

Psalm 104

Read Psalm 1-4:1-4: There is a huge difference between how God appears; and how we perceive him. We are not forced to study him; or deal with him as he deserves. The further we are away from him, the more we think of him just like ourselves. The more that we focus on him and praise him, the more he seems completely different than us. We are expecting him to be glorious; but for now we are pretty relaxed about his greatness.

But as it is written: “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him.” (1 Corinthians 2:9)

The term of God's *greatness* in this verse, is an expression of something that towers far above all around it. God is surrounded by angels; who are themselves completely overwhelming to us. There is no comparison to how much greater angels are than we are in power and glory. Likewise; there is no comparison to how much greater the creator of the angels are than they are. The angels do reflect some attributes of their creator, such as light and power.

Now I, John, saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. Then he said to me, “See that you do not do that. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God.” (Revelation 22:8-9)

Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it. His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men. (Matthew 28:1-4)

Despite their awesome appearance; God is far above all of the angels in his glory. We really cannot see God; but Jesus is the visible image of God that we can relate to.

God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. (Hebrews 1:1-4)

We know that God is literally light. Jesus was transfigured into light.

Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John, and led them up on a high mountain apart by themselves; and He was transfigured before them. His clothes became shining, exceedingly white, like snow, such as no launderer on earth can whiten them. (Mark 9:2-3)

I urge you in the sight of God who gives life to all things, and before Christ Jesus who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate, that you keep this commandment without spot, blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ's appearing, which He will manifest in His own time, He who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power. Amen. (1 Timothy 6:13-16)

This psalm says that God has clothed himself with honor and majesty and light. Clothing can be used as an identifier. For example, we wear *the white robes of the righteousness of Christ*...which gets us into heaven. When God looks at us he sees Jesus. Likewise *the robe of honor and majesty and light* are accurate descriptions of who God is...and what his role is. God is light; is another to also say that he is our enlightenment, or understanding. We are like a mist of basic elements who can think and feel and come to understanding. How is that possible? In heaven, everything is accurate. On earth, Satan portrays himself as a beautiful being. In heaven he is seen as an evil and bloodthirsty dragon. In other words, things tend to get confused down here, and are normally misrepresentations.

God is the source and author of honorable things. That means that he deserves respect and recognition. What happens when we do not give honor to whom honor is due? The 5th Commandment about honoring our father and mother have clear cause-effect impacts on our life. A brat will be a menace to society, his employer and to himself. God is the definition of honor; so we need to allow his Spirit to overrule our natural inclinations to dismiss authority.

Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor. (Romans 13:7)

To refuse to honor God and respect him results in a series of tragic personal failures and reduced states of existence. Only an unreasoning animal would fail to see God's greatness. To willingly do so reduces you to the state of someone who would not know

any better. We become like appetite-driven animals and dumb totem poles as we hide the truth about God.

For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them. (Romans 1:20-32)

One reason that our physical body cannot go to heaven is that it could not survive the fire, and the brightness, and loudness and overwhelming presence of God. Only our spirit could survive. God is a consuming fire that burns all matter. Our spirit and new bodies are built for that environment.

We tend to believe that we can carve out areas of our faith walk and scripture that suit us better than others. That is like saying that we can remove parts of a car engine that bother us...and still have transportation. If you remove the smoking exhaust pipe or loud tires you no longer even have a functioning car.

There is much that we do not understand about how God created the universe; and how he interacts with it. When Job questioned what God was doing in his life, he was inadvertently questioning all that God has done. When Satan got Eve to question God's

goodness towards her, she essentially called the entire garden arrangement into question. The only way that she could see that it was good and right, was to compare it to an unfair and uncaring world. She soon learned how God's plan for her life was far better. She was tricked into believing that things outside of God's plan for her life were better. God allows us to explore the harsh realities outside of his plan for us.

Tell Me, if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements? Surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? To what were its foundations fastened? Or who laid its cornerstone, When the morning stars sang together; And all the sons of God shouted for joy? “Or who shut in the sea with doors, When it burst forth and issued from the womb; When I made the clouds its garment, And thick darkness its swaddling band; When I fixed My limit for it, And set bars and doors; When I said, ‘This far you may come, but no farther, And here your proud waves must stop!’ “Have you commanded the morning since your days began, And caused the dawn to know its place, That it might take hold of the ends of the earth, And the wicked be shaken out of it? (Job 38:5-13)

Another aspect of God's unknowable greatness is his use of angels. He does not need them anymore than he needs us. He empowers them (according to their obedience) to do his work. Somehow, we will judge angels in the future. Who could figure out why a simple being with very limited understanding would be elevated to judge the powerful angels? It might have to do with humility testing for angels.

Read Psalm 104:5-9: God created the earth; and he flooded the earth, in order to create and preserve the future of mankind. Man does not self govern himself well. God created the earth in a way that it would endure, until his purposes are completed. Without our oceans we would have no rain; and we would all die from starvation. No plants would grow. We would also have much more extreme weather. God has created a shoreline that does not change much. The boundary of the oceans is compared to the limitations that God has put on mankind and peoples. The demonic forces are like waves that threaten to pass their beach boundaries. They rise up and tower over us and threaten us; but they always fall. Demonic influences seem to be able to sweep us all away to destruction...but God makes them fall at his appointed limits. The nightly news is a reminder of those threats.

...raging waves of the sea, foaming up their own shame; (Jude 1:13)

When He established the clouds above, When He strengthened the fountains of the deep, When He assigned to the sea its limit, So that the waters would not transgress His command, (Proverbs 8:28-29)

Who have placed the sand as the bound of the sea, By a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass beyond it? And though its waves toss to and fro, Yet they cannot prevail; (Jeremiah 5:22)

Read Psalm 104:10-18: God's true nature and greatness are observed by angels. We tend to just see byproducts of his great nature. We have a god who is all about life and hope. He provides for all of nature as well as for our spiritual development. Rain and springs of water are equated with life and sustenance on earth. Rain is compared to righteousness; because it flows from heaven to earth.

"For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, And do not return there, But water the earth, And make it bring forth and bud, That it may give seed to the sower And bread to the eater, So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it. (Isaiah 55:10-11)

There are comparisons between God's hand in nature, and in our lives. If we lived on a planet with less rain; we would probably have more appreciation for rain. God sustains us and he is glorious and he loves us. God the saints to trees that need water to live and grow and be fruitful.

He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper. (Psalm 1:3)

God uses nature to explain himself and ourselves in a way that we can understand. A tree is something that is rooted down, to withstand the winds and forces in his life. We have to hold onto something much stronger than ourselves to not get tossed around and pushed over. The bible describes demonic forces like the unseen winds that blow against God's path; across this earth. Non Christians are described like unrooted chaff that blows where the winds of pop culture take them. They are not rooted down. We are like trees of righteousness that require a lot of attention to produce sweet fruit. A wild tree (like a natural man) is not so fruitful or useful. Like trees we need a lot of water; which is compared to scripture. When we go without reading scripture we just dry up; and we are not too useful to those around us. It says here that we are like trees that are full of sap. The sap is the plant sugars and natural insecticides that produce plant vigor and repel

pests. A dry tree is a host to all kinds of pests and diseases. We need to protect our temple (body). We are a combination of body, soul and spirit that needs to have good health and vitality. Growing fruit takes a lot of work for the farmer. We should appreciate God's hand on all of our affairs. Trees get pruned back; and we need to part ways with deadwood in our lives too. A tree cannot be as fruitful if it does not get pruned. Areas of our life may not appear to be compromised; but it may just be taking up valuable resources and time that could be used better elsewhere. We are frequently disappointed, disillusioned , and often unhappy. It seems like things are not going our way. God is taking away comfortable but unfruitful areas of our lives; while he is making room for new growth. All unpleasant things are blessings or bridges to a better state of living. There are no exceptions to this.

And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. (Romans 8:28)

Read Psalm 104:19-23: Life is filled with cycles. We have peaks and valleys according to the lessons that we need to learn. Hardships are typically the only means to have a spiritual breakthrough. We are like turkeys that need to get cooked at a specific temperature and time. Unbelievers tend to fall to their weaknesses; but believers tend to fall to their strengths (areas of confidence). Job was an example of a very faithful man who was a worry wart over his family and his assets. In a sense, he had everything to lose and nothing to gain. When it all came down on him, and he had catastrophic losses he said that the very thing that he had been obsessing about finally happened to him. He had no peace with his blessings. God fixed all of that. Job had cycles in his life. He was rich and poor, healthy and nearly dead, well respected and ridiculed and disrespected. Nature has cycles and durations like our lives.

God has created our world to have a cycle of nights and days, months and years. The animal kingdom is divided between nocturnal and daytime animals. The moon and stars serve multiple purposes for us.

Then God said, “Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years; and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth”; and it was so. Then God made two great [d]lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. He made the stars also. God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from

the darkness. And God saw that it was good. So the evening and the morning were the fourth day. (Genesis 1:14-19)

The stars and moon play a role in our necessary seasons. We could not survive without the rain of winter; or the time of summer. The moon creates all of our tides and waves; which keep the ocean alive.

“While the earth remains, Seedtime and harvest, Cold and heat, Winter and summer; And day and night Shall not cease.” (Genesis 8:22)

Solomon focused on the patterns of nature; and how his life seemed to have cycles and repetitive events. This pattern became very depressing to him, as he tried to break through the patterns and find a new high. The missing component for him was the basic understanding of what makes us whole. We think that pleasure and accomplishment can fill this void. It cannot.

I communed with my heart, saying, “Look, I have attained greatness, and have gained more wisdom than all who were before me in Jerusalem. My heart has understood great wisdom and knowledge.” And I set my heart to know wisdom and to know madness and folly. I perceived that this also is grasping for the wind. For in much wisdom is much grief, And he who increases knowledge increases sorrow. (Ecclesiastes 1:16-18)

God has made us play a missing part in the lives of others too. I cannot be made whole and complete if I am only looking in the mirror. My life will always have gaps and frustrations. I receive a boost when I help other people. We are wounded healers who become healed as we become God’s hands and feet.

Read Psalm 104:24-35: Nature teaches us about our creator. God is the author of provision, good change, control, wisdom and joy. What seems like random events of the sunrise and traffic and the weather are today’s blessings concealed. We have to know what we are looking at; and not confused when our momentary goal gets run over by God’s goal for us.

We need to begin each day with a clear understanding that we control nothing at all; except to make the right decisions over prayer. When things take a turn for the worst; it is on God to see us through. We learn during those times that we are holding the steering wheel too tight. Hold on a little more loosely; and trust where this is all leading. The birds of the sky don’t worry; and they seem to get their needs taken care of.

Are not two sparrows sold for a [i]copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father's will. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows. (Matthew 10:29-30)