

Reflections by the Pond

THE WRITINGS OF DAVID S LAMPEL



From the rising of the sun to its setting
The name of Yahweh is to be praised.
Yahweh is high above all nations;
His glory is above the heavens.
Who is like Yahweh our God,
The One who sits on high,
The One who brings Himself low to see
The things in heaven and on the earth?
Who raises the poor from the dust
And lifts high the needy from the ash heap,
To make them sit with nobles,
With the nobles of His people.
He makes the barren woman of the house sit
As a glad mother of children.
Praise Yah!

Psalms 113:3-9



WITHIN THE SUBSET OF HUMANITY THAT SEEKS AFTER GOD, most individuals look for Him in the wrong place—or, if not the wrong place (for there is no place where God cannot or should not be), at least the less-immediate place.

Too many look for God only in the cavernous majesty of the cathedral, the sequestered prayer closet, the humble church pew. We imagine He is more accessible on a Sunday morning, than on a Thursday afternoon. God is in each of these places, of course, but too often we imagine that we must go somewhere other than where we are to find Him.

When the Lord God Almighty, the eternal Yahweh, the transcendent Three-in-One, the Creator of all that is—when Father God condescended to save man in the person of His Son, He lifted the veil on His unapproachable holiness. At the moment of Christ's death of atonement on the cross, God the Father—literally—tore open with His own voice the barrier that had stood between His purity and man's uncleanness.

And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. And behold, the veil of the sanctuary was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth shook and the rocks were split.

Matthew 27:50-51

In that epochal moment, God demonstrated His willingness—indeed, His eagerness—to meet man on the untidy plane of his own existence. No more would man be required to go somewhere to meet his God; now, in Christ, God would dwell not only in the ethereal reaches of the cathedral, but in the very air breathed into the lungs. Now, in Christ, He would be personal, intimate, near.





THE EARLY-MORNING AIR IS COOL AND CLEAN. There is fresh sunlight dappling the turning leaves of the oak tree.

He is here.

A squirrel digs for his buried acorn, then races with it up to his lofty nest of dried leaves.

He is here.

A boy swings his bat, and for the first time in his young life gets a base hit. Perched on the bag at first base, he grins at his dad and mom who beam proudly from the stands.

He is here.

A man sweats in his labors under the noonday sun. His hands are raw, his back aches, his bones are weary and worn as he works to support his family.

He is here.

An elderly woman weeps outside the hospital room in which her husband has just breathed his last.

He is here.

“The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands; nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all people life and breath and all things; and He made from one man every nation of mankind to inhabit all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation, that they would seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; for in Him we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, ‘For we also are His offspring.’”

Acts 17:24-28





OD'S EAGERNESS TO DWELL WITH HIS PEOPLE is profoundly demonstrated in the culmination of the Apocalypse, when, after the existing heaven and earth are done away with in preparation for the great white throne of judgment, they are replaced by a *new* heaven and *new* earth.

The new Jerusalem, housing all the believers who had previously died, comes down out of heaven to reside on this new earth. In that city is the holy tabernacle of God in which Father God and the Lamb will be enthroned, giving eternal life and light to all its residents. That is, in the final eternal state God does not bring the people up to heaven to live with Him, but comes down to the new earth to live with them!

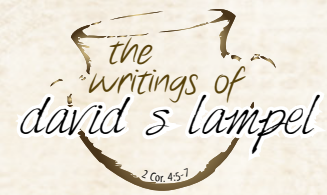
Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain. The first things passed away." And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." And He said, "Write, for these words are faithful and true."

Revelation 21:1-5

We need not wait impatiently, however, for the creation of the new earth. We need not change our clothes and attend a meeting. Wherever we are we need only look around us in the here and now to see Him. We need only listen for His "still, small voice."

No matter where we are, God is there. No matter what we see with our eyes, or hear with our ears, God is in it. No matter what we touch with our hands, God's fingerprints are already on it. ♦





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