

THE CHANGELESS ONE & THE CHANGING ONES

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Everything that we can perceive with our five senses is in a state of continual change. "One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth forever. The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place where he rose. The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north; It whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits. All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again" (Eccl. 1:4-7).

If the Lord tarries, every individual who is alive on earth today will be dead within 150 years, and a generation yet unborn and unknown to us will inhabit the earth. The generations change and so do the dumb elements of creation. The winds shift, bringing storms or sunny weather. Rivers gradually alter their course; the depth and the quality of their waters rise and fall. Even the sun "changes" from our perspective as we observe modifications in its location, its distance, and its visibility. Beyond the sun, changes can be observed by astronomers as they study things such as novas, supernovas, black holes, and quasars. Astronomers tell us that the star Arcturus (mentioned by Yahweh in Job 38:32) is 36 light years away from us. It takes 36 years for the light from Arcturus to reach earth; therefore what we're really seeing is Arcturus as it was 36 years ago. If I'm not mistaken, I think this means that if Arcturus ever burns out and disappears, we will still see its light from earth for 36 years after its demise. We will see a star that no longer exists.

The entire created universe is in a state of constant change. Because we are a part of the created universe, we are in a state of constant change. In case you haven't noticed yet, your body is undergoing a radical (though gradual) transmogrification as you

age. When the reality of a man's mortality sinks in and he comes to grips with the inevitability of his own death, it can cause him to despair and cry out, "Vanity of vanities; all is vanity!" as did Koheleth, "the Preacher" of Ecclesiastes.

It is man's destiny to change, not only outwardly in the body but also inwardly in the soul. Man was originally created in the image and likeness of his Creator. Through man's sin, that image and likeness has been marred. If man is to be restored to the image and likeness of God, either man must change or God must change. One of us has to change. And in case you don't know, God is not going to change. "For I am Yahweh, I change not" (Mal. 3:6).

The Creator is "the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (James 1:17). He is the same today as He was millions of years ago, and He will still be the same millions of years from now. He has never been any "older" or "younger" at any point in time. He is forever young, a bubbling fountain from which flows an endless stream of new life and youthful energy. He is forever old, a deep bottomless well from which man can draw out refreshing waters of ancient wisdom. He is "the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy" (Isa. 57:15).

The Creator's character and personality do not change. Some people mistakenly think that "the Old Testament God" got smarter and mellowed out after a few thousand years, and sent Jesus with a message like this: "God has had a change of heart. He's wised up. He realizes now that those laws He gave through Moses are just too difficult and unrea-

sociable. Some of them are just downright mean. So He's gonna nail those old laws to the cross and cancel them, and give you a new set of rules that are easier to follow.*

No Christian would accuse Jesus of actually saying these exact words, but that in effect is the gist of the anti-Torah message which some Christian preachers present to their flock. The Scriptures rule out such a message, though. "All His commandments are sure. They stand fast forever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness" (Ps. 111:7f). Thou art near, O Yahweh; and all Thy commandments are truth. Concerning Thy testimonies, I have known of old that Thou hast founded them forever" (Ps.

With the exception of the Levitical sacrificial laws, i.e., the law "that was added because of transgressions" (Gal. 3:19), God's Law does not change. Neither does His love for His faithful remnant. Concerning the remnant "which were left of the sword," Jeremiah wrote this: "Yahweh hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee" (Jer. 31:3).

The Changeless One wants to change His redeemed children into His image and likeness, as manifested in Yeshua, because He loves us with an everlasting love. That is quite remarkable, given the fact that we actually deserve His everlasting punishment for our sins. That is the wonder of the simple gospel of salvation. "But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Messiah died for us" (Rom. 5:8).

Going through changes is often difficult, but when the changes are for the sake of the Changeless One, it is worth it. We might not see the worth of it in this age, but we will see it in the age to come. As a line from an old hymn puts it, "It will be worth it all, when we see Jesus."