

looking up to heaven said, "If there is a God in the universe, I challenge Him to strike me dead." All the assembly waited tensely. Though most of them claimed to be atheists, few present would have dared to make such a challenge. For two minutes they waited. No thunderbolt came. Then they laughed and went on with their business. The very next day as the man was on his way to a meeting, a little fly flew into his eye and blinded him. Soon afterwards he died. God did not need to waste a thunderbolt on him. A little fly was enough to put an end to the man's defiance. Many a small factor in life may mean the ruin of our plans if it goes the wrong way, and God controls all of these factors.

Often we hear the term "God" used as if it were a mere symbol for general well-being, or a term for the summation of the universe, or some sort of an abstract principle. Even a hasty survey of the Bible shows that the God described there is not of this type at all. He is a Person who thinks, feels, and takes an active part in the affairs of this world. He is not like a statue that we can examine from various sides, and depend on to stay quiet while we do so. He has thoughts and plans and purposes. His influence and activities show themselves at many points within our lives. Great upheavals and mighty changes come because He wills them. The little circumstances that affect our lives at thousands of points are all under His close control.

What a tremendous universe the Lord has made! Planets whirling thousands of miles through space -- distant suns so vast they stagger the imagination -- whole galaxies of newly-discovered stars whose very existence was previously unsuspected -- all give witness to the matchless power of the Creator!

Someone has compared this universe to a great fly-wheel several hundred feet in diameter, whirling around at a rate of a thousand revolutions a second. As this fly-wheel goes round and round at this tremendous speed a little fly is sitting on the edge of the fly-wheel and he sometimes imagines that the fly-wheel exists simply for the sake of the fly. No great and intricate machine in this world comes into existence through pure accident. In every case there is a directing mind back of it planning and directing it. There is purpose in the universe. The complexities of nature, the mighty cosmic forces moving in accordance with fixed laws, the wonderful inter-relationship of the various parts of the human body -- these did not come into existence through chance. There is a vital factor; a directing mind who has established and controlled them. How can our plans for our lives be worth anything if they do not take into account this mighty factor -- the greatest factor in all the universe.

How then shall we take this factor into account? Shall we, like the little fly on the great fly-wheel, think of ourselves as having created the great universe, and imagine that we can twist and change it in accordance with our purposes? Or shall we not rather try to learn what is in the mind of the Maker of it all?

The Bible is the Book that tells us about the Creator of the universe. No other book in the world gives us such an insight into His mind as this one, for He Himself is the Author of this Book. Through many different writers He spoke His Word. He led them as they thought and meditated. He revealed His ideas to them. His Holy Spirit guided them as they wrote down the message which was needed for their day, and for ours.

As we look through the Bible, we gain from it a picture of this great directing Mind -- a God of justice, but a God of mercy; a God who desires the well-being of all creatures in His universe; but One who maintains such standards that He must inevitably punish defiance against His laws.