

Job Sees God Anew

“There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job; and that man was blameless and upright, one who feared God and turned away from evil” (Job 1.1). Job was a believer, a deeply devout and prayerful man. Surely this man knew God as he ought. Surely he had a “taste for the majesty of God.” But then came the pain and misery of his spiritual and physical desert. And in the midst of Job’s darkness God spoke to him in his majesty:

God to Job:

“Will you even put me in the wrong? Will you condemn me that you may be justified? Have you an arm like God, and can you thunder with a voice like his? Deck yourself with majesty and dignity; clothe yourself with glory and splendour . . . Look on everyone that is proud, and bring him low; and tread down the wicked where they stand . . . Then will I also acknowledge to you, that your own right hand can give you the victory” (Job 40.8-14)

Job’s response to God:

Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me which I did not know . . . I had heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees thee; therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes (Job 42.3b-6).

Glimpses of Jesus in Isaiah’s Vision

Isaiah 6.1-4: In the year that king Uzziah died I saw the Lord (Adonai) sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and his train filled the temple. Above Him stood the seraphim; each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called to another and said: ‘Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.’ And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke.

Seven glimpses of God I see in these four verses — at least seven.

Adonai Is Alive

First, he is *alive*. Uzziah is dead, but Adonai lives on. “From everlasting to everlasting, thou art God” (Psalm 90.2). Adonai was the living God when this universe banged into existence and He was the living God when the radical liberal theologian, an atheist by the name of Thomas Altizer proclaimed him dead in 1966 and *Time* magazine put it on the front cover.

Thomas Jonathan Jackson Altizer (born May 28, 1927 died November 28, 2018) Colgate School of Divinity. Proclaimed God dead in 1966 and held that absurd position until his death in 2018.

Harry Emerson Fosdike (born May 24, 1878 died October 5, 1969) Colgate School of Divinity & Union Theological Seminary. Pastor of Riverside Baptist Church and founder of modernism and liberal theology that denied the virgin birth, the inerrancy of scripture and the bodily return of Jesus Christ inspired by the German “higher criticism” movement of the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries.

And Adonai will be living ten trillion ages from now when all the puny pathetic despots, hotshots and pot-shots against his reality will have sunk into oblivion like a submarine with a hole in it.

“In the year that king Uzziah died I saw the Lord.” 110 years from now this planet will be populated by ten billion brand new people and all four billion of us alive today will have vanished off the earth like Uzziah. But not Adonai. He never had a beginning and therefore depends on nothing for His existence. He always has been and always will be alive.

Adonai Is Authoritative

Second, He is *authoritative*. “I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne.” No vision of God has ever caught a glimpse of Him plowing a field, cutting his grass, shining shoes, filling out reports or loading a truck. He sits, and He sits on a throne. All is at peace and He has control.

The throne is His right to rule the world. We do not give Adonai authority over our lives. He has it whether we like it or not. What utter folly it is to act as though we had any rights at all to call Him into question! The words of Virginia Stem Owens in the *Reformed Journal* are timely:

God’s activity is what it is. There isn’t anything else. Without it there would be no being, including human beings presuming to judge the Creator of everything that is.

Few things are more humbling, few things give us that sense of raw majesty, as the truth that God is utterly authoritative. He is the Supreme Court, the Legislature, and the Chief Executive. After Him there is no appeal.

Adonai Is Omnipotent

Third, Adonai is *omnipotent*. The throne of His authority is not one throne among many. It is high and lifted up. “I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne high and lifted up.” That God’s throne is higher than every other throne signifies Adonai’s superior power to exercise His authority. No opposing authority can nullify the decrees of God. What he purposes, he accomplishes.

“My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose” (Isaiah 46.10).

“He does according to his will in the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand” (Daniel 4.35).

To be gripped by the omnipotence of God is either marvellous because He is for us, or it is terrifying because He is against us. Indifference to his omnipotence simply means we haven’t seen it for what it is. The sovereign authority of the living God is a refuge full of joy and power for those who keep his covenant.

Adonai Is Resplendent

“I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne high and lifted up, **and his train filled the temple.**” (Hebrew “the train of His robe”). You have seen pictures of brides whose dresses are gathered around them covering the steps and the platform. What would the meaning be if the train filled the aisles and

covered the seats and the choir loft, woven all of one piece? That God's robe fills the entire temple means that he is a God of incomparable splendour.

"The fullness of God's splendour shows itself in thousands of ways."

For one little example, check out this species of fish who live deep in the dark sea and have their own built-in lights — some have lamps hanging from their chins, some have luminescent noses, some have beacons under their eyes. There are a thousand different kinds of self-lighted fish who live deep in the ocean where none of us can see and marvel. They are spectacularly weird and beautiful.



Why are they there?

Because God is lavish in splendour. His creative fullness spills over in excessive beauty. And if that's the way the world is, how much more *resplendent* must be the Lord who thought it up and made it!

Adonai Is Revered

"Above him stood the seraphim; each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew." No one knows what these strange six-winged creatures with feet and eyes and intelligence are. They never appear again in the Bible — at least not under the name seraphim. According to verse 4, when one of them speaks, the foundations of the temple shake. There are no puny or silly creatures in the Kingdom, only magnificent ones.

And the point is this: not even they can look upon the Lord nor do they feel worthy even to leave their feet exposed in his presence. Great and good as they are, untainted by human sin, they revere their Maker in great humility. An angel terrifies a man with his brilliance and power. But angels themselves hide in holy fear and reverence from the splendour of God. How much more will we shudder and quake in his presence who cannot even endure the splendour of his angels!

Adonai Is Holy

"And one called to another, '**Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts!**' The possibilities of human language to carry the meaning of the holiness of God eventually run out and spill over the edge of

the world into a vast unknown. "Holiness" carries us to the brink, and from there on the experience of God is beyond words.

When you say God is holy, it just means that God is God. The root meaning of the word holy is probably "**to cut or separate.**" A *holy thing* is cut off from and separated from common use. Earthly things and persons are holy as they are distinct from the world and devoted to God. So the Bible speaks of:

holy ground (Exodus 3.5), holy assemblies (Exodus 12.16), holy sabbaths (Exodus 16.23), a holy nation (Exodus 19.6), holy garments (Exodus 28.2), a holy city (Nehemiah 11.1), holy promises (Psalm 105 2), holy men (II Peter 1.21), holy women I Peter 3.5), Holy Scriptures (II Timothy 3.15), holy hands I Timothy 2.8), a holy kiss (Romans 16.16) and a holy faith Jude 20).

Almost anything can become holy if it is separated from the common and devoted to God.

If the holiness of a man derives from being separated from the world and devoted to God, to whom is God devoted so as to derive his holiness? To no-one but Himself. When asked for His name in Exodus 3.14 He said, "I am who I am."

He is incomparable. His holiness is his utterly unique divine essence. It determines all that He is and does and is determined by no one. His holiness is what He is as God, which no one else is or ever will be. In the end, language runs out and in the word "holy" we have sailed to the world's end in the utter silence of reverence and wonder and awe.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=huFra1mnIVe> 6.40 to 10.25

Adonai Is Glorious

But before the silence and the shaking of the foundations and the all-concealing smoke there is one final thing to learn about Adonai. He is indescribably. "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory." The glory of God is the manifestation of his holiness.

God's holiness is the incomparable perfection of his divine nature; his glory is the display of that holiness.

"God is glorious" means: God's holiness has gone public. His glory is the open revelation of the secret of his holiness. In Leviticus 10.3 God says of Himself, "I will show myself *holy* among those who are near me, and before all the people I will be *glorified.*" When God shows himself to be holy, what we see is glory. The holiness of God is his concealed glory. The glory of God is his revealed holiness.

"The glory of God is the manifestation of his holiness."



Søren Aabye Kierkegaard was a Danish philosopher, theologian, poet, social critic and religious author who is widely considered to be the first existentialist philosopher. To use one of his parables about the glory of God, “we are like people who ride our carriage at night into the country to see the glory of God. But above us, on either side of the carriage seat, burns a gas lantern. As long as our head is surrounded by this artificial light, the sky overhead is empty of glory. But if some gracious wind of the Spirit blows out our earthly lights, then in our darkness God’s heavens are filled with stars.”

When the Seraphim say, “The whole earth is full of his glory,” it is because from the heights of heaven you can see the end of the world. From down here the view of the glory of God is limited, but it is limited largely by our foolish preference for frills, empty pursuits and counterfeit substitutes.



This is us, on our miniscule blue dot

and this is the glory of God on full display (Psalm 19.1)

But now, thus says the LORD, who created you, O Jacob, and He who formed you, O Israel: “Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called *you* by your name; You *are* Mine.

When you pass through the waters, I *will be* with you; And through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, Nor shall the flame scorch you.

For I *am* the LORD your God, The Holy One of Israel, your Saviour;

(Isaiah 43.1-3a)