Magnificent Creator

Readings, prayers, and hymns

Ken Bible

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Magnificent Creator

~

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. (Genesis 1:1, NASB)

~

All understanding begins with an understanding of God.

He is the First and the Last,
the Beginning and the End,
the Creator and Sustainer,
the Source and the Goal.

From Him, through Him, and to Him are all things.
His reality is the foundation for all other realities.

In His Presence

O Lord my God, You are very great; You are clothed with splendor and majesty. (Psalm 104:1, NASB)

Some of the most profound and moving moments of my life have been spent under the clear night sky. Looking up from my backyard, I feel I am in a great hall of eternity. I see the stars and think of the unfathomable distances of time and space there before me.

I am awestruck by the vastness of God. He is there, filling all space, all eternity, and beyond. I sense that I've walked into His holy temple, and the only proper response is to stand in total silence.

I am one of billions of life forms on this planet, which is little more than a pebble orbiting the sun. And each of those tiny stars there in the sky is roughly the size of our sun. There are a billion trillion of them scattered like grains of sand through the vastness of space.

The total life span of one of those stars, millions or billions of years, is only an episode in the life of the universe, to say nothing of His unimaginable eternity. And my life...my life is the tiniest fraction of a heartbeat. One breath.

Lord God, why do I matter to You? Why do You even notice me? God, why should You care about me?

I stand here wrapped up in my own little world, so anxious and dark. But I am in Your world, in Your domain, in all its vastness and serenity. Your skies are singing, "He is good, and His mercy endures forever." Your trees, so stately against the sky, are silently chanting, "O Lord, our Lord, how majestic You are in all the earth." The whole world is a symphony to Your name. I listen, and I can hear it.

God, my Father, I don't know why, but I know that You love me. I see Your love in my life. I hear You whisper it in my heart. And I don't want to ignore You, my God.

There is so much I don't understand about You. But I know that when I admit that You are God--that You are MY God--I am embracing the truth.

I know that when I believe You love me and start to trust Your love, it pleases You. It pleases You very much.

And I sense that when I open myself to You, I am opening myself to Your goodness and wisdom and to a wonderful future with You.

Lord God, I am nothing in myself. I am significant for only one reason:

You, Great Creator, love me. Teach me to love You in return.

~

O Father,
if only everyone recognized You for
who You are,
the sovereign Creator,
the Source and Goal of all that is!
How different our world would be,
and will be!
How blessed we are to know You,
serve You, and
live every moment in Your care!

~

Hymn recording: Creation Praise

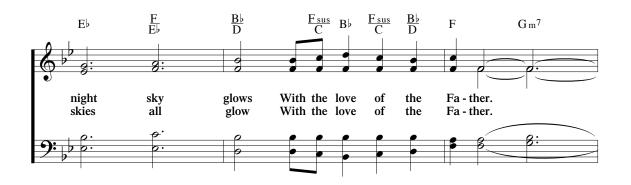
Creation Praise

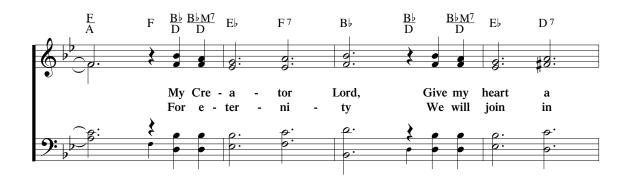


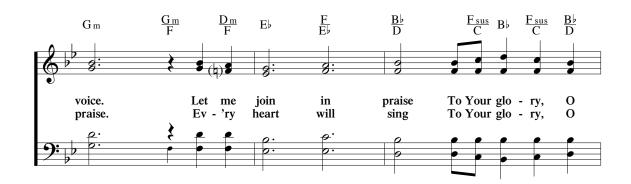
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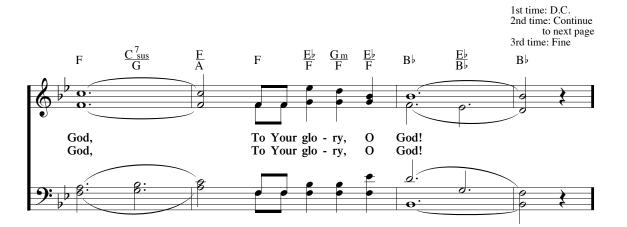
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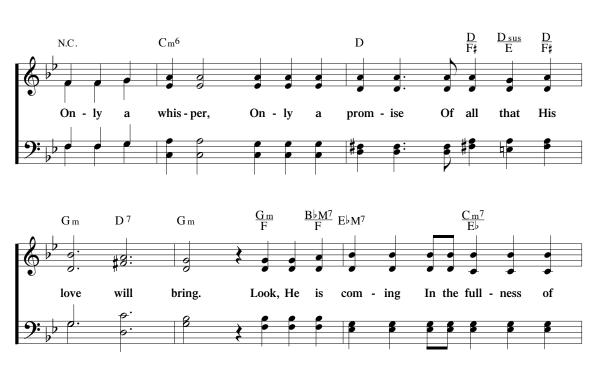
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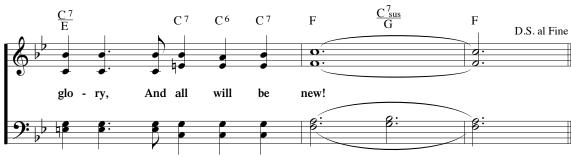












The Immensity of God

O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? (Psalm 8:1, 3-4, NIV)

Have you ever had the experience that the psalmist describes above? Have you been out under the clear night sky and looked up at the stars and the vastness of the heavens? Have you marveled that the Creator of all this has any interest in *you*? Here are some facts that may stimulate your imagination.

Light travels so fast that a beam of light can circle the earth more than 7 times in a second. The moon is a quarter of a million miles away, and its light reaches the earth in less than a second and a half. The sun is approximately 93 million miles away, and its light arrives in approximately 8 minutes.

Our own galaxy or group of stars is called the Milky Way. How long do you think it would take light to travel just across our own galaxy? 100,000 years! Light travels around the earth 7 times in a second and 93 million miles from the sun in only 8 minutes. But our galaxy is so vast that even light takes 100,000 years to cross it.

Galaxies are vast beyond our imagination. But ours is only one galaxy. How many galaxies do you think there are in the universe? Estimates vary, but in 1999, data from the Hubble space telescope led scientists to estimate that there are 125 billion galaxies in the universe. Some estimates run much higher. Try to imagine that: 93 million miles in 8 minutes; 100,000 years to cross our galaxy; 125 billion galaxies.

We are so very small. Reality dwarfs us. It dwarfs the human race. It dwarfs the entire earth.

But here's something else to consider: this vast universe is only the smallest taste of the Living God. He overflows the physical universe. Job 26 talks about God's mighty works in creation, then in v.14 says that in all these we see only the fringes of His robe. We hear only a faint whisper of Him.

What's more, the gap between God and us is far greater than the size of the universe. The real gap between God and us is in the essence of who we are.

- He is all-powerful and all-wise, unbounded by matter and time. We are weak and blind, living momentary lives, consumed with the here and now.
- He is holy and pure. Without Him, we are corrupt and sinful.
- He is unlimited love. We are proud, small-minded, and selfish, wrapped up in our own comfort and narrow interests.

But now for the most amazing truth: God's love has bridged this gap between us. This immense chasm of time, space, and character has been closed by God's all-encompassing love. All the immensity of God, all the eternity of God, all His glory and power and holiness have been embodied in a human being: Jesus Christ. We are united with this immense God in Christ (Colossians 2:9-10).

~

O Magnificent God,
in You Yourself are
all the wonder,
all the mystery,
all the discovery,
all the joy,
all the deep, unshakable peace
my heart could ever want!

~

Hymn recording: **Everlasting Father**

Everlasting Father



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CCLI Song #3249891. For CCLI information call 1-800-234-2446.

Reflection on Psalm 65

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Sovereign Creator,
Universal Father,
Transcendent King,
Holy, Holy, Holy God,
sometimes the only appropriate response to You is
silence -
      the silence of deep joy,
      the silence of childlike trust,
      the silence of humble, selfless worship.
All creation models such
      silent worship.
Without a word, it
      endlessly,
      eloquently
lifts up its mighty voice to You,
glorifying You for
      all
      You
      are.
Its unsung hymns ring with
      wonder and
      joy and
      adoration.
Its liturgies bubble over with
      a richness that
      words cannot capture.
O Father, school me in such worship.
Let Your creation and
      Your Holy Spirit
teach me.
Then when I do speak or
      sing,
may it be in
      full,
      wholehearted response
to You,
the One,
the Holy,
the Living and True God.
```

O Father Creator, all that You have made worships before You in reverent silence and in joyful song! All the earth around us sings of Your goodness!

~

Hymn recording: Psalm 65

Psalm 65

TUNE: My Faith Looks Up to Thee (OLIVET)



MUSIC: Lowell Mason (1792-1872); arr. by Ken Bible

6.6.4.6.6.6.4.

All-encompassing God

From Him and
through Him and
to Him
are all things.
To Him be the glory forever.
(Romans 11:36, NASB)

```
All being flows from You alone,
all existence,
all reality.
      All things came into being through Him, and
      apart from Him
      nothing came into being that has come into being. (John 1:3, NASB)
You,
      transcendent and
      unseen,
are the ultimate reality.
       The things which are seen are temporal,
      but the things which are not seen are eternal. (2 Corinthians 4:18, NASB)
You are truth.
      Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." (John 14:6, NASB)
All that is flows
      from You –
             the Source of all.
All that is flows
      through You,
             the means,
             the mover,
             the doer.
             the enabler.
All that is flows
      to You.
             our Goal,
             our Destination,
             our Ultimate Good.
You are the Source of all I am.
      I was designed and created
             by You and
             for You.
```

You are the means for all the good I can ever do. You are the Goal toward Whom my life and all the world is moving.

I look to

You.

I trust

You.

I live for

You.

You are fullness.

You are completeness.

You are all joy.

You are all well-being.

You, my Lord.

I long,

I wait for

You.

Our value and our glory come not from our own abilities or attractiveness, but from reflecting our magnificent Creator.

Hymn recording: From You, Through You, to You

From You, Through You, To You

Romans 11:32-36; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Colossians 1:15-16; Revelation 5:11-14



WORDS & MUSIC: Ken Bible

EUNICE COURTS 9.9.9.7.

Reflection on Psalm 8

Father, Your greatness shines all around me!
All the earth radiates
Your splendor,

Your glory, Your might and majesty.

But You don't need spectacular displays to prove Your power. It is so woven throughout the fabric of reality that mere children speak the awesome truth of who You are.

Creator, in Your humility,
You even display Your glory through us.

When I look up at the clear night sky and see the vastness of time and space,
I am gripped by how very small and unworthy we are.
I wonder why You take any notice of us at all.
Yet You make us lesser versions of Yourself and surround us with Your magnificence.

You entrust Your own creations to us – all the varied creatures of

land, sky, and sea.

Your condescension to us is yet another of Your marvelous, amazing works.

O my God, how glorious is Your name in all the earth!

~

O Magnificent God,
Your creation sings powerfully of
Your greatness and
my smallness, of
Your unbounded mercy and
my complete unworthiness.
May that song sound

throughout my being!

 \sim

Hymn recording: Psalm 8

Psalm 8

TUNE: The Lord's My Shepherd (CRIMOND)



Alt. Tunes: AZMON; ST. ANNE
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Love in Living Color

```
Our beautiful earthly home paints our Father's love
      in living color.
Open your eyes! Look around!
With youthful enthusiasm our timeless God
carefully planned all the universe,
      from immense panoramas
      to the tiniest, most stunning detail.
He took pleasure in displaying His magnificence for all to see.
He eagerly provided for our every need.
There in the very beginning,
the same sovereign Word that spoke the world into existence
       blessed us.
He blessed us even more richly in Jesus Christ.
He continues to bless us day by day with everything
      good,
      noble,
      pure, and
```

Rejoice in Him!

lovely.

Worship our Father for all He has done!

To the trusting heart, all reality is a forest,

dense with the life and mysterious beauty of God.

~

Hymn recording: Lavish Love, Abundant Beauty

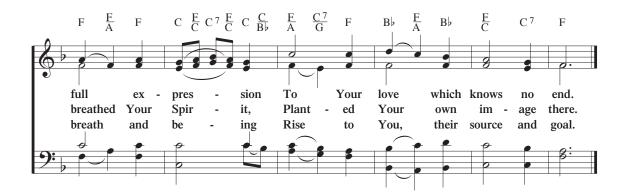
Lavish Love, Abundant Beauty

TUNE: Jesus, What a Friend of Sinners (HYFRYDOL)

Genesis 1



WORDS: Ken Bible MUSIC: Rowland H. Prichard HYFRYDOL 8.7.8.7.D.



Know Your Creator

The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. (Psalm 19:1, NIV)

God is an all-powerful Spirit Being. He created us as physical beings. How could He reveal Himself to us in a way we could understand? How could He show Himself to each of us in a way that is unlimited by language and culture and that is undiminished by all the changes that swirl around us?

He reveals Himself by the physical world of which we are a part.

What may be known about God is plain...For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. (Romans 1:19-20, NIV)

Any open-minded view of our physical world tells us about God. But we observe and experience His creation without knowing Him, even though He has made Himself plain. How does this happen?

We intentionally suppress the truth (Romans 1:18). We refuse to accept Him as Creator. We work to write Him out of our story. We insist on making this physical world our ultimate reality, though actually it is but a small part of a much greater reality. We crown ourselves as the gods of our own lives and destinies, even though our smallness and weakness are inescapably obvious.

Meanwhile, God's glorious revelations of Himself go on speaking to all who will hear.

Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard. Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world. (Psalm 19:2-4, NIV)

Observe our world and experience it with an open mind. See and feel the order, the pleasure, the beauty, the mystery, the power, and the infinite wisdom that connect it all. All this is only the faintest whisper of the magnificent Being that He is (Job 26:14). He wants you to know Him, to trust Him more completely, and to experience life more fully in Him.

Almighty God,
our shallow images of
greatness and glory
are inadequate to show us
the excellence,
the purity,
the wonder of all You are.
O Holy One,
I want to know You!

Hymn recording: Psalm 104

Psalm 104



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Live as Seeing the Unseen

We walk by faith, not by sight. (2 Corinthians 5:7, NASB)

We tend to react only to what seems real to us. And as humans, we interpret reality primarily by what we can see. If it happens to be visible, it's real. If not, it can't be fully trusted.

But even science tells us that our sight perceives only a fraction of reality. Many "lower" animals perceive the world very adequately without the sight we experience. In fact, many of them sense vast portions of reality we never notice in our heavy dependence on sight.

For example, many animals live in a world of smell. They rely on it to find food, to find mates, and to protect themselves. Some scientists believe that pigeons and salmon can use scent to navigate great distances.

Other migrating animals, including certain butterflies and birds, seem to find their way across vast distances of unfamiliar territory simply by sensing the earth's gravitational field.

Sharks, the platypus, and other species can sense electrical impulses in the bodies of their prey. Rattlesnakes and their fellow pit vipers find their prey through an organ that detects body heat. Bats can fly with incredible agility and accuracy, even picking insects out of midair in the dark, using their built-in ultrasonic radar.

Some animals and plants can predict the weather as well as we can, or even better. They seem to know of coming thunderstorms, earthquakes, or volcanic eruptions, perhaps because they can perceive electrical charges in the air, hear low-frequency vibrations, or feel tiny tremors to which we are oblivious.

Even in the area of sight, we are sometimes left far behind. Birds of prey can clearly see what is almost invisible to us. And some insects see colors the human eye can't distinguish.

All this reminds us that as physical beings, we humans operate on a heavily filtered version of reality. Sight leaves us in the dark in many, many respects. And if we perceive so little of what is real in a physical sense, imagine how little we perceive of the realities that are not dependent on matter.

That brings us to Hebrews 11. It talks about people who pleased God by trusting Him, despite the way things looked around them. Noah spent many years building an ark, based purely on God's warnings about things not yet seen (v.7, NASB). Moses

overcame all the trials and difficulties of leading Israel out of Egypt because *he endured,* as seeing Him who is unseen (v.27, NASB).

All these saints lived wisely and fruitfully by focusing on the reality of God's presence. Almighty God was always with them. They knew it was true, and they acted like it, even though their eyes could not see Him.

I long to live that way, knowing and trusting that reality, living in full response to His personal presence with me. What a joy it would be to consistently act and react as seeing Him who is unseen (v.27, NASB).

I want to live and serve that way, to pray and worship, to think and talk as being immediately with Him always and forever.

~

Live in response to Sovereign God, not in response to your childish fears. Walk in the light of all He is, not in the shadow of your own smallness.

~

Hymn recording: **Ever Standing in Your Presence**

Ever Standing In Your Presence

TUNE: All My Life-long I Had Panted (SATISFIED)

Psalm 73:23-28



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CCLI Song #3305144. For CCLI information call 1-800-234-2446.

The Hunger

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. (Matthew 5:6, NASB)

I had an extra day off work, and I wanted to enjoy it to the fullest. One of the best parts of having the day off is getting to stay up late the night before. So I watched TV to my heart's content. I lay around instead of taking that walk I needed. And I ate whatever I felt like eating.

By the time I went to bed, I felt bloated, guilty, and restless. I had learned again what I should have already known: self-indulgence is not the path to happiness.

What's more, satisfying the needs of our bodies does not satisfy us.

Yes, we are physical creatures. In a sense, we are children of this earth. Our bodies are made of its elements. We are sustained by its resources and are dependent on them for life - water, food, and air. Even our concepts of pleasure and beauty are largely shaped by this earth. And when we die, our bodies return to the elements from which we were formed. Physically, we are children of this earth.

But we are more than that. We are more than this weak, dying body. Life is more than a sensory experience. Happiness is more than making our bodies as comfortable as possible.

We indulge ourselves. We make life as easy as we can. Or we make it as stimulating as we can. Pleasure . . . ambition . . . they add interest to life, for a while. They can be pleasant distractions, some for longer than others. But always the emptiness returns, the "is that all there is?" feeling. We hunger for something greater, something deeper, something truly fulfilling . . . something lasting.

We hunger to reach all the way to the roots of our existence. We hunger for our Father, our Mother.

We hunger for God.

We don't want to think of it that way. We want to look at the need a "rational" way and come to a more human solution. But the fact is that we hunger for something more than this sea of humanity has to offer, more than it can know. We hunger for our Creator. We hunger to know Him and be known by Him, to understand, to rise to all that we can be, to find our place . . . forever.

We grasp for fulfillment, and fulfillment can only be found in the One that created us from Himself. Fulfillment can only be found in all that He is and all that we can be in Him.

If you're searching for meaning, for purpose, for soul-deep satisfaction, for all that life should be, search for the Source. Search for Him.

You'll discover that He has been searching for you all along . . . searching for His child. And you'll discover that finding Him is as close as a single, honest prayer.

~

God's light is always burning, day and night forever.

He is always with us, always watching, always seeking, always blessing, always drawing us to Himself.

~

Hymn recording: <u>Seeking Me</u>

Seeking Me

Freely, don't rush $\int = ca. 52$

Jeremiah 7:13, 25; Revelation 3:20



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Irregular

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I Am from You

The Lord God formed man of dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being. (Genesis 2:7, NASB)

God, in a way, our relationship is private and personal, one that You and I share alone.

It's an organic relationship,
as fundamental as my substance,
as my existence.

I am from You.

I turn back to You now as demands leave me uncertain and seeking support.

I am from You.

I don't just have my source in You.
I'm not a child now seeking independence.
I am a part of You once ripped away,
now seeking reunion.
You are life, and I am alive.
You are reality, and I exist.
You are air, and I am a breath.

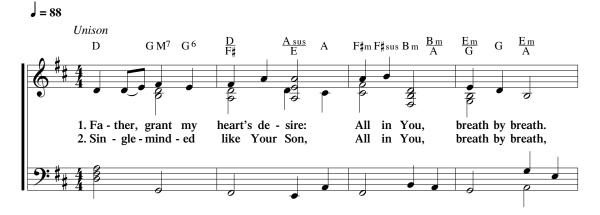
Father, I am from You. Make us one again, I pray.

Father, as I trust You,
my reality is as vast as You are.
I share in Your character,
Your power,
Your goodness, and
Your unlimited future.

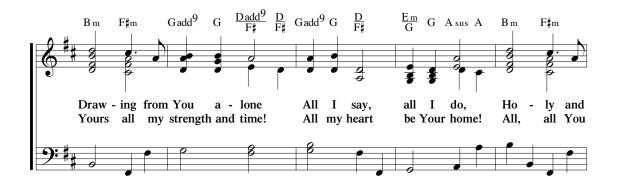
Hymn recording: All in You, Breath by Breath

All in You, Breath by Breath

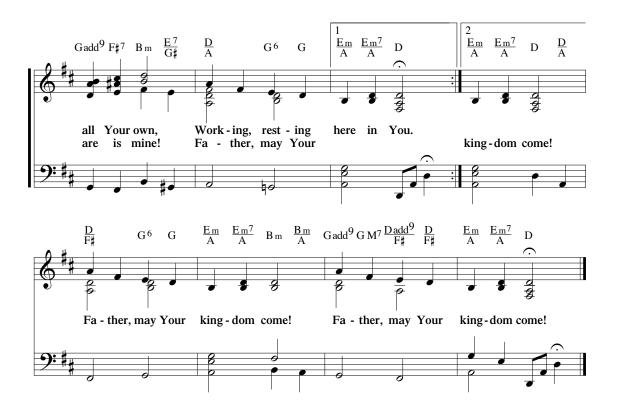
Matthew 6:10; 26:42; John 4:31-34; 5:19-20, 30; 14:10, 16-23; 17:20-24; 20:21-22; Acts 2:1-4; 1 Corinthians 3:21-23; Ephesians 3:14-19







WORDS: Ken Bible SINGLE-MINDED MUSIC: Traditional Folk Tune and Ken Bible 7.6.7.7.6.6.6.7.



I Am Your Creation

O Lord, you are our Father.

We are the clay, you are the potter;

we are all the work of your hand. (Isaiah 64:8, NIV)

During some periods in my life, I've lived in a vague uneasiness about myself. I've felt a restlessness, an unsettledness within that was hard to pin down or identify.

Eventually I realized this stemmed from a clouding of my relationship with God. Though I had not totally rejected Him, I was reluctant to face Him, afraid to stand before Him unhidden. Perhaps I had let Satan steal my confidence through his false accusations. Or perhaps sin had crept in, and I knew deep within that I hadn't been living as I should. As a result, guilt had separated me from a full, joyful relationship with God. I was hesitant to look into His face.

If you've ever experienced these feelings, try something with me. Close your eyes and bow your head, and see yourself standing before Him right now. In your heart look Him straight in the face and say, "God, I am Your creation."

Go ahead, try it.

Listen. How does your heart respond when you say that?

I have a sense of being a child, standing before my Father, with my arms outstretched, looking up into His face. No matter what my struggles, He understands me. My sins and failures have not dampened His love. I'm enveloped in acceptance, an affection, a belonging that goes deeper than my childish inadequacies.

When our children fail or get in trouble, we don't want them to hide from us or go to other sources for help. It hurts and frustrates our hearts when they won't share themselves with us, even when they fall. We long for them to come to us and be assured of our love, understanding, and total support, no matter what they've done. Our Father is the same with us. We are His. Though sin brings a cloud and a separation from Him, the separation is on our end, not His. The love and acceptance still exist. He yearns for us to turn to Him again.

As I stand before Him as my Creator, realizing I am His very own, worship becomes a living relationship. At such times, words are unnecessary. Communication lines are open from heart to heart, without the formalities of speech. The love I sense for Him is worship. That trust growing within me is the adoration He desires.

Standing there, I long to live always in His presence, in that unbroken fellowship with Him. Sin appears now as foolish and destructive, soiling that beautiful, living relationship. I want Him to seal all my affections forever as His very own. I want to live fully and freely before Him—naturally, as His love designed.

And in that love, I want to glorify Him in every way I can. Creation so beautifully and lavishly glorifies Him, singing constantly of His power, His wisdom, His love. As His creation, I want to take my place in that symphony.

We are His creation, His children. That warm, open relationship is what He wants most for us, and with us. He only asks that we trust Him—trust Him enough to come to Him immediately and repent when we have sinned; trust Him enough to bring Him our needs and concerns; trust Him enough to obey His words of love.

He is a wonderful Father!

~

Father, You have placed
Your Almighty, holy name on us.
We are cleansed,
protected,
equipped,
exalted, and
forever set apart as Your very own.
Thank You, Father!

~

Hymn recording: We Are Children

We Are Children



WORDS: Ken Bible MUSIC: George F. Root; arr. by Ken Bible JEWELS 8.6.8.5.7.7.7.5.

Do You Hear Him?

I will listen to what God the Lord will say, for He promises peace to His people.

When we suffer,
God speaks to us in the midst of our trouble.
He wants to draw us out of our distress
into deliverance,
into a spacious place that is wide open and free.
He wants to lead us to a banquet table
filled with all the best food.
(Psalm 85:5; Job 36:15-16; para.)

Creation is God's song about Himself.

Are you listening?

He speaks in the thunder.

Do you tremble at His majesty?

He speaks in a small whisper.

Don't let your desires drown out His voice.

He speaks in the silence.

Are you resting in Him?

He speaks through pain and distress.

Do you still trust His tender love?

He speaks through a thousand daily pleasures, calling you to find constant joy in Him.

Your Father is always speaking. As you trust Him, you will hear Him.

> Father, help me to hear and obey every word You speak to me, for each word is loving and

> > wise and for the best.

Hymn recording: <u>Voice of God</u>

Voice of God

Genesis 1; Exodus 7:1-2; 1 Kings 19:12; Psalm 29; Matthew 10:20; John 14:24; Hebrews 1:1-3



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MUSIC: Ken Bible, inspired by a Traditional Folk Tune

CCLI Song #7070319. For CCLI information call 1-800-234-2446.

You Are My Home

Father, the body I inhabit is destined to die, and probably not without pain. Sooner or later, I will lose my battle for comfort, health, and physical life. But as I look up into the clear night sky, I realize that my home is not this frail body. Neither is it this tiny, ingrown world in which my mind lives most of the time. My home is not this house. this neighborhood, or any of the physical surroundings in which I spend my days. My home is all eternity.

My home is Your entire reality, O Omnipotent Father! My home is everywhere You are!

You are my home! My home is Your heart. My walls are Your power. My roof is Your transcendent magnificence. My future is the farthest reaches of Your boundless life and unfailing love.

O Lord, my God, my world will be filled with knowing You completely, intimately, constantly.

That is where I want to live.

That is where I will live.

And that eternity has already begun.

The Sun of Righteousness

has dawned in me.

The light is growing, and

the darkness is receding.

I stand on the rim of this planet and lift my hands and say,
"I love You,
Almighty Creator,
Exalted Father,
my Source and
my Goal!
You are my home,
now and
forever!"

~

Once we are gripped by
the reality of God,
words can't begin to describe Him.
The only appropriate testimony
to His reality is a life of
persistent faith,
patient endurance, and
selfless love.

~

Hymn recording: Lord, You Are My Home

Lord, You Are My Home

Psalm 90



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WORDS & MUSIC: Ken Bible

HOME Irregular

