

The Transcendent God

A Reflection

*Death is naked before God...
He spreads out the northern skies
over empty space;
he suspends the earth over nothing.
He wraps up the waters in his clouds,
yet the clouds do not burst under their weight.
The pillars of the heavens quake,
aghast at his rebuke.
By his power he churned up the sea...
By his breath the skies became fair...*

*And these are but the outer fringe of his works;
how faint the whisper we hear of him!
Who then can understand
the thunder of his power?
(Job 26:6-8, 11-14, NIV)*

Many insist on a god as small as they are, a human deity comfortably within their puny understanding. They want a god without power, holiness, or transcendence, without fire, anger, zeal, or sovereignty; a god as ignorant, bland, spineless, and apathetic as they. Many prefer a god who is no god at all.

But for the true and living Creator, even our grandest images - the thunder of His power, the oceans of His love - are childish understatements. His love boils over into universes, races, and epochs, bounded only by His own wisdom. His self-giving cannot be stopped any more than a sandcastle can hold back the ocean.

I find comfort in the immanence of God, in His personal nearness and constant presence with me. He is closer and more intimate than any of us can imagine. Knowing Him and realizing His presence have transformed my entire life.

But in the rushing stream of our daily struggle and in the crises that inevitably come, I desperately need to see the transcendent God. I need to be reminded of the God who is God indeed, the One who is bigger than my shriveled perspective; the God who overflows all names and all descriptions; the God whose self-given name, "I AM," suggests that He is being itself, beyond all time and all categories.

*Even as a believer, most of the discontent in my life
flows from a heart that sees too little of God.*