

Greater than All the gods

Joe Slater

Not long after the Exodus Jethro (Moses' father-in-law) brought Moses' wife and sons to him in the wilderness. As he spoke with Moses, Jethro affirmed this remarkable truth: *"Now I know that the Lord is greater than all the gods; for in the very thing in which they behaved proudly, He was above them"* (Exodus 18:11).

Jethro referred, of course, to the ten plagues God inflicted upon Pharaoh and the Egyptians as well as other miraculous acts that demonstrated His superiority over their innumerable idols.

The Nile itself was considered to be a god, but the Lord turned its water to blood. Then the plague of frogs showed the ineffectiveness of the fertility goddess Heqet, worshiped under the image of a frog. And on it went until Pharaoh, who was deemed a living god, suffered the devastating loss of his firstborn son, the heir apparent to his throne. The gods of the underworld could do nothing to prevent the boy's death or bring him back to life.

Pharaoh had arrogantly asked, *"Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice?"* (Exodus 5:2). The plagues answered that question with crystal clarity! But they also served to help convince the stubborn Hebrews to believe and obey. We can only wish their faith had been stronger and more permanent!

Christians confess *"one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all"* (Ephesians 4:6). American idolatry differs significantly from that of ancient Egypt but make no mistake, idolatry is still with us! How fortunate we are to have the complete, revealed, confirmed, and recorded word of God to show us exactly who God is and how to have fellowship with Him not only now, but forever! Who could ask for more?

How Well Does God Know?

Even the hairs of your head are all numbered (Luke 12:7b ESV).

The designers and builders of automobiles know their product. They designed it. They built it. They provide manuals which define the automobile, explain its features and tell how to use it. In short, the designer and builder knows the automobile "inside out."

So it is with God. He designed and built (created) us. We are a marvelous creation. The Psalmist writes, *"For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well"* (Psalm 139:13-14).

How well does He know us? Many scriptures answer this question. Luke tells us that God knows the number of hairs on our head. Those in the medical field tell us that the human scalp contains, on average, between 80,000 and 100,000 hairs. Additionally, each person sheds around one hundred hairs per day. Does God ever lose track? No, he still knows the exact number, even as they are being lost and replaced.

More importantly, God knows our thoughts and hearts. He knew the hearts and thoughts of every man during the time of Noah, and He didn't like it. *"The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually"* (Genesis 6:5). Psalm 139:2 indicates that He knows our thoughts even before we think them.

Our thoughts lead to actions (Matt. 15:17-20). We are warned that we should maintain pure thoughts which, in turn, will lead to righteous actions. *"For the Lord searches all hearts and understands every plan and thought. If you seek him, he will be found by you, but if you forsake him, he will cast you off forever"* (I Chronicles 28:9).

God knows us inside out!

--Roy Allen Crutcher (Mt. Carmel, IL)

GREATNESS

For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus (Philippians 1:6 NASU).

Helen Keller wrote, "I long to accomplish a great and noble task, but it is my chief duty to accomplish humble tasks as though they were great and noble. The world is moved along, not only by the mighty shoves of its heroes, but also by the aggregate of the tiny pushes of each honest worker."

I think we all realize what she says is true. How often people get caught up thinking greatness is something recognized by the masses. Seldom do we ever think that God sees greatness in things no one else sees. All the so-called great things done by all the renowned heroes of this world together couldn't compare to all the things the so called "nobodies" have done to make this a better place to live.

Have you ever thought that Acts and the epistles say little or nothing about the other apostles besides Peter, John and Paul? Luke, James (the Lord's brother), Jude, and Mark were not apostles. What about those other men? Have we forgotten there were twelve apostles and not just two or three? Do we really believe Paul converted the Roman world all by himself?

There are some who think that unless a preacher is published, he's not much of a preacher. I have known, and still know scholarly brethren who have no interest in writing for publication. These men are serving the Lord in their niche of the world. I think about the scholarly sisters who corrected me a time or two with their great knowledge of Scripture, and how grateful I am for their humble assistance.

Stop thinking you are a nobody! Jesus died for you. He has a plan for you. I remember when I was young I heard elderly men pray, "Father, use us for your high and holy purposes." I believe those words. Paul said that "For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus" (Philippians 1:6 NASU).

--Rob Redden (Arroyo Grande, CA)