

The World behind the World

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Recently, my brother-in-law made a comment about a realistic computer game he had been playing. At one point in the game, a flaw appeared in the virtual world that revealed elements behind and below the scene. He equated this experience to a brief glimpse into the secret world hidden behind the world we see. I believe in an unseen world behind this world that is as real and active and diverse as the world we know. Although this world is invisible to us, sometimes we catch an indirect glimpse of it or feel it when something stirs within it.

It's not too implausible that a world like this could exist. Without the aid of a microscope, we would be unable to see the teeming world of life that exists in a drop of pond water. As a kid, I found it fascinating to watch the variety of amazing creatures swimming past the field of view of our home microscope. Let's consider the universe in which our Earth is just a speck. Without the invention of the telescope, we would never have seen distant galaxies or colorful nebulae. Or consider the unexplored world that exists at the bottom of the ocean. These real worlds exist outside of our own, but cannot be seen without the use of special equipment. Why then is it difficult to believe in a world that is inhabited by beings we cannot see?

The Unseen Spiritual World

This unseen world I'm referring to is the spiritual world. This is the world where God and angels navigate and from which they occasionally interact with the physical world. I'm told that the Disneyland theme park has an underground network of tunnels through which employees appear and disappear, and supplies and trash are carted. In a similar way, spiritual beings travel behind the scenes, but make their presence known when it's needed. They are always there, unseen, but influence the world and our experience of it.

Does it matter whether we believe in this spiritual world? It matters in that this spiritual world is eternal. It preexists the physical world and will exist after this physical world ends. Of greater importance is that we must learn to trust in it. More specifically, we must learn to trust in God and believe that He is always there and will make His presence known when needed. "It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, but the glory of kings is to search out a

matter." – Proverbs 25:2. God chooses to hide from mankind, but allows Himself to be found those who seek Him. This is intended to test our hearts and to distinguish those who are sincere, those who desire to know God from a pure longing and not for selfish ends.

For those who seek God, this spiritual world isn't as elusive as it is for others. It is a rich world that satisfies our deepest cravings, a place where we can connect to God and find peace and love. People these days seek peace, but we discover authentic peace when we encounter God. The peace that God gives can quell every fear and worry, but we cannot obtain it without first obtaining God. I have learned that the peace of God is God. When we experience God, we experience peace. It is not something He gives, but something that He *is*. When we receive peace, we receive God. When we give peace, we offer God to others.

Hide and Seek and Find

"You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart. I will be found by you, declares the LORD." – Jeremiah 29-13-14. The apostle Paul said, "His purpose was for the nations to seek after God and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him—though he is not far from any one of us" – Acts 17-27 (Living Bible). The spiritual world is hidden from us for a reason: so we might seek after God. Those who have no need for God will never experience Him, as He will remain hidden from them. But for those who earnestly seek Him out of a recognized need for what only He can give, we are promised that we will find Him.

When we find God and ask Him into our lives, He comes and dwells in our hearts (Ephesians 3:17). The God of the universe makes us His habitation. We become temples of the living God. God becomes accessible to us to a greater degree. Jesus says in Revelation 3:20, "Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me." The image of having a meal with Jesus alludes to sharing, companionship and intimacy. God desires these qualities of relationship with all of us.

Responding to the Spiritual World

As you go through your day, be aware that the spiritual world surrounds you. This unseen world is aware of you whether you are aware of it or not. More than just being aware of you, the spiritual world endeavors to influence your life and offer assistance if you are open to it. Seek to be open. And, maybe, you might catch a glimpse of it or feel it when it brushes past you. We need not fear this mysterious world because God inhabits it and He can be trusted.

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Rick Hocker

Author of *Four in the Garden*

An Allegory about One's Relationship with God

Readers' Favorite International Book Award Winner

Available in print and e-book at all online stores

Email: rick@rickhocker.com

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