

Cat.1 #1 Do we know God? By Pieter Bos

Moses met God after 40 years of walking (with the sheep of his father in law) through the desert and **through** the confrontation with the pharaoh and his Egyptian gods, as a preparation to lead the people of Israel... *and calls God Father* (Deut.32:6). Isaiah is confronted with the most frightening visions for his own and 20+ other nations and world class cities... *and calls God Father* (63:16; 64:7, 65:1). (Jesus teaches his disciples to pray to "Our Father. Who art in heaven...")

The Bible is plain concerning God pouring his wrath over nations and cities, punishing the worship of false gods, through the great flood, through famines and through the armies of Israel and of world powers. Is he still our Father? The Bible is plain about Jesus opening the seals of the end-time book, about trumpets to announce Satan being thrown out of heaven and about bowls of wrath poured out to finish off Satan's one-world government, with millions dead and millions upon millions in refugee camps, traumatized and starving. Is he still our Father?

During my university years for many months a depression aggressively disrupted all my activities. This was stopped short overnight by God appearing to me as Father. This first encounter was the solid base for my adventurous life with God. When this "end time" comes, is he still my Father? The clue, but not an easy one, is the understanding of covenant.

In "Covenant" the Creator God commits Himself to creature Man. The repeated short covenant formula is: "I am your God and you are my people". Or longer: "I commit myself to protect and prosper you; you commit yourself to (corporately) follow me; if you follow me I will bless you; if you do not follow me the following curses will come upon you". God's commitment is awesome; the consequences of not fulfilling our part are awesome too; the "uneasy" sections in the Bible make that very clear.

Now God did not only have a covenant with Israel. Prior to that he had a "covenant with all nations", which was broken, and the later covenant with Israel served as a means to recover the earlier one (Zech 11:12-13; Matt 27:4-10). That's why God reaches out to many nations by name, with blessings, warnings, curses and promises, because they are covenant-partners-on-the-run. (See the book "The nations called" on this "Covenant with all nations".)

This sheds light on the frightening Bible passages above. The unseen world vibrates with covenant love and covenant faithfulness, and shakes with covenant passion and covenant wrath.

Do we know God? Do we know God as he commits himself to us, as the Covenant God?

Back to Moses. "We are consumed in your anger. We are troubled in your wrath... Who knows the power of your anger, Your wrath according to the fear that is due to you?" (Psalm 90:7,11). Moses wonders whether he really knows God. A good question.