

Sustainer of All Things

“As the world turns,” the sea of humanity is awash with calamity and catastrophe; tragedy and terror. The forces of evil seem relentless and invincible. What will become of the human race? Will we be swept ultimately from the face of the earth? Will we revert to uncontrolled savagery, as prevailed in the middle ages? Will a minority of psychotic opportunists hold the world hostage with unbridled terrorism? What does the future hold for a cosmos wracked with ceaseless convulsions and seizures? Will there ever again be normalcy or peace?

The Bible is blessedly clear and certain in its response to all of these anxieties. The race will remain. The earth will be renewed. Evil will be vanquished. God’s ultimate purpose for His creation will be fulfilled.

Now the earth is in travail, but the travail, like the pangs of childbirth, signal the coming of new life—spirit life. This is the true destiny of God’s creation. The light of life will not go out forever. It is sustained by the eternal energy of Jesus Christ, the “light of the world.” The energy of the sun is limitless; in its capacity to handle the earth. But there are galaxies millions of light years away that have energies millions of times greater than the sun. (Many of the celestial bodies that we think of as simply stars, are whole galaxies.) All of this energy has its resource in Christ. The entire universe; is dynamically alive with the energies of Christ. He is truly the “SUSTAINER” of all things.

The Greek word translated, “uphold” means literally, “to carry.” He carries the universe, **“By the word of His power.”** He who “spoke” the world into being, sustains it easily with a word. Since such power is His, can we not trust Him with our lives?

But, in the real world it isn’t so easy. Why do His children have to struggle so much? God does not seem that ready to help. I’m not always sure he cares.

He is ready to help. The power is there and the willingness and the caring. The Psalmist has said, **“He healeth the broken heart, and bindeth up their wounds. He telleth the number of the stars; He calleth them all by their names”** (Psalm 147:3,4). In the words of a grand old Bible teacher, a former mentor of the author, who inspired his unflagging devotion to the Word of God—

There is hope and help for our sighs and tears,
For the wound that stings and smarts.
Our God is at home with the rolling spheres,
And at home with the broken hearts.

—Arthur Petrie.

Our problem is perspective. We don’t see things the way God does. His task is to cultivate our spirits—the “inner self.” Nothing in this world has value apart from that. We may enjoy earthly comforts and pleasures, but we must see them in their true nature. They minister only to the outward shell—the flesh. They are of temporary value at best. There is much illusion in earthly comforts and much disappointment. Those who would pursue satisfaction in the flesh, must learn the maxim: “Expectation is the hand-maiden of disappointment.” We often

expect more from this world than it has the capacity to give. Life has a way of shifting in a trice from gentle zephyr to hurricane. The expression, “cruel world” is more than a phrase. Sometimes, it is as in Edgar Allan Poe’s musing about the infamous “Raven’s” master, upon whom “disaster followed fast and followed faster.” It seems so grossly unfair some people live a lifetime, stretched on the racks and tortures of misfortune and devastation. Others seem to sail smoothly from port to port with fair winds and gentle seas. There is no explanation for this in terms of the earthly vessel in which one sails, outside the ultimate design of God for the fashioning of the spirit. Our destiny as reborn spirits of God is not simply to spend eternity in idle ecstasy, or choral convocations, however glorious. In fact, if the worship of God must be, “in spirit,” on the earth, it must certainly be of spirit nature in heaven. It is quite likely that every spirit that comes into the world has a purpose in the mind of God. The fulfillment of that purpose is affected by the earthly circumstances of that spirit. Thus, as God said to Jeremiah, **“Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations”** (Jeremiah 1:5). Many spirits, of course, do not fulfill their purpose. They are free to choose how they will respond to God. As the angels of Lucifer in the beginning of creation, they are often entranced by surface luminescence, and fascinating facades—ever seeking satisfaction without, while ignoring the realities within.

Once one accepts the truth of the Spirit, one can put the destiny of one’s spirit in the care of the “Father of spirits,” and receive all of life’s experiences as part of God’s eternal purpose for oneself. In this respect, it is well to remember Paul’s instructions not to compare ourselves with one another. Your life and destiny and experience are yours alone. Even nature teaches us that everything in the universe—every snowflake, every leaf, every specimen of every species is unique. Why does God let you suffer, and not others? Because that fits with His pattern for you. Of course, one must never assume what another suffers. There are so many varieties of suffering that it is impossible to tell. What is suffering to one, is not to another. And what is not suffering to one may be intense suffering to another.

At this point in your life, the **“One who sustains all things by the word of His power,”** is sustaining you. If you have been joined to Him by receiving His Spirit, your ultimate destiny is in His hands. He is shaping you as He sees fit. All the positive and negative experiences you are going through have His purpose in mind. As “one star differeth from another star,” so each of us is different. Who can fathom God’s intentions? Rest in the reality that His intentions for you are being fulfilled. Through pain and pleasure, desire and desperation, the Great Master is crafting your spirit into a grand *Objet d’art*. Let Him do His work. Bear patiently the painful process. Rest in His power and purpose. Think not of your weaknesses and fears. Think rather of His power and grace. **“My grace is sufficient for thee for my strength is made perfect in weakness.”**

Are you a failure? Even your failure is a tool in the Master’s hand. Have you no faith? You are supposed to trust Him, not your faith. Is the vessel marred and battered? It’s not the vessel, but the spirit within that matters. Do you see no usefulness for yourself? God is the user, not you. Do you feel despondent, depressed? Your feelings are as illusory as the circumstances that produced them. Trust God, not your feelings about God or yourself or life. That is all part

of the fleshy “cocoon,” which soon will disintegrate, and release the glorious butterfly.

There is no facet of your life that God is not aware of—no circumstance without purpose; no sorrow without growth; no failure that is not the threshold of success; no darkness that does not precede the dawn. Satan may batter the vessel, but he can never disturb God’s work of art within.

There is never a moment of lapse in the sustaining power of Christ within us—only of our perception of that power. Whatever the circumstance you are now in, see not the circumstance, but the “Master Craftsman” in whose hand the circumstance is a tool. Your fulfillment or shaping is His concern.

In this moment of time—weak and failing; doubting and despairing; cast all upon Him. **“Lay hold of eternal life.” “Casting all your distractions upon Him, for it is a care to Him concerning you”** (I Peter 5:7) (Author’s translation).

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