

# Does It Really Matter What You Believe?

*"Knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit." 2 Peter 1:20-21*

When God spoke to Moses from the burning bush, He told Moses to take off his sandals, because the ground where he stood was holy ground. God's Word is holy ground. Nothing that we might think, say, or write is worthy of such respect. His Word is as precise as the sunrise. *Does it matter?*

Does it really matter what one believes religiously? Most of the teachers in denominational churches tell their members that it does not matter. They would say, "as long as you believe from the heart in God and Jesus His Son, that is all that matters." So they leave everything else to individual understanding and preference in the application of the Scriptures. Peter's instruction in 2 Peter 1:20-21 explicitly states that God's Word is not up to man's private interpretation. That warning applies to us as well, for the meaning of the Word of God is the same for all of us. The Scriptures that Peter mentions were not of human origin ("private interpretation"), or of man's will, but came from God Himself through the Holy Spirit. God gave us His Word to guide us and not to confuse us, for He is not a God of confusion but of peace (1 Cor. 14:33). You see, it is not God's fault if a misunderstanding of the Scriptures leaves

someone in a state of confusion and unable to know for sure God's will. He has given us His Word to supply the perfect guidance as to what His will is, for God's Word is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, so that we can be complete and thoroughly equipped for good works (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

God has given us His inspired Word to guide us into righteousness. We can trust that "*All Scripture*" is God-breathed, for they are the words from His own lips. So we must trust and understand that same Word, written by men guided by the Holy Spirit to write what they wrote, assuring us that it is God's very Word. In Galatians 1:6-9, the apostle Paul warns us about another Gospel, for no angel or man is authorized by God to preach any other Gospel than what was preached. Such a person was cursed, being cut off from God. You see, some of the Galatian brethren had perverted the Gospel, making it a different Gospel by taking God's Word and making slight changes (by adding, subtracting, substituting, or the like). Today it is no different, for many create or invent something that God never said. As a consequence of not doing what God has said in His revealed Word, they have created error, and departed from God's Truth (1 Cor. 4:6).

In Matthew 16:19 Jesus declared,

*"Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."*

This was referring to the future teachings of the apostles, for Jesus said in John 15:20,

*"If they kept my word, they will also keep yours."*

God's specific teachings in His inspired Word must not be loosed from its authority. Nobody has the right or authority to

believe or do something other than what God has said. You see, the apostles were binding and loosing when they presented God's revealed Word. God through His apostles bound His instructions on man and unbound (loosed) other things. God tells us what He wants, and we must not bind or loose where He has not authorized to do so. What the apostles preached is what God's Holy Spirit taught them. It is the Spirit of Truth that guided them into the Truth (John 14:26; 16:13; 1 Cor. 2:6-13; 2 Peter 1:20-21). God's will was "bound" and "loosed" in heaven first, and then on earth.

The Pharisees were experts in building doctrines where the Scriptures were silent. For example, they violated the Scriptures when they insisted on the washing of hands before eating (Mk. 7:1-9). Their practice was a man-made addition to the Word of God, for God had never authorized them to do so as a religious observance. Jesus told them that Isaiah's prophecy applied to them, that they worshipped God in vain because they created man-made doctrines and not God's doctrines. Although the Law did not forbid such practices, neither were they authorized. It is arrogant for men to invent their own doctrines beyond what God has spoken, for they presumptuously imply that they know better than God's Word! How absurd it is for men to suggest that they can choose some teachings from the Scriptures and demand them as essential or fundamental while declaring that other Scriptures are not as important or vital! So why would anyone trust such men with our soul's salvation?

All of God's teachings in His Holy Book are important. Jesus didn't come to this earth just to die and pay the price for our sins. He also came to bring us His teachings, the Gospel, a new way to live. We will be judged by the same teachings (John 12:48)! We must not pick and choose as we please from God's revealed Word. We must not choose what sounds good to us or goes along with what we have already been taught by religious error. For we must embrace God's Word and obey all

of God's will. We must obey God's way. Therefore, it is our job to study diligently to handle His inspired Word accurately and to learn His will more fully. It will make an eternal difference in your life and the salvation of your soul!

May we love God's Word with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength, and meditate on it all day long. And may we never drift away from the Truth but rather defend it with all our breath.

# This Is My Father's World

*"Bless the Lord, O my soul! O Lord my God, you are very great! You are clothed with splendor and majesty, covering yourself with light as with a garment, stretching out the heavens like a tent. O Lord, how manifold are your works! In wisdom have you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures. May the glory of the Lord endure forever; may the Lord rejoice in his works."* Psalm 104

Are we alone in the Universe, orphans of a great primordial explosion? If we are just an accident of the cosmos, we have no purpose, there is no order or beauty, or reason to do what is "right" or morally responsible. Thanks be to God, we are not alone and our benefactor is a caring, all-wise Creator who delights in beauty and fills the world with His glory. The song that we are pondering expresses a small part of the wonder that we see in God's masterpiece. "*This is my Father's world!*"

I love the song, "*This is My Father's World*," because it exalts God's glory. The world is His handiwork. He is sovereign, and His magnificence fills His creation. God has sovereign rights over the world because He crafted it as He willed. This song presents the earth and all it contains as the LORD'S, for the entire universe belongs to God. He owns all that is physical on this earth, everything in it (every living creature and the physical substance of the earth). God is the

Supreme Processor of all created things. He owns all, for He has made all and is the unrivaled LORD of everything. At His command, land emerged from the water. God's majestic creation brings me to my knees in reverence and awe, for the work of His fingers and the artistry of His mind reflect His glory. God's glory is echoed in the starry sky, His natural revelation. The grand expanse, the work of His hands declares His majesty. God created the world and man to serve Him, for He has spoken His wisdom and power in His marvelous creation. He has expressed His mind in His inspired Word and expects all men, all humanity, to fulfill His will, for He wants His creatures to proclaim His surpassing glory and grandeur. Indeed, this is my Father's World, for it is His handiwork and everything belongs to Him. In Colossians 1:16 we are told that "*by Him (Christ) all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities —all things were created through him and for him.*"

Lately, I've been meditating on our Father's world and the power there is in the Word of the Gospel to change and regenerate the hearts of men, for "all Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

The Word of the Gospel offers man the only perfect pattern of human conduct (the principles of righteousness) to help him walk in the Light that he may walk the straight path of God. As we walk His straight path of righteousness, we will be able to choose wisely and righteously in all areas of life and conduct. In matters of gambling, dancing, immodest apparel, profanity, alcohol, abortion, fornication, adultery, marriage, the home, the raising of children, and many more, for it is the only straight and truthful path for "such a time as this" (2 Peter 1:12; Esther 4:14). The Word of God is settled forever, and no man dare change it, for it is the only perfect standard of Truth. It teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldliness that we

might live soberly, righteously, and godly in the midst of a perverse and crooked and twisted generation among whom we must shine our light brightly.

Though our Father's world might rebel at His Word and divine authority and though men might change God's standards of principles of righteousness calling evil good and good evil; changing darkness for light and light for darkness; bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter; and being wise and clever in their own eyes, God's Word and divine principles of righteousness will be settled forever in heaven. Therefore, let us not compromise our faith and conviction, let us continue being lights that shine brightly in word and deed, doing all things in the name of the Lord by His authority (Col. 3:17). Remember, that only the Gospel, His Truth can make men free from sin (John 8:32; 4:23-24). So we must continue to take the Sword of the Spirit out of the sheath and move forward to fight against our society's moral decay. We must keep crying aloud the Message of the Gospel to them and not hold it back. We must lift up our voices like a trumpet, declaring all people their sins and transgressions that they might come to know God's goodness and grace, and repent that He might save us from our sins and folly.

*"Grace to you and peace be multiplied in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; seeing that his divine power hath granted unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that called us by his own glory and virtue; whereby he hath granted unto us his precious and exceeding great promises; that through these ye may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world by lust." (2 Peter 1:2-4)*

## I. THE EARTH AND ITS FULNESS ARE THE LORD'S:

*This is my Father's world, And to my listening ears  
All nature sings, and round me rings The music of  
the spheres.*

*This is my Father's world; I rest me in the thought  
Of rocks and trees, of skies and seas—His hand the  
wonders wrought.*

This is our Father's world because the earth, its fullness, the world and its inhabitants are the LORD's (Ps. 24:1). We can hear the music of the spheres as we listen to the sounds of God's creation. God spoke the word, and the heavens were made and all their hosts. All the rocks, trees, skies and seas were made by the breath of His mouth. His hands the wonders wrought. God commanded, and everything came to be and stood firm.

## II. THE BEAUTY AND SPLENDOR OF GOD'S CREATION:

*This is my Father's world; The birds their carols  
raise.*

*The morning bright, the lily white, Declare their  
Maker's praise.*

*This is my Father's world; He shines in all that's  
fair.*

*In the rustling grass, I hear Him pass; He speaks to  
me everywhere.*

We can observe the beauty and splendor of God's creation. God's glory is manifested in His creation. The birds and the lilies declare their Maker's praise and remind us of His love and care (Matt. 6:26-30). He shines in all that's fair, for He saw everything that He had made was good (Genesis 1:31). His essence is in everything, for even the rustling grass reminds us it was God who formed the mountains and created the wind (Amos 4:13).

### III. GOD IS THE RULER YET:

*This is my Father's world; O let me ne'er forget  
That though the wrong seems oft so strong, God is  
the ruler yet.*

*This is my Father's world; The battle is not done.  
Jesus who died shall be satisfied, And earth and  
heaven be one.*

As I read the words of this third stanza, I remember that our Father's kingdom shall never be destroyed and that He will triumph in the end, even when wrong and wickedness seems so strong. God is still sitting and ruling on His eternal throne, a throne that does not tremble before the threats and darkness of this world. Indeed, God as the righteous ruler of all will deal with those who eagerly try to destroy His kingdom and His cause. But He will show grace and mercy to His faithful. Thus, we His faithful must fight tooth and nail the good fight of our faith until the end, for the battle is not done and we must confess Christ as King of kings and Lord of lords through His Gospel.

Jesus is the perfect High Priest and still reigns as Priest on His throne (Hebrews 2:17, 4:14-15; 5:1-6; 7:22-25). Our Perfect Priest was without blemish, that is, He had no sins though He came in the likeness "of sinful flesh" (Romans 8:3-4) who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth (1 Peter 2:22; Hebrews 7:28). We are reconciled by Jesus' death, burial, resurrection, ascension, and priesthood in heaven. Our God of peace and Prince of peace brought peace to all men. Peace is the result of reconciliation. The blood of Jesus brought peace between the Jews and the Gentiles. You see, God removed everything that stood in the way of peace through the Gospel Message of Christ. The Gospel Message urges us to be reconciled with God to have salvation. This same approach must be put into practice with our enemies, for we are taught to love them. Indeed, this breaks down the enmity that separates us

(Matt. 5:43-48; Romans 1:20-21; Eph. 5:2). God's love was demonstrated in His Son's sacrifice (1 John 4:9-11, 19; Rom. 5:8; Eph. 2:4-5; Titus 3:3-6).

Jesus paid the price, through His blood, for our deliverance from sin (1 Peter 1:18-20). Under the Law of Moses, it was impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. There is no money, no animal sacrifice, nor are there perfect works that can redeem us, but only the precious blood of Jesus. And since our God is all righteous, perfect, fair and just, He must be our standard of righteousness, for this is His perfect character. Of course, all these terms involve law, rules, and standards of righteousness that are just and fair. God will judge the world according to His standards of righteousness (Acts 17:31).

God's Law is righteousness. Therefore, all humanity is compelled to listen to the Word of reconciliation, the Gospel Message and respond to it to be reconciled, that is, redeemed from sin, be justified and have access to salvation. There can be no justification without our active participation (Romans 5:1; Eph. 2:8)! God's Law will be upheld, for Jesus paid the price by dying on the cross that we might be reconciled. The Gospel Message is God's revelation and righteousness. God's grace is revealed through His Word, for His Word is the pathway to God's grace which teaches us to deny ungodliness and live righteously. Thus, it is in the Gospel Message where grace is found (Titus 2:11-12; Gal. 1:6-9). God's Law is the standard rule of belief and conduct (the Gospel, the mind of God, laws, statutes, ordinances, covenant, Word, Scriptures, Sacred Book, the Faith) and we must uphold such Law, for Jesus paid the price, His blood, for our deliverance of sin (1 Peter 1:13-20; Acts 4:24-30). God has already spoken and given us instructions to be reconciled to Him. Thus, we must continue to proclaim and live out His Gospel Message even in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. And though God's world rejects God's sovereignty and righteousness and fails to sub-

mit to His rule, He is still Lord and King ruling from His mighty throne. Satan cannot thwart God's victory of righteousness, even though he intends to destroy mankind with deceit and lawlessness. We must continue being soldiers of the cross to defeat the evil one and his lawlessness with the Sword of God, the Gospel.

*"And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall the kingdom be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever."* (Daniel 2:44).

*"After this I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, 'Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.' 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."* (Rev. 4:1-3)

*"This charge I entrust to you, Timothy, my child, in accordance with the prophecies previously made about you, that by them you may wage the good warfare, holding faith and a good conscience. By rejecting this, some have made shipwreck of their faith."* (1 Tim. 1:18)

*"Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses."* (1 Tim. 6:12)

#### IV. THE LORD IS IN THIS PLACE:

*This is my Father's world; Dreaming, I see His face;  
I ope my eyes in glad surprise: 'The Lord is in this  
place.'*

*This is my Father's world, From shining courts  
above,*

*The B'loved One's come, His Only Son, A pledge of  
deathless love.*

How beautiful it is to feel the presence of God and His Son in creation, His marvelous works! God is near because He is omnipresent and because of His wonderful and magnificent works. His wondrous works draw us near to Him in worship and gratitude for all that He has done for us in the past. God's nearness and wondrous works can be seen in His providential judgment, His sovereignty, and His covenant faithfulness. His beautiful creation teaches us to trust in Him. And though we cannot literally see God's face now, those who are pure in heart can see Him (Matt. 5:8) for we know that He is "*in this place*" (Genesis 28:16). Jesus' sacrifice, death, and blood made it possible to see His Father's face in eternity, for He sent Him that we might have everlasting life (John 3:16). Jesus, our Lord, was the "animal" of the sacrifice, and our High Priest who offered His own blood before the heavenly mercy-seat. Through Jesus, God draws men to Himself, for Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life and no one can come to the Father but by Him (John 14:6). God extends His love to us by the preaching of the Gospel. To see Jesus is to see the Father, for they are one (John 10:30). God's traits of Godhood are there for all to see through His Son. We all can see who He is and what He has done. Mankind can see the glory of God through His Son and have a better understanding of God. We see God's face when we keep His commands. We must know Him to see His face and have eternal life.

## V. LET EARTH BE GLAD:

*This is my Father's world; Why should my heart be  
sad?*

*The Lord is King—let the heavens ring; God reigns—  
let earth be glad.*

*This is my Father's world, Closer to heaven bound,  
For dear to God is the earth Christ trod: No place  
but holy ground.*

We must rejoice in God's creation because this is our Father's world. We must not be sad but instead rejoice always in the Lord, for He is near and is our King and we can see it in His creation and marvelous works. Since God causes His face to shine upon us, and since He is gracious and blesses us, He brings delight and gladness in our lives. The world can come to know God (His ways, His works, His purposes and what He wants to accomplish in us). Our God wants all the nations, all humanity, to know Him, His ways and His salvation. He mercifully cares for all people, and He wants His people to know His ways and spread His salvation to the nations. So, the nations should be glad and sing for joy. He is worthy of all praise for all He has done for us and still is doing through His Son. Therefore, we must be compelled to tell the world about Jesus, the Gospel Message, the plan of salvation. Joy is the result of our holiness, and it is never the root. His redeemed praise Him for what He has done for our salvation. The pathway to joy is traced when one seeks to know God, His salvation and praise Him, for God alone is the ruler of all the nations and provides for them. So, all the nations must know who God is and how He rules over all humanity. All humanity must respond to what they see with reverence and fear for God to be their God. As we praise God, others can see His greatness and goodness. So, how do we praise God? By studying Him through His Word to have an ever-growing appreciation of Him which compels us to praise Him. We must praise Him publicly and privately with hearts of gratitude and

thankfulness. As we walk on “holy ground” figuratively, we are being drawn closer to heaven by walking in Christ’s steps of righteousness and holiness, in the sunlight of His grace.

*“For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth.” (1 Pet. 2:21-22)*

## **VI. MY HEART IS STILL AT HOME:**

*This is my Father’s world. I walk a desert lone.  
In a bush ablaze to my wondering gaze God makes  
His glory known.  
This is my Father’s world, A wanderer I may roam.  
Whate’er my lot, it matters not, My heart is still at  
home.*

In God’s creation, we can be at home anywhere. Although our walk in this life is like a desert in a dry and weary land where there is no water, we can still see God’s power and glory (Ps. 63:1). Even in such times, we can see God’s blazing glory like Moses did when he saw the burning bush (Exo. 3:1-5). Our communion with the Creator is the highest joy in life. No treasure can equal it, for this world has many amusements, but very few real joys or pleasures. This world (the passing pleasures of sin) can never offer genuine and lasting pleasure and happiness, but those who walk with God in faithful communion will find enjoyment, happiness that is sweeter than life itself. Walking with God even in the “desert lone” (during our difficult times) will sustain us. When we walk with God in our Father’s world, we can rest assured that no problems in life will separate us from our real home, for we long to be with Him. Victory will ultimately belong to God, for we live from triumph to triumph hidden in God through Christ, shielded from the devil’s darts and life’s difficulties.

We can be confident that God holds on to us with His mighty right hand of strength. So, wherever we may wander and whatever might be our lot, we can still be confident that we are at home in heart with our God as we seek for the city which is to come. We must continue bearing good fruit and be at home in heart with our God despite our lot in life, for we wait for the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God (Hebrews 13:14).

*"For you have not come to a mountain that can be touched and to a blazing fire, and to darkness and gloom and whirlwind, and to the blast of a trumpet and the sound of words which sound was such that those who heard begged that no further word be spoken to them. For they could not bear the command, 'If even a beast touches the mountain, it will be stoned.' And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, 'I am full of fear and trembling.' But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel."* (Hebrews 12:18-24)

## **CONCLUSION:**

As long as we continue living on this earth as faithful followers of Christ, our battle is not done, for the righteous must keep fighting the good fight of faith until our last breath. Jesus who died for us shall be satisfied, and earth and heaven will be one in eternity because all the saved, the redeemed will receive their eternal home in heaven. We understand and accept that we have a spiritual war that we must fight with the full armor of God to be victorious. And though our fight seems

to be difficult, we must still proclaim the Gospel no matter how much resistance we face. Our faith must not waver. We must trust in God to help us fight our good fight of faith no matter how vigorously we are attacked or persecuted. Our ultimate defense is the assurance we have of our salvation, an assurance, a confidence that no spiritual force can take away. Our offensive weapon is the Word of God, not our own philosophies, opinions, and feelings. We must pray for God's help, for we have a strong enemy who is seeking to destroy us. And while we are traveling upon this earth as pilgrims, we must always remember that "*this is my Father's world.*" This world does indeed belong to God, for He made it and it is His. He is the Creator and Sustainer of this world and all its fullness (Genesis 1:1; Psalm 24:1; Jeremiah 10:10-12; 1 Corinthians 10:26; Hebrews 1:1; 11:3).

Today, this world does not appear to be our Father's world, for there are many skeptics like Pilate who reject the Truth (John 18:36-38). The fact is that 7 out of 10 or 70 percent of the people in our nation believe that there is no such thing as absolute Truth. According to them, there is no absolute Truth that can be applied to every circumstance in every place and time. What they ignore is that our Father's kingdom shall never be destroyed and ultimately He will triumph even if His children fail in their duties and are lost. For no amount of sin in this world, or indifference to sin, can thwart the final victory of righteousness. Thus, Christians must do the Father's work and live godly and righteously in this crooked and perverse generation. Though Satan may be the ruler of this world (John 12:31), Jesus is still King and Lord ruling all nations from His eternal and mighty throne. Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil, who is the "father" of deceit, lies, murder, and every act of wickedness or lawlessness in this world. John said that "*the whole world lieth in the evil one*" (1 John 5:19). Everyone that sins is of the devil. We must remember that Satan has no power over man other than what man voluntarily chooses to give to him. Eve didn't have to eat of the fruit but voluntarily

chose to eat it instead of saying "no." But he, Satan, can indeed manipulate circumstances and pressure men in many ways to do what he commands. He gets to mankind through the works of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and pride of life (1 John 2:16). He has used these venues since the beginning. Satan and his angels will ultimately be cast into the lake of fire, the second death. Jesus came to His Father's world that we may have life and may have it abundantly. He came to offer us eternal life which is abundant beyond anything this world has to offer. Our goal, then, must be to attain eternal life. Men must know God to have eternal life. Men must know God and keep His commands to have eternal life.

Jesus offers us spiritual life that is abundant and brings peace (through His blood), for by the remission of sins, our guilt is removed, and our mind is cleared (our conscience is cleansed). Our God wants all the nations, and all humanity, to know Him, His ways, and His salvation. He mercifully cares for all people, and He wants His people to know His ways and spread His salvation to the nations. All humanity is compelled to listen to the Word of reconciliation, the Gospel Message and respond to it to be reconciled, that is, redeemed from sin, be justified and have access to salvation. There can be no justification without our active participation (Romans 5:1; Eph. 2:8)! So, soldiers of Christ, arise and put your armor on! Be strong and quit yourselves like men! Be eaten up with zeal for your Lord's honor. Bow down before your Creator, your Helper and stand up and fight in His army for the souls of men! Commit yourself to oppose all evil and lawlessness. Don't let Satan have his way! Go on the offensive and resist the devil. Learn lovingkindness toward those who are Satan's victims and teach them the Gospel Message! Weep for the erring one! Lift up the fallen! Devote your life to saving those souls wounded by sin!

We show our love for the Lord, His world, and His cause when we labor in evangelism, for He is called Faithful and

True and He judges in righteousness and makes war on His enemies. He is the Word of God and those who obey His Word follow Him. He strikes the nations with His sharp sword, His Word. He rules them with a rod of iron, for He is King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:11-16).

Therefore, let us thank God, for He is the most righteous Judge, for His wonderful and marvelous works, for His providential judgments, for His oracles, for His message, for His sovereignty, and excellence and finally for His faithfulness. No matter our hardship, we can rest assured that our peace with God will bring us peace of mind so that we can approach life's difficulties with joy,

*"For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God."* (Rom. 8:6-8)

*Bless the Lord, O my soul!  
O Lord my God, you are very great!  
You are clothed with splendor and majesty,  
Covering yourself with light as with a garment,  
stretching out the heavens like a tent.  
He lays the beams of his chambers on the waters;  
he makes the clouds his chariot;  
he rides on the wings of the wind;  
He makes his messengers winds,  
his ministers a flaming fire.*

*He set the earth on its foundations,  
so that it should never be moved.  
You covered it with the deep as with a garment;  
the waters stood above the mountains.  
At your rebuke they fled;  
at the sound of your thunder they took to flight.*

*The mountains rose, the valleys sank down  
to the place that you appointed for them.  
You set a boundary that they may not pass,  
so that they might not again cover the earth.*

*You make springs gush forth in the valleys;  
they flow between the hills;  
They give drink to every beast of the field;  
the wild donkeys quench their thirst.  
Beside them the birds of the heavens dwell;  
they sing among the branches.  
From your lofty abode you water the mountains;  
The earth is satisfied with the fruit of your work.*

*You cause the grass to grow for the livestock  
and plants for man to cultivate,  
that he may bring forth food from the earth,  
And wine to gladden the heart of man,  
oil to make his face shine  
and bread to strengthen man's heart.*

*The trees of the Lord are watered abundantly,  
the cedars of Lebanon that he planted.  
In them the birds build their nests;  
the stork has her home in the fir trees.  
The high mountains are for the wild goats;  
the rocks are a refuge for the rock badgers.*

*He made the moon to mark the seasons;  
the sun knows its time for setting.  
You make darkness, and it is night,  
when all the beasts of the forest creep about.  
The young lions roar for their prey,  
seeking their food from God.  
When the sun rises, they steal away  
and lie down in their dens.*

*Man goes out to his work  
and to his labor until the evening.*

*O Lord, how manifold are your works!  
In wisdom have you made them all;  
the earth is full of your creatures.  
Here is the sea, great and wide,  
which teems with creatures innumerable,  
living things both small and great.*

*There go the ships,  
and Leviathan, which you formed to play in it.*

*These all look to you,  
to give them their food in due season.*

*When you give it to them, they gather it up;  
when you open your hand, they are filled with  
good things.*

*When you hide your face, they are dismayed;  
when you take away their breath, they die  
and return to their dust.*

*When you send forth your Spirit, they are created,  
and you renew the face of the ground.*

*May the glory of the Lord endure forever;  
may the Lord rejoice in his works,  
Who looks on the earth and it trembles,  
who touches the mountains and they smoke!*

*I will sing to the Lord as long as I live;  
I will sing praise to my God while I have being.*

*May my meditation be pleasing to him,  
for I rejoice in the Lord.*

*Let sinners be consumed from the earth,  
and let the wicked be no more!  
Bless the Lord, O my soul!  
Praise the Lord!*

May we exalt the glory of God and His handiwork which is shown in His creation. May we always remember that this is our Father's world, for the earth and its fullness are His. May we never forget that though wrong seems oft so strong, God is the ruler yet sitting on His throne. May we never forget that the battle is not done but will continue until the end of time and that we must fight tooth and nail the good fight of faith. May God's Law be upheld, for Jesus paid the price, through His blood, for our deliverance of sin (1 Peter 1:18-20). May we always be glad and rejoice in the Lord, for this is our Father's world. May we always walk on holy ground and be drawn closer to heaven by walking in the steps of His righteousness, following His example. No matter our lot in life, may we always have a home in our heart with God as we seek for the holy city which is to come.

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