

TIME OF REFLECTION

“Smoke went up from his nostrils, and devouring fire from his mouth; glowing coals flamed forth from him. . . He bowed the heavens and came down; thick darkness was under his feet. He rode on a cherub and flew; he came swiftly on the wings of the wind. He made darkness his covering, his canopy around him, thick clouds dark with water. Out of the brightness before him hailstones and coals of fire broke through his clouds.”

~Psalm 18:8, 9-12 (ESV)

“What is obvious is the power of a religion whose secret is perhaps, simply, to get rid of the distance, the transcendence, and the remoteness of the divine... A present God this time; a God who is there, behind the door or the curtain, and asks only to show himself; a God without mystery; a good-guy God; almost a human being, a good American, someone who loves you one by one, listens to you if you talk to him, answers if you ask him to—God the friend, who has your best interests at heart.”

~Bernard Henri-Levi, secular journalist experiencing an American megachurch

“There is a paradox in Old Testament narrative ethics: on the one hand God is terribly demanding, he looks for nothing less than godlike perfect behavior, yet on the other, despite human failings, he does not forget his covenant loyalty to his people... Old Testament ethics are therefore, as much about grace as about law: they declare that God, the all-holy, is also God, the all-merciful.”

~Gordon Wenham, Old Testament scholar

“There is in God a sweet conjunction: majesty and meekness joined together: he is sweet and gentle, and holy majesty; and also a majestic meekness; an awful sweetness; a high, and great, and holy gentleness.”

~Jonathan Edwards, American pastor

“The God of the Bible localizes himself. In great condescension, the Lord of Hosts rends the heavens and comes down and dwells in the midst of his people. And he sets apart and makes holy the temple, the symbol of that dwelling; or he sets apart for his use Bible and cup and bread, in order that flesh and blood persons can see and remember and know that the holy God is in their company.”

~Elizabeth Atchemeier, Old Testament scholar

SERMON – “Drawing Near to a Holy God” – *Pastor Jim Angehr*

SERMON PASSAGE – *Psalms 99 (ESV)*

¹ The LORD reigns; let the peoples tremble!
He sits enthroned upon the cherubim; let the earth quake!

² The LORD is great in Zion;
he is exalted over all the peoples.

³ Let them praise your great and awesome name!
Holy is he!

⁴ The King in his might loves justice.
You have established equity;
you have executed justice
and righteousness in Jacob.

⁵ Exalt the LORD our God;
worship at his footstool!
Holy is he!

⁶ Moses and Aaron were among his priests,
Samuel also was among those who called upon his name.
They called to the LORD, and he answered them.

⁷ In the pillar of the cloud he spoke to them;
they kept his testimonies
and the statute that he gave them.

⁸ O LORD our God, you answered them;
you were a forgiving God to them,
but an avenger of their wrongdoings.

⁹ Exalt the LORD our God,
and worship at his holy mountain;
for the LORD our God is holy!