

“He found him in a desert land,
And in the howling waste of a wilderness;
He encircled him, He cared for him,
He guarded him as the pupil of His eye.”
Deuteronomy 32:10



Washing Away the Grime

Dear God,

It's been a long, dry winter down here, but word has it that we are to get our first, substantial spring rains this week and perhaps the next.

It's a good thing, because we all need a bath down here.

I realize that, being all-powerful and all-knowing, You certainly *can* keep up with the latest goings-on down here, but do You bother? Have You been reading the news lately? Have You been keeping up with things?

Sunday night they held the 78th Annual Academy Awards in Los Angeles. A lot of us were hoping that one of the five films up for Best Picture would be *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*—say “Hey” to Mr. Lewis for me, will You?—but it didn't make the cut. Even though the movie was superbly made, wildly popular, and is still raking in the big bucks, I guess the Academy didn't deem it worthy. Instead, they nominated a movie about two

homosexual sheepboys, another about a homosexual writer, one about how Jews are as bad as Arab terrorists, one about how communists *aren't* bad at all, and one about rampant racism in the bowels of urban despair. The one about rampant racism in the bowels of urban despair won. Tell Mr. Lewis that we're really sorry, but we didn't have a vote.

The fool has said in his heart, “There is no God,”
They are corrupt, and have committed abominable injustice;
There is no one who does good.
God has looked down from heaven upon the sons of men
To see if there is anyone who understands,
Who seeks after God.
Every one of them has turned aside; together they have
become corrupt;
There is no one who does good, not even one.

Psalm 53:1-3

And, oh yes, did You hear which *song* won this year? This is good—well, really not. Even in my brief span of years I can remember Best Song Oscars for “Three Coins in the Fountain,” “Love Is a Many-Splendored Thing,” “Moon River,” and “Born Free.” Well, this year’s winner was “It’s Hard Out Here for a Pimp,” which contained lyrics so profane that they had to be changed for the television broadcast—and even the ones they left in I wouldn’t repeat to You. They may not be up there with You, but just in case they are, pass along our apologies to Jule Styne and Sammy Cahn.

Idiots

Without a doubt You surely must have the best television reception of anyone (talk about your High Definition!), but I wouldn’t blame You if You never watched the news. Though I prefer to stay informed about my world, it has become a painful occupation weeding out the stray needles of truth buried in the vast haystacks of lies. And on those rare occasions when the reportage does *not* consist of bald-faced falsehoods, the weight of that which is purposely omitted is sufficient to tip the television set onto its side. Usually the left side.

As You are one who stands outside of Time as we know it, God, I’m not sure how You regard history. But for us it is mostly linear, following a systematic progression with one event following another. It is, for the most part, well-documented, and (in most places) freely available to all. The historical facts are out there about nations, conflict, political intrigue, geography, wars and their aftermath. With that record in the public domain, it is hard not to conclude that those who report today’s news come to their job with a clear and obvious agenda—and, oddly, an agenda not shared by most in their audience. Like the purveyors of Hollywood’s “entertainment,” the news establishment seems bent on convincing the rest of us that we are little more than blithering idiots. They happily ignore the fact that, like them, we all have access to the historical information that easily proves *them* to be the idiots! It is enough to leave one scratching one’s head.

School Dazed

You’ve left us in a funny world, God. We read Your word, we listen to Your Spirit, then we look around our temporal habitation and wonder out loud, paraphrasing the reawakened ballplayer in *Field of Dreams* who had just emerged from the mysterious corn field, “Is this the Twilight Zone?”

When I was in grade school, I learned how to read and write. I learned how to add, subtract, multiply and divide numbers. I learned the history of my state, my country, and the world. And at recess I played tag and dodge ball, shot marbles, and played on the merry-go-round.

Today’s little children learn how to read and write leftist tracts. They learn how two plus two may equal nine, if that is what they feel in their heart. They learn that history has little to do with facts, but everything to do with perception. They learn that white people and capitalism are bad, that black and brown people are oppressed, and that socialism is good. They learn that sex at any age, with anybody, is okay, and that pregnancy is little more than a temporary inconvenience—and that girls who find themselves with that curable malady should never, ever tell their parents.

Twilight Zone indeed.

Inside and Out

As the world emerges from winter it is dirty. City streets are littered with the gritty remnants of sand and salt used in the icy months for traction. Houses and buildings have not been rinsed off for months, and windows have not been scrubbed. Out here in the country, gravel roads are rutted and muddy, and the gravel of the driveway has been plowed off into the grass along with the snow. Tree limbs that have snapped and plummeted during the rigors of blizzard and wind litter the yard. And we are surrounded by the naked skeletons of dead-looking trees.

It all leaves us feeling like we need a good hosing off.

God, there are times when Your spring showers seem a manifestation of that grand old Sunday evening hymn.

*“There shall be showers of blessing”—
This is the promise of love;
There shall be seasons refreshing,
Sent from the Saviour above.*

*“There shall be showers of blessing”—
Precious reviving again;
Over the hills and the valleys,
Sound of abundance of rain.*

*Showers of blessing,
Showers of blessing we need;
Mercy-drops ’round us are falling,
But for the showers we plead.*

Daniel W. Whittle

Your heavenly showers remind us of Your copious blessings spilled out on our behalf, Your refreshing presence, Your kind attention.

But sometimes we just need a good hosing off. No matter how hard we try to remain close to You and Your ways, no matter how vigilant we are to avoid the worst of our environment, the clinging filth of this world coats us like mud splattered from a tractor’s back tires. It gets on our clothing, in our hair. The stench of it fills our nostrils and clings to everything on us. Like the futility of trying to wash away the smell of skunk with soap and water, our own efforts to clean away the lies and filth of this place are never effective.

God, only You can wash away this world’s grime. So please do. Send Your cleansing rains to wash us once again. Bathe us thoroughly in the waters from Your pure, crystalline spring. And, while You’re at it, don’t forget the scrubbing we need on the inside. You know better than we that not all of our grime comes from without. We need a good dousing within. dsj

Create in me a clean heart, O God,
And renew a steadfast spirit within me.
Do not cast me away from Your presence
And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy of Your salvation
And sustain me with a willing spirit.
Then I will teach transgressors Your ways,
And sinners will be converted to You.

Psalm 51:10-13