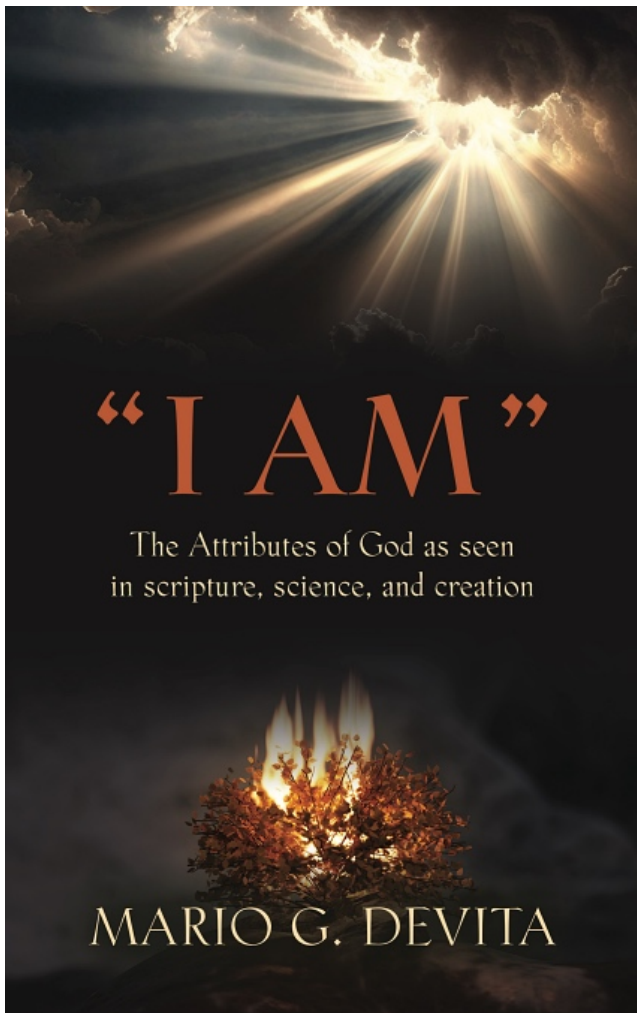


*What the Bible teaches about
God as seen by His attributes.*



**"I AM":
The Attributes of God Seen in Scripture, Science and Creation**
By Mario G. DeVita

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A dramatic scene of a bright sunburst breaking through dark, heavy clouds, with rays of light shining downwards.

“I AM”

The Attributes of God as seen
in scripture, science, and creation

A close-up of a bush engulfed in bright, golden flames, set against a dark background.

MARIO G. DEVITA

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CHAPTER 1:

GOD IS GOOD

Knowing God must begin with an understanding that we are totally dependent on Him to reveal himself to us. And that is what God did as he inspired men to write, without error, what he decided we needed to know. That written account we have today of course is called the Bible.

The Bible is divided into two parts, the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament, also known as the Hebrew Bible, was written over a period of approximately 1,000 years, from around 1200 BC to 100 AD. It contains 39 books that were written in Hebrew and Aramaic and covers the history of the Jewish people from the creation of the world to the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem after the Babylonian exile.

The New Testament was written in Greek over a period of approximately 50 years, from around 50 AD to 100 AD. It contains 27 books that describe the life, teachings, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, as well as the history of the early Christian Church. It is divided into four main sections: the Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, the Epistles (or Letters), and the Book of Revelation.

Some of the greatest intellects in history have drawn their inspiration from the Scriptures. Benjamin Franklin said:

“Young man, my advice to you is that you cultivate an acquaintance with and firm belief in the Holy Scriptures, for this is your certain interest.” Thomas Jefferson said, “I have said and always will say, that the study of the Sacred book will make better citizens, better fathers, and better husbands.”

When the late Queen Victoria was asked the secret of England’s greatness, she took down a copy of the Scriptures, and pointing to the Bible she said, “That Book explains the power of Great Britain.” Daniel Webster once affirmed, “If we abide by the principles taught in the Bible, our country will go on prospering; but, if we and our posterity neglect its instructions and authority, no man can tell how sudden a catastrophe may overwhelm us and bury all our glory in profound obscurity. How Great is Britain now that so many of their people have all but abandoned the teachings of holy Scripture?”

When Sir Walter Scott lay dying, he said, “Read to me out of the Book.” Which book? answered his servant. “There is only one Book,” was the dying man’s response “The Bible!

The goodness of God is a recurring theme throughout the whole Bible, as the authors of the various books repeatedly express their belief in God's benevolent nature and his unending love for his people. Throughout the stories and accounts presented in the Old Testament, we see evidence of God's goodness manifested in a variety of ways, from his creation of the world and his providential care for his people, to his grace and forgiveness in the face of human sinfulness and disobedience.

In the opening verses of the book of Genesis, we are introduced to God as the Creator of the universe, who

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brings order out of chaos and calls all things into being. This act of creation is seen as a profound expression of God's goodness and his desire to share his life with the people He created.

Throughout the Old Testament, we see evidence of God's providential care for his people, as he provides for their needs and protects them from harm. In the book of Exodus, for example, God leads the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt and guides them through the wilderness, providing them with food and water and protecting them from their enemies. The psalmist reflects on this care in Psalm 23, proclaiming: "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul."

Despite man's disobedience and sinfulness, God repeatedly shows his goodness with grace and forgiveness for his people. In the book of Jonah, for example, God sends the prophet to the city of Nineveh to warn them of their impending destruction. When the people repent of their sins, God relents and shows them mercy, sparing them from the punishment they deserved.

Likewise, the book of Hosea portrays God's steadfast love for his people, even in the face of their unfaithfulness. The prophet marries a prostitute named Gomer, who repeatedly cheats on him and runs away. Despite this, Hosea remains faithful to her and continues to love her, reflecting God's love for his people, who constantly turn away from him.

The book of Isaiah also emphasizes God's grace and forgiveness, as the prophet speaks of a time when God will "take away the disgrace of his people from all the earth and

wipe away the tears from all faces and the reproach of his people he will remove from the whole earth.” (Isaiah 25:8). This vision of a restored relationship between God and his people is seen as the ultimate expression of God's goodness and mercy.

At the same time, the Old Testament also portrays God as a God of justice, wisdom and righteousness, who expects his people to live according to his standards. The book of Proverbs, for example, presents a vision of the good life that is based on wisdom and righteousness, while warning against the dangers of folly and wickedness.

Similarly, the prophetic books of the Old Testament often denounce injustice and call for the restoration of justice and righteousness. The prophet Amos, for example, speaks out against the oppression of the poor and the abuse of power by the wealthy and powerful, declaring "Hear this you who trample upon the needy and destroy the poor of the land, the Lord has sworn by the pride of Jacob, I will never forget anything they have done.” (Amos 8:7).

The book of Job also grapples with the question of God's goodness in the face of human suffering, as Job wrestles with the problem of why bad things happen to good people. In the end, Job comes to a deeper understanding of God's goodness as He restores to Job twice what the devil had taken from him.

The book of Jeremiah says it best, “I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future.” (Jeremiah 29: 11). Isn't that what every loving father wants for his children. And so does God.

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The New Testament is full of references to the goodness of God, as the authors of the various books repeatedly express their belief in God's benevolent nature and his mercy towards his people. Throughout the stories and teachings presented in the New Testament, we see evidence of God's goodness in a variety of ways, from his loving kindness and care for his creation to his grace and forgiveness in the face of human sinfulness and disobedience.

The gospel of John describes Jesus Christ as the Word of God who was present at the beginning of creation. In John 1:3, we read: "Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made." This depiction of Jesus as the creator underscores the belief in God's goodness and his desire to share his blessings with his creatures.

Similarly, the apostle Paul speaks of God's providential care for his people in Romans 8:28: "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." This assurance of God's care and concern for his people is seen as an expression of his goodness and his desire to bless them.

One of the central themes of the New Testament is God's grace and forgiveness, which are expressed most fully through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The apostle Paul describes this grace in Ephesians 2:8-9: "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast." Grace is understood as unmerited favor of God which can neither be earned nor purchased.

This message of grace is also expressed in the parable of the prodigal son, which Jesus tells in Luke 15:11-32. In this story, a wayward son returns to his father's house after squandering his inheritance on wild living. Despite the son's disobedience, the father welcomes him back with open arms and celebrates his return, demonstrating God's willingness to forgive even the most wayward of sinners.

At the same time, the New Testament depicts God's goodness through his justice and righteousness, as the authors of the various books call for God's people to live according to his standards. In Matthew 5:6, for example, Jesus declares: "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled." This hunger for righteousness is seen as a key characteristic of those who seek to follow God's will.

The apostle James calls for a life of active faith that is expressed through deeds of righteousness, as he writes in James 2:17: "In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead." This call to action underscores the belief in God's goodness and his desire for his people to live just and righteous lives.

God's goodness, love and compassion for his people are expressed most fully through the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. In John 3:16, perhaps the most well-known verse in the Bible, we read: "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." This profound expression of God's love for his creation is seen as the ultimate expression of his goodness.

Jesus demonstrates compassion and love as he heals the sick, feeds the hungry, and welcomes the outcast. In

"I Am"

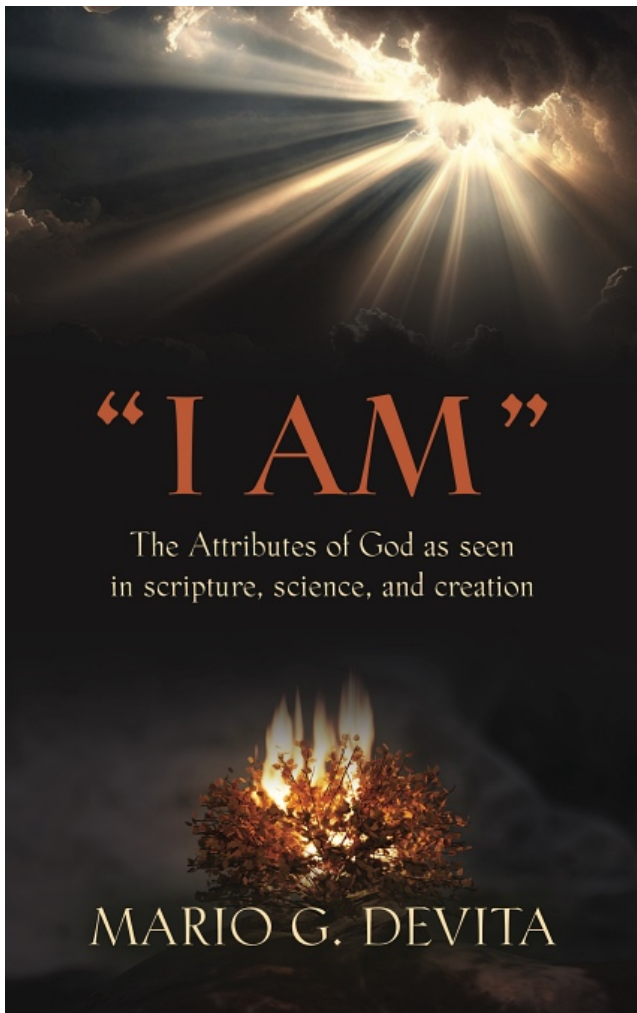
Matthew 25:40, Jesus declares: "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of my brothers, you did unto me."

Perhaps the best expression of the Goodness of God is found in Philippians 2: 6-8 which speaks of the nature of Jesus' sacrifice for the whole world. "Christ Jesus, who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be held on to, rather he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross."

One could only imagine the enormity of that transition of Jesus Christ from God to one of His creatures, mankind, knowing beforehand what the cost would be to save those whom He loves so much. Goodness is hardly sufficient a word to describe such an act. It has no equivalent in all human history. However, it might be loosely compared to a man who loves cats so much that he decides to become a member of the feline species to save that species from extinction. In doing so, he would have to restrict himself to the limitations of a cat's ability to function while retaining the memory of all the things he was able to do in his former life as a human being. And after 33 years of sacrificial living, he accomplished his purposes as a cat having saved from extinction those cats who followed him. He then submits to being ruthlessly killed by a pack of angry, jealous cats for no cause.

What kind of a man would do that. The God-Man, Jesus Christ, did something like that, and a whole lot more for us. So Good!

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