish. And people of all nations came to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and from all the kings of the earth, who had heard of his wisdom.”*  
(1 KINGS 4:29a, 32-34)

From a young age, I enjoyed watching and learning about fish. I watched tropical fish in an aquarium in my bedroom for hours. My dad taught me how to fish on farm streams for Brook Trout. We fished on family vacations in northern Wisconsin, the boundary waters of Minnesota, and in the northwest territories of Canada. We caught walleye, northern pike, bass, perch, and bluegills, and Mom cooked them and listened to our stories around the table. The encouragement of relatives and friends also inspired interest. Knowledge that I gained was passed on to my children. The next few pages feature some highlights from the early days.

We did not live close to water in Colorado, and so in the last decade, fishing became a once-a-year experience while on vacation in the Beartooth Mountains of Wyoming. That all changed, as you will see, by being asked to teach some friends how to fly fish. I hope my photographs help you to feel like you were there in each adventure and encourage you to explore and meditate on God's works and everyday speech. The purpose is to know God better and enjoy Him.

# *Early Days*



# Dad Allan



May 20, 1999 40 1/4 inches 17# Little Green Lake  
Allan brings 5:05 pm  
Russell, Erwin, James & myself had a good time.  
Erwin will tell you how tough it was to  
get the musky into the net & the boat.

Dad





# *Grandpa John Clay*



## Uncle John Clay



“We consider life, its day-to-day happenings, the environment that we share with other creatures, those creatures themselves, the objects that we observe, from the great booming galaxies to the sub-microscopic viruses, as being deeply informed with the spiritual working of an infinite, ‘ineffable’ God. These workings emerge as ‘events’ in our lives that affect our being and shape our souls.”

Christmas, 1996

The following pages provide text and pieces of art that John displayed at his show at the Arts Chateau, Butte, Montana in May 1997.



## *The Gift of Fishing*

“My father shared his time with me when he took me fishing.

It was with this experience, his gift of fishing,  
that I was first introduced to the mysteries of this life,  
including death and the interrelatedness of things,  
and the miraculous variation of forms.”

John Clay







## *Reliquary for a Brown Trout*

“Some of my earliest memories include the  
startling colors of a Redwing Blackbird’s wing,  
the transient colors of a freshly-caught trout,  
and the sky blue through the leaves overhead.

Lets just say, for now, that at times there are those qualities in a moment that stir us in  
such a way that we desire to find out all we can about it.

For me those moments led to an intuitive affirmation that there exists behind experience  
something of which the event ‘Betokens.’ ”

John Clay

“For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly  
perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made.”  
(ROMANS 1:20)





# *Big Fish in a Small Pond*

*September 9, 2022*

I decided to go back to learn some more about the Cutthroat Trout in the alpine lake off the Continental Divide Trail. Last time I noticed a faint trail heading to the southeast over the ridge. I would explore that trail to see if it would reveal a different way to the lake that was safer so I could invite friends to come with me sometime. An advantage of coming down the steep side of the mountain was in seeing the rocks. I would like to learn the geology of the area.



View of the rocks west of the alpine lake





© Joseph R. Tomelleri

The young fish that I caught had the same red patches along the side as a drawing that Joseph Tomelleri made from a live specimen of a Greenback from Bear Creek, April 2022.





Then, to my surprise, my pole bent strong when a strong fish took the submerged caddis fly. The trout stayed deep, so I was concerned that I might not find out what I caught if it got loose. I was quite pleased to capture this photograph of the apparent mature male Greenback.

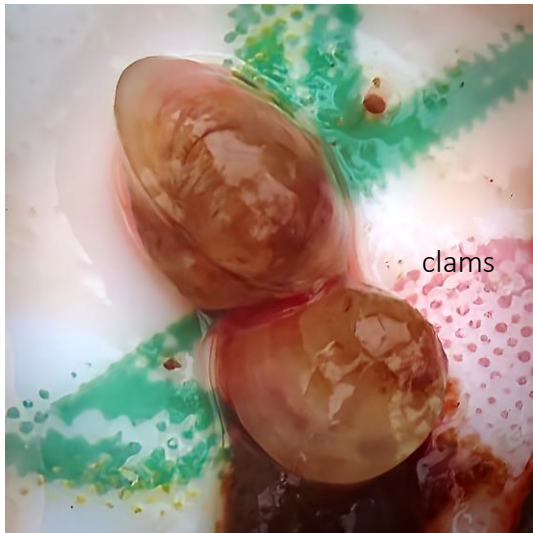


The last fish of the day gave another thrill. It was exciting to see the flashes of red color as it dashed around in the water.



The new trail I sought went up from the south side of the lake, around a mountain, and then west back to a road that goes to the parking lot. It was an easier route to and from the lake. While exploring, I was also blessed to see this herd of elk in the far distance heading into the forest where the stream flows from the lake.

“You make springs gush forth in the valleys;  
they flow between the hills;  
they give drink to every beast of the field; ...  
From your lofty abode you water the mountains;  
the earth is satisfied with the fruit of your work.” (PSALM 104:10, 11a, 13)



When I examined the contents of a trout's stomach, I was surprised to see tiny clams in addition to Scuds (freshwater shrimp). These appeared to be Lake Fingernailclams (*Musculium lacustre*), which reportedly are common in high-elevation lakes.

"O LORD, how manifold are your works!  
In wisdom have you made them all;  
the earth is full of your creatures ...  
These all look to you,  
to give them their food in due season." (PSALM 104:24, 27)

# *New Friend and Guide*

*September 13-16, 2022*

I sought to learn more about the fish in Colorado. So I joined a Facebook group called “I Fish Colorado” to learn from other fishermen. There were 30,000 members. So when I started posting photographs of rare fish like the Tiger and Greenback trout, Shawnon Stanley was concerned that people could flock to those small lakes and ruin them. He sent me a note on Facebook Messenger. I replied, saying that I would remove the locations from my posts. Then Shawnon asked if I knew that one could catch three- to four-pound trout just a couple hours into Wyoming. I asked if he needed any company. He said yes. Soon I was on an adventure to Laramie, WY. I learned much from Shawnon as I observed him catching more and larger fish than me. Here he is with a Brown Trout on September 13, 2022. The blue spot behind the eye of the fish was not uncommon for the species.



“The heart of man plans his way,  
but the LORD establishes his  
steps.”  
(PROVERBS 16:9)







The Brown Trout eggs were very colorful. Where did the pigment come from? What I could figure was that it came from a diet of crustaceans (Scuds, crayfish, zooplankton), and the pigments moved from the flesh to the maturing eggs at spawning time in the fall where they can serve to protect the contents as well as optimize the survival and growth of the newly hatched trout (alevins). The wisdom of the Creator was on display.





Crayfish found in a Brown Trout's stomach provide carotenoid pigments that are a source of color for the fish's flesh and eggs.



Ready to scoop up a Brown Trout in the net so the fish would not break the line when it was lifted out of the water. September 16, 2022, Wyoming.



Beautiful male Brown Trout caught on a lure that was made to look like a young Rainbow Trout. Before the curse caused by Adam and Eve's sin in the Garden of Eden, animals only ate plants and other non-breathing creatures without blood—perhaps zooplankton. I have hope for the future because the risen Christ Jesus is restoring all things.

*“Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist,  
and faithfulness the belt of his lions.  
The wolf shall dwell with the lamb ...  
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.” (ISAIAH 11:5-6a, 7b)*



Knowing that a piece of  
God's art was hidden in  
the water below, we were  
motivated to

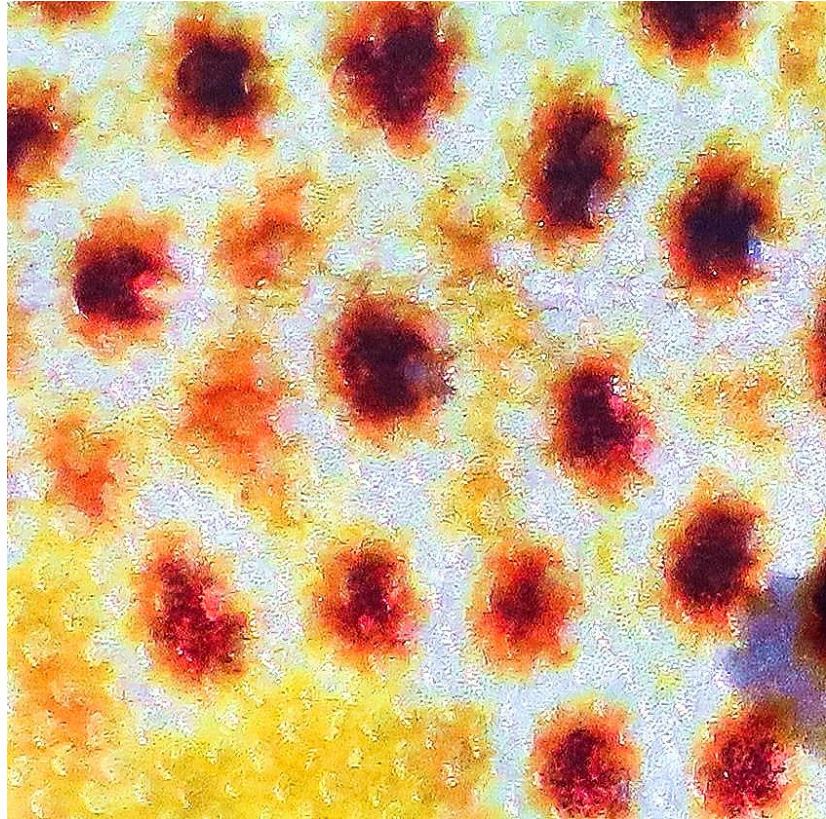
lure it to a hook,

feel the tug,

hear the drag sing,

see the splash,

and delight our eyes with  
the gift.



“On the glorious splendor of your majesty,  
and on your wondrous works, I will meditate.  
They shall speak of the might of your awesome deeds,  
and I will declare your greatness.  
They shall pour forth the fame of your abundant goodness  
and shall sing aloud of your righteousness.” (PSALM 145:5-7)

# Solomon Spoke Also of Fish

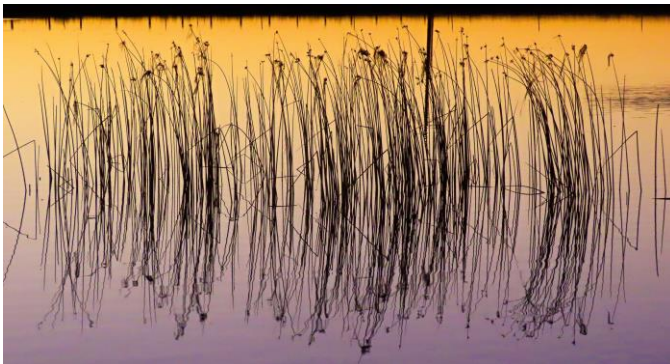
September, 2022

With the unexpected series of opportunities to fish, I started to wonder if God was calling me to do a book about fish. I remembered that Solomon spoke of fish with wisdom as I mentioned in the introduction.

“And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding beyond measure, and breadth of mind like the sand on the seashore, so that Solomon’s wisdom surpassed the wisdom of all the people of the east and all the wisdom of Egypt. ... He spoke of trees ... He spoke also of beasts, and of birds, and of reptiles, and of fish.” (1 KINGS 4:29, 33)

So I expected that fish and fishing adventures would illustrate wisdom from the Word about God and His will. I prayed, “Lord God, help me to see and learn what You want me to know about You and share it with others for Your glory.”

“ ‘For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you. You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart.’ ” (JEREMIAH 29:11-13)



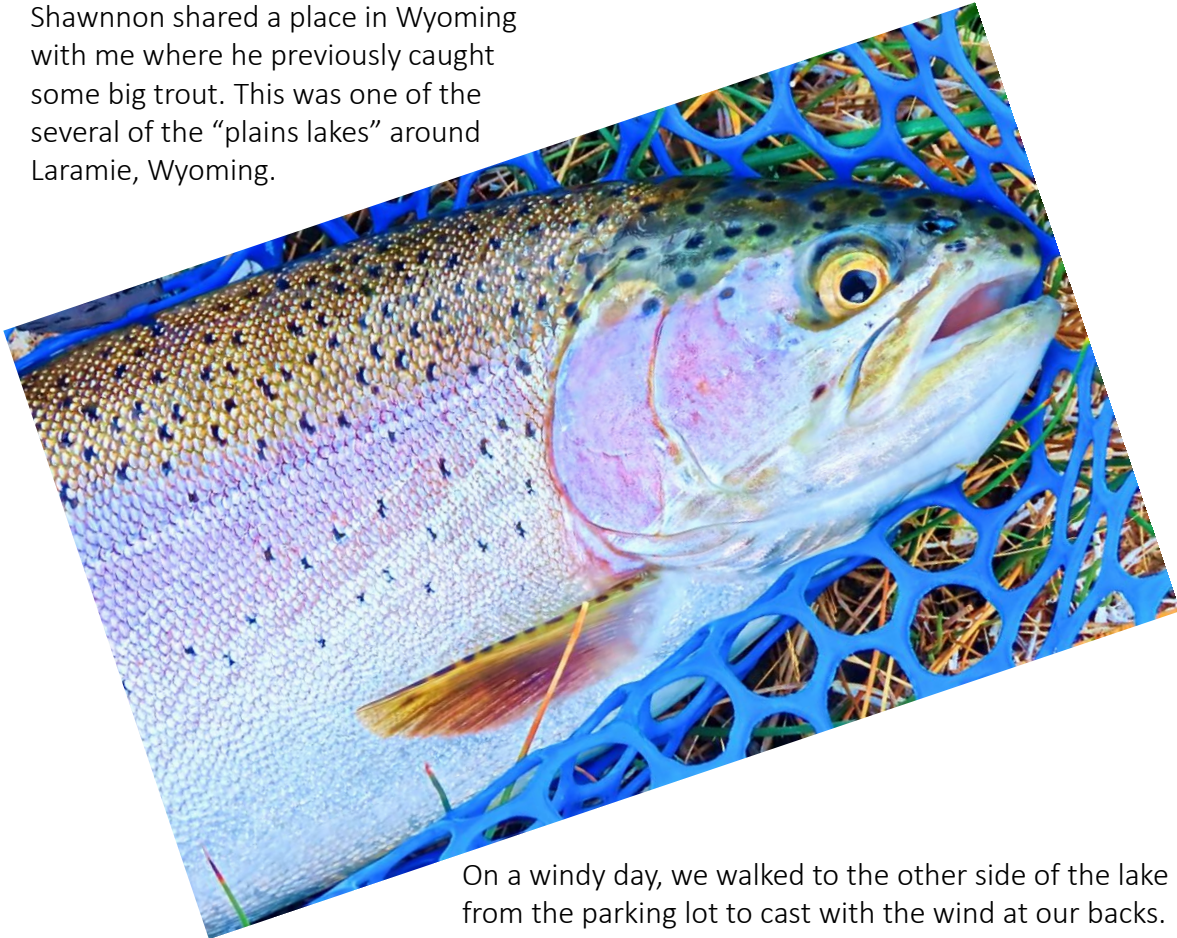
Reeds reflected in the water early in the morning. They are like the humble whom the Lord Jesus strengthens.

“ ‘A bruised reed he will not break ... until he brings justice to victory.’ ” (MATTHEW 12:20)

# *Rainbows in the Water*

*September 13-17, 2022*

Shawnon shared a place in Wyoming with me where he previously caught some big trout. This was one of the several of the “plains lakes” around Laramie, Wyoming.



On a windy day, we walked to the other side of the lake from the parking lot to cast with the wind at our backs. Walking out from the shallow shoreline in his waders, Shawnon landed this nice 20-inch Rainbow Trout, September 13, 2022.



One can see why these fish were named after rainbows. (September 27; October 5)

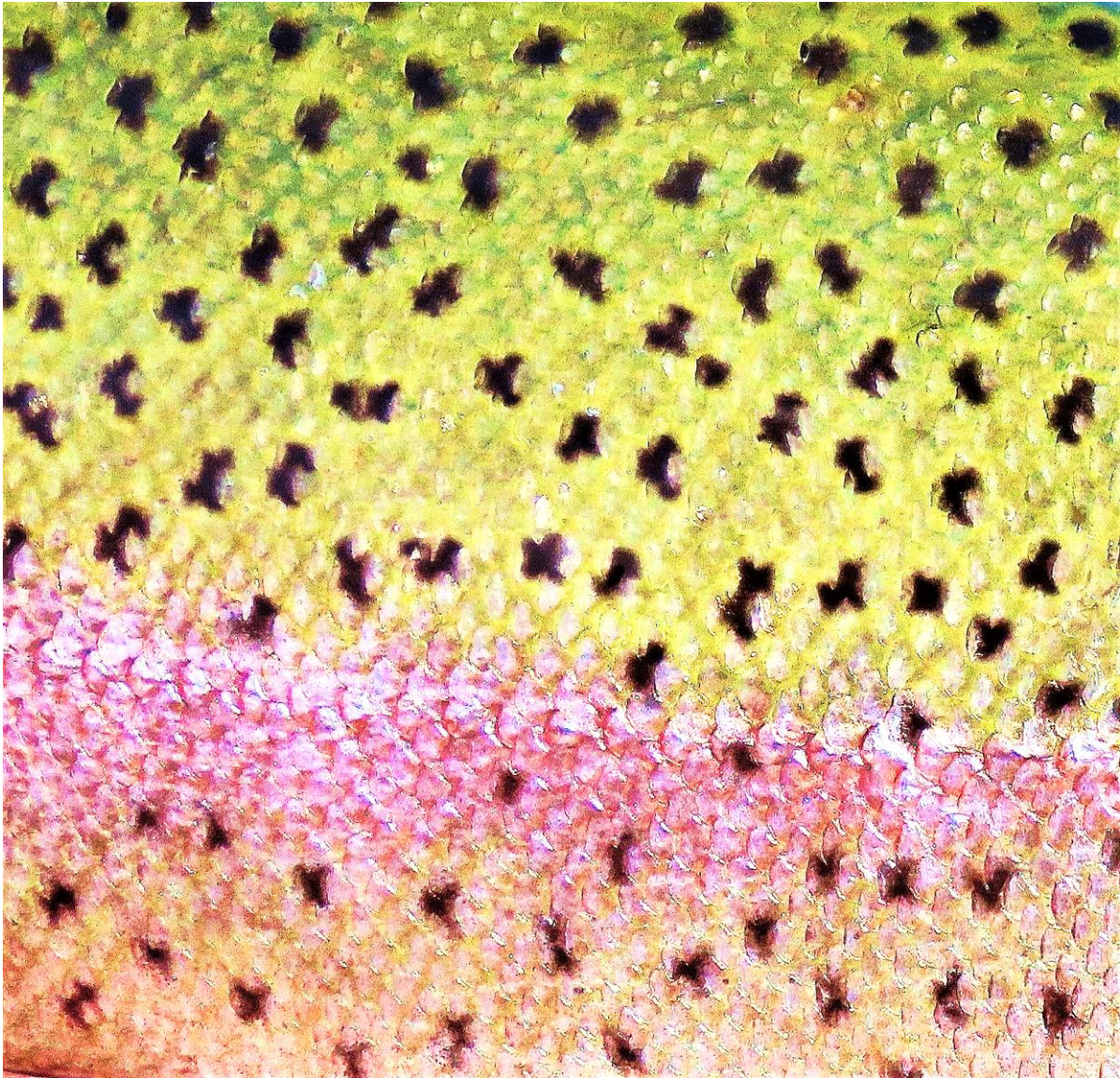


I lifted the rainbow to put it in the sky. Rainbows are not only on fish and in the sky but also around the throne where Jesus sits in heaven.

“At once I was in the Spirit, and behold, a throne stood in heaven, with one seated on the throne. And he who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian, and around the throne was a rainbow that had the appearance of an emerald.” (REVELATION 4:2-3)







“For not all flesh is the same, but there is one kind for humans, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish.” (1 CORINTHIANS 15:39)



The trout reflect the beauty of the Maker-Jesus.

“One thing have I asked of the LORD,  
that will I seek after:  
that I may dwell in the house of the LORD  
all the days of my life,  
to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD  
and to inquire in his temple.” (PSALM 27:4)