

God Is Our Dwelling Place

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Psalm 90: 1-2

¹Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations.

²Before the mountains were born

Or You gave birth to the earth and the world,

Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.

Centuries ago, mankind was ignorant in many respects; ignorant and more at the mercy of what they believed was the hand of God in their lives. The ancients did not know weather patterns, the barometric highs and lows, what caused hurricanes or lightning, the winds, or the tempests on the seas. They were ignorant of the actual physical processes and scientific causes, and so ascribed them to God, or as the pagans believed, to various gods. Anything bad that happened or anything good that happened was because of God's intervention.

Those were simple times, shrouded in myth, legend, and superstition.

Today, we live in a world of greater knowledge in terms of the physical universe. For instance, we know that earthquakes are caused by movements in the earth's tectonic plates. We know that tsunamis are caused by various natural phenomena, such as earthquakes under the oceans.

We know that diseases are caused by viruses, germs, bacteria, and infection. We know that wind is caused as low pressures form, and

that rising warm air cools into clouds, and massive warm air colliding with cool air creates storms.

We know that crimes and man-made calamities are caused by choices that people make by whatever nefarious or conflicted reasoning they use.

Today we are surrounded by accurate information about the world, whereas the ancients were ignorant. Yet at times, our attitudes and concepts of God remain ancient. There are those who still believe, for instance, that earthquakes and hurricanes and terrorist attacks are retribution from God; that the Swine Flu and Aids were sent by God as punishment, and that global warming is God's hand descending in judgment upon his evil children.

This is the way of folklore, fable, and oral tradition passing down memorable allegories through eons of generations.

Some people still believe that if they pray hard enough, their football team will win the Super Bowl; as if somehow God has a stake in the outcome, swayed only by the power of who prays the longest and hardest.

Some people still cling to the Old Testament concept of an angry and punishing God, although we understand now that God does not and nor has He ever manipulated the environment to His ends. Christ taught that God is a God of Love; Paul confirms that in John 4:8 when he says: God is love.

The Bible says that God does not change; I agree. I am certainly no mystic and do not have the same insights about God as does the Christ. But when Jesus described a loving, trustworthy, giving and forgiving Heavenly Father, bringing warmth and life giving rain upon the good as well as the bad – I believe that. Jesus described a just God, one who has designed a Universe where our actions and decisions dictate our results. He described a powerful God, where “With God all things are possible.” Jesus tells us of the intimate relationship we have with God: that He knows our name, ‘sees what is done in secret’ and ‘knows our need before we ask.’

So I also believe that Jesus, the Jew and scholar, studied all the same Old Testament gospels that we do today and despite all that he read he concluded that God is a loving God, a forgiving God, our Father, our Poppa, our Daddy.

I tend to believe the conclusions of Christ. So to say that God does not change and to conclude that God is a God of love must mean that He has always been a God of love despite what we think the Old Testament teaches. Perhaps we just do not understand those words correctly, or we are not reading the words from the right perspective, the perspective of Christ.

Of course, the Christ also brought us a new commandment, which is to ‘love each other, as I have loved you’. I don’t know, but I think the Christ was attempting to bring us out of darkness, fear, and ignorance, and establish a new focus – one of infinite unselfish love.

But condemnation and judgment are easy concepts to embrace and difficult to dismiss; they are simple and effective ways for the

powerful to control and influence us and have us believe that God is casting judgment on others that think and live differently than we do. We are still being controlled by fear as in the folklore of ancient man.

Christ came to teach us a lesson of love, not fear; of freedom, not bondage.

I believe that God fashioned the building blocks for Creation and set into motion the physical laws that rule our physical Universe. Whatever science discovers will fall under the physical laws that exist. If there is something newly discovered that seems to contradict a physical law, it will simply be something we previously did not know. It will eventually be found not to be in conflict with those laws at all, or else we will modify the law to reflect and include our new knowledge, information, and perspective.

I dare believe that we are still ignorant of most knowledge, both physical and spiritual. Anything we know today is merely the surface luster of what there is to know.

So God created the Universe, unimaginably vast. Yet in this one infinitesimal speck of time and space, we are here; and like the rest of Creation we are subject to the same physical laws.

But there is more. God's Creation has finally developed to the point where Creation is capable of knowing its Creator. Perhaps it is ignorance and arrogance that compels the human race to set itself apart from all other life forms on the earth and claim

exclusivity in knowing this Presence and Power. But regardless of what other forms of life have a concept of God; we most certainly are aware of a Higher Power.

And that Presence communicates with us. God doesn't speak to us as in the Old Testament, with floods, and other natural calamities. I don't think God speaks to us as a nation, a country or community, or a religion. I have observed that as a nation our awareness is brought to focus by certain natural and national disasters, but I don't interpret this as communication from God. It is more like a child learning that a stove is hot by touching it; it is reactionary – a glimpse into the Law of Cause and Effect: do this, get this.

God speaks to His Children individually; intimately, through the Spirit within us. From the Christ within us, the individualized essence of God within us, we hear, feel, and learn the guidance of God: the whispers of intuition, the yearnings and nudging from within, the gradual – or sudden – awareness of a loving Presence within and around us.

In this tiny speck within the vastness of Creation, God has found an ally through which Creation can continue in a new way. Instead of Creation unfolding in evolutionary terms, through us, God's Children, Creation can achieve revolutionary advancements.

We are capable of changing the face of this earth because of our spiritual connection with our Creator, and through the power of our minds to utilize the knowledge of the physical laws of the universe and apply them not only to the sciences, but to the arts and literature.

This astounding development comes with a price, however: we are free to take our guidance from our Creator, or not. We are free to allow God to express through us individually, or we can sever that connection. But it is from this individual, intimate, inner connection that God affects the greatest changes in the world.

This is the value, therefore, of every single individual on the planet: we each can be a vessel for God's Love, Peace, Joy, and Hope, enabling the Creator to blossom anew into Creation. Conversely, individually we can express the ego-lust and obsessive possessiveness of our human natures into the world.

The choice is ours and ours alone. It is called ... free will.

We are a relatively new creation on earth; our time here has been short and I believe we are still clawing our way up the learning curve. But we are making progress. Individuals like Jesus, Buddha, Muhammad, Krishna, Confucius, the Dali Lama, and the other Enlightened Ones have come to earth to help us focus on our divine natures. Sadly, our human egos can confound their words, and we attempt to confine their ideas and interpret them through the ancient ways of thought: ignorance, myth, superstition, and occasionally even – by fear and control.

As an individual, when we awaken to Spirit close within us, and hear that still small voice, or feel the Presence, or gentle intuitive nudge, then we can focus our spiritual energies on expressing God through us – back into Creation. We finally become aware that we can ask God for help in ways that are keenly different than folklore.

We no longer ask that God take our side in conflict and vanquish the enemy. We stop asking God to take away our suffering, and instead we ask for the peace and the strength to face our challenges and pain. We no longer pray for the poor and hungry to be saved; we pray for God's wisdom to understand, and for God's guidance as to how we can help. How can I as an individual make a difference? How can I serve You more, my God?

Gradually, our concept of God changes from a God 'out there' to a God 'in here'. Our thoughts move away from the idea that God manipulates the environment to punish us or reward us, to the idea that we can allow God's energy and Love to flow through us, affecting changes in situations, people, and the environment to the benefit of others.

God has been our dwelling place, our Source, the place where we 'live and move and have our being' since long before we have been here as a species. Finally, we have grown into the fullness of what God intended: a creature with an awareness of Self, our large self, our spiritual nature; a life form consciously aware of its oneness with all Creation and our Source of Creation.

The next part of our 'awareness journey' is to realize that we are constantly changing, growing, developing, evolving and transforming into what God needs us to be in this moment. So it is my prayer that we continue to ask for God's help; for a greater awareness and sense of our own worth, of who we are, how much we are loved, and how we fit into God's immense and perfect plan.

Let us pray....