



HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT

It's no secret that God has chosen to remain invisible to those of us living on earth.

He cannot be perceived by our five senses because God is a spirit, and our physical senses are limited to this tangible world. It would be so much easier if God would simply appear on demand, allowing people to see Him for themselves! Isaiah must have felt the same way when he said, "Oh, that You would rend the heavens! That You would come down! That the mountains might shake at Your presence... To make Your name known to Your adversaries, That the nations may tremble at Your presence!" (Isaiah 64:1-2)

God could certainly appear to the world. His appearance would likely silence the skeptics and humble His enemies. He could come down in an instant and solve all the world's problems! Yet He chooses to remain invisible.

It's ironic that people who owe their very existence to God can choose to live as if He doesn't exist. They can blaspheme Him, take His name in vain, or completely ignore Him, all the while breathing air that He created, eating food He has provided, and living a life that He made possible. They can live their entire lives without ever acknowledging His presence, while God allows them to do so without interfering. In Matthew 5:45 Jesus said, "...He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust."

God exercises amazing restraint by allowing people to live their lives without intervening, but why ?

By remaining hidden, He is honoring our right to choose. We have all been given a free will, and with it, the ability to make choices. Not even God overrides the human will. As free moral agents, we have the ability to choose Him! He has given each of us one lifetime to make this decision, and He will not force us through intimidation or coercion.

God could certainly reveal Himself and His glory to the world at any time. Humanity would be overwhelmed by His presence. The result? Every person would immediately surrender to Him.

At the end of World War II, the United States dropped two atomic bombs on cities in Japan. Up until that moment, Japan was ready to fight to the death; surrender was not an option. When the overwhelming force of the atomic bomb was unleashed, an estimated 200,000 people died, and suddenly, surrender was the only option. Japan surrendered unconditionally. Their surrender was not by choice, but by force. God's manifested presence would have the same effect on the world, many times over.

However, God doesn't want a forced surrender; He does not want people to be compelled to live with Him throughout eternity because they are unable to resist His awesome presence. So He has chosen to step back and allow each person to make their own decision. But just

because He is hidden doesn't mean that He is unreachable or unconcerned. *(To be continued)*