

Larry Ciupik - The Fifth Attribute

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And as announced by Brother Bruce, my discourse title is called the Fifth Attribute. The Fifth Attribute and of course we're very familiar with God's attributes, His four attributes of justice, wisdom, power, and love, and we can find these written in various verses in the Bible. So Satan Psalms 89:14 describes God's justice. This is the ESV.

Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne. Steadfast love and faithfulness go before you, and Romans 11:33 describes God's wisdom. O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God. How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out.

Job 36:5 describes his power. See, God is powerful, but does not hate anyone. He is powerful in strength of understanding, and first John 4:8 states God's love. He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love.

So we are quite familiar with God's four attributes of justice, wisdom, power, and love. But I'd like to suggest that he has another important attribute. The Apostle Paul writes about the dimensions of God's love in Ephesians chapters 1 and 3. The scripture renditions presented here are from reprint article 5145, which is a composite of Ephesians 1:18 and Ephesians 3:18 and 19. I pray God for you that the eyes of your understanding opening, ye may be able to comprehend with all saints the height and the depth, the length and the breadth and to know the love of God, which passeth all understanding.

Now notice that there are four descriptive words or dimensions for the love of height, depth, length and breadth, and given my background in science and mathematics, this Scripture is has puzzled me for years in one way, and that is, why are there four dimensions mentioned? We all know any solid object has three dimensions length, width, and height. But where does the word depth come in? What could the fourth dimension be?

Well, one answer may come from the early 20th century, during the latter part of Brother Russell's ministry. In 1905, Albert Einstein suggested that we consider time as an additional dimension. Later, he combined time and space in an odd mixture known as space time, first proposed by the mathematician Hermann Minkowski in 1908. Einstein used this concept in his theories of special and general relativity, which have become a basis for modern physics and are now used in many electronic devices, such as the GPS system you may have in your smartphone or in your car's navigation system for precise direction finding. The real master of time is God.

But my intention is far from giving you a physics lecture. Let's just try to understand how time can be a fifth attribute of God. The first question I have is what was the universe like before creation?

Here is a representation of what the universe was like when God was alone. Before our universe was created, time had no meaning. Time did not exist. So why did God create other beings? Why did he formulate a divine plan of the ages for mankind?

In reprint 5209 we read that the completeness of the divine perfection is such that companionship is not necessary to the happiness of Jehovah. The one who inhabiteth eternity is self centered. The creation of angels and of man was indeed his pleasures because benevolently he desires to do good, to give capacity for pleasure and to afford it opportunity for gratification. Furthermore, the

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highest good of his creatures calls for an exhibition to the full of all the elements of divine character, divine justice, love, power, and wisdom. The Bible describes God's power over time in Proverbs 15:3 the eyes of the Lord, the intelligence of Jehovah, are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.

This scripture defines God's omnipresence. He is presence everywhere, all the time and reprint 5209 continues. The scope of the exercise of divine power is the universe. But it is difficult for our finite minds to comprehend the meaning of this word universe. Astronomers tell us that by the aid of photoastronomy they can see nearly 125 million suns, the centers of solar systems like our own, with supposedly more than a billion of planets more or less like the Earth.

Brother Russell used the best science of his era to get those numbers. But in our modern era, astronomers have enlarged those numbers almost beyond imagination. Before 1925, that is, when Brother Russell penned those estimates, many astronomers thought the whole known universe consisted of just one galaxy, the Milky Way. No stars in their view existed outside it, and then in 1923 and 24, Edwin Hubble identified unique stars called Cepheid variables in the Andromeda Galaxy.

In 1908, Henrietta Swan Leavitt had formulated the Period Luminosity Law for Cepheids. Finding their actual luminosity depends on how long they take to change brightness over time. The longer it takes, the greater the actual luminosity or the actual brightness of that Cepheid. So by measuring how dim Cepheids appeared on photographs because they're so far away, Hubble could determine their distance. He confirmed that the Andromeda Galaxy was far outside the Milky Way.

The announcement came on January 1, 1925. Astronomers new estimate for the size of the universe suddenly grew enormously now, thousands of objects previously thought to be star forming regions inside the Milky Way were revealed to be giant galaxies containing millions and billions of stars. This is a video zooming into a photo produced by the Hubble Telescope called the Deep Field. Scientists took more than 100 hours of exposures over 10 days in 1995 of a seemingly empty area of the sky near the Big Dipper and added those 342 pictures together to form this composite. About a thousand never before seen galaxies are in this picture, including this one, nearly 13 billion with a B light years away.

Hubble was also used to look at nearby galaxies. Notice how many stars you can see when you zoom into a single galaxy. The example comes from the Andromeda Galaxy, a close neighbor of our Milky Way, and since the Deep Field photo, the Hubble telescope camera exposed even longer for a million seconds and produced the Ultra Deep field in 2004 and the Hubble Telescope and Camera System exposed for 2 million seconds to produce the Extreme Deep field in 2012. This showed additional amazing views of the extent of the observable universe.

Take note of the word observable. According to modern astronomy, the universe is nearly infinite in size, although only a tiny fraction of it can be observed even with the largest telescopes. Note if you have questions on what that means, ask me during the fellowship time. But in 2016, estimates for the number of galaxies in the observable universe were increased or multiplied by more than 10 times. The estimated number of stars in our observable universe has dramatically increased from 125 million in the early 20th century to a million trillion in 2016.

That's one followed by 18 zeros, and do you recall that planets around most stars? The number of planets in our observable universe boggles our imagination. Now back to reprint 5209 for a description of what God may have in mind for these myriad planets. These, we may assume, are in

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the process of development, are in preparation for inhabitants whom the great Creator will in due time provide.

From the scriptural standpoint, however, the great work of human creation began with our Earth. What a boundless thought we have in the mere suggestion that the billion worlds are to be peopled, and that the lessons of righteousness and sin, of life and death eternal now being taught to humanity, will never need to be repeated. Reprint 5209 continues. How insignificantly small we all feel in the presence of our God. No wonder some great men are inclined to say that humanity is too insignificant from the divine standpoint to be worthy of the least consideration, much less to be objects of divine care and providence.

Now let's look at more scriptures about how we may consider time the fifth attribute of God. Now it's interesting. I think we find evidence in almost every book of the Bible, starting from Genesis. In Genesis 1:14 it describes how God divided day from night, and God said, let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night, and let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years.

In Genesis 2:17 we read how time differs with God, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die. We know that Adam died within that thousand year day because he lived just a little bit short of that 930 years. Genesis 8:22 has a wonderful promise we seldom recall While the earth remaineth seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease. In Exodus 12:41 we read and it came to pass at the end of the 430 years, even the self same day, it came to pass that all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt. After 430 years of Egyptian captivity.

The master of time God saw to it that they left Egypt the self same day. Now, two weeks before the Israelites left Egypt, God initiated a new Jewish calendar. The dates and even the times of the events leading up to the first passover are recorded in Exodus 12:1 3 6, and the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, this month shall be unto you the beginning of months. It shall be the first month of the year to you speak he unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, in the 10th day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, and according to the house of their fathers, a lamb foreign house.

And ye shall keep it up until the 14th day of the same month, and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening we read of another commandment for the Jews in Leviticus 19:26 ye shall not eat anything with the blood, neither shall ye use enchantment, nor observe times. Now the first part of the scripture is clear. But what does the second part mean? It becomes much clearer using the new life version. Do not tell the future, or do witchcraft.

So this is the ban on astrology, fortune telling, reading tarot cards, and so forth. The God given law respecting the precise timing of the jubilee is found in Leviticus 25, 8, 10 and thou shalt number seven Sabbaths of years unto thee seven times seven years and the space of the seventh Sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years. Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the 10th day of the seventh month in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land and ye shall hallow the 50th year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land, unto all the inhabitants thereof. It shall be a jubilee unto you and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family. Numbers 4:3 gives ages of the Israelites serving in the tabernacle as from 30 to 50 years old.

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Recall that Jesus was 30 when he was baptized. Numbers 4:3 from 30 years old, and upward even until 50 years old. All that enter into the host to do the work in the tabernacle of the congregation.

God determined a day for a year Jews would wander in the wilderness, because they did not obey him to Conquer Canaan. Numbers 14:34 says, after the number of the days in which ye search the land, even 40 days each day for a year shall ye bear your iniquities even 40 years, and ye shall know my breach of promise. Deuteronomy 4:32 gives us an answer to a question many ask Is there life on other planets? For ask now of the days that are past, which were before thee since the day that God created man upon the earth and ask from one side of heaven unto the other whether there hath been any such thing as this great thing is, or hath been heard like it. So this scripture tells us that since the creation of man, there have been no other creation so wonderful.

This implies that there have been no creations of beings on other planets thus far. Deuteronomy 33:27 describes God's lifespan and his care over us. Reading from the easy to read version God lives forever. He is your place of safety his power continues forever he is protecting you. God commanded the Israelites to follow times and dates very exactly as we read in 2 Chronicles 8:13 even after a certain rate every day offering according to the commandment of Moses, on the sabbaths, and on the new moons, and on the solemn feasts three times in the year, even in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feasts of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles.

Job 10:5 proves that God doesn't measure time as we do. Are thy days as the days of man are thy years as man's days Another scripture stating that Jehovah is the master of time is found in job 24:1 why seeing times are not hidden from the Almighty do they that know him not see his days? Job 36:26 tells us that we cannot determine the age of God. Behold, God is great and we know him not. Neither can the number of his years be searched out.

Job 38 gives us an impressive science lesson while revealing some of the power God has over time. Here God admonishes and humbles Job like a father to a wade word, son, including how to improve his posture. This is the good News Translation Job who are you to question my wisdom with your ignorant empty words? Now stand up straight and answer the questions I ask you. Were you there when I made the world?

If you know so much, tell me about it. Who decided how large it would be? Who stretched the measuring line over it? Do you know all the answers? What holds up the pillars that support the earth?

Who laid the cornerstone of the world? In the dawn of that day the stars sang together and the heavenly beings shouted for joy. Who closed the gates to hold back the sea when it burst from the womb of the earth? It was I who covered the sea with clouds and wrapped it in darkness. I marked the boundary for the sea and kept it behind bolted gates.

I told it so far and no farther. Here your powerful waves must stop. Job, have you ever in all your life commanded a day to dawn? Have you ordered the dawn to seize the earth and shake the wicked from their hiding places? Daylight makes the hills and valleys stand out like the folds of a garment, clear as the imprint of a seal on clay.

The light of day is too bright for the wicked and restrains them from doing violence. Have you any idea how big the world is? Answer me if you know. Do you know where the light comes from or what the source of darkness is? Can you show them how far to go or send them back again?

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I am sure you can because you're so old and were there when the world was made. Have you ever visited the storerooms where I keep the snow and the hail? I keep them ready for times of trouble, for days of battle and war. Have you been to the place where the sun comes up or the place from which the east wind blows? Can you tie the Pleiades together or loosen the bonds that hold Orion?

Can you guide the stars season by season and direct the big and the Little Dipper? Do you know the laws that govern the skies and can you make them apply to the earth and Moses in Psalms 92 describes God's lifespan and then compares his to ours in verses nine and ten before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hast formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God, for all our days are passed away in thy wrath. We spend our years as a tale that is told. The days of our years are threescore years and 10 and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is there strength, labor, and sorrow for it is soon cut off, and we fly away. Psalm 90, verse 4 reads, For a thousand years in thy sight are but yesterday, as it is past, and as a watch in the night.

I like the contemporary English version here, but a thousand years mean nothing to you. They are merely a day gone by, or a few hours in the night. So to Jehovah a thousand years can be compared to a day for us.

Psalms 102:13 states the time to favor Zion Thou shalt arise and have mercy upon Zion for the time to favor her yea, the set time is come. In Psalm 104:19 we see that God ordained the moon for seasons and the time of sunset. He appointed the moon for seasons the sun knoweth his going down. Have you ever looked at the night sky on a moonless night far from city lights, the Milky Way stretches across the sky, and there are so many stars you may have trouble finding the big dipper. Psalm 147:4 and 5 are an astounding tribute to the Master of space and time.

Reading verse four using the ERV he counts the stars and knows each of them by name. Then verse 5 in the King James Version Great is our Lord, and of great power his understanding is infinite. I remember that Ecclesiastes 12:1 was given for us to memorize the in the young People's Chicago Bible class, but only the first portion Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, because the rest of the text is a bit less optimistic. Reading from the common English Version in years to come you will be burdened down with troubles and say, I don't enjoy life anymore. God's everlasting strength is manifested in Isaiah 26:4 Trust ye in the Lord forever, for in the LORD Jehovah is everlasting strength.

In Isaiah 46:10 we read that only God as the Master of time can tell the end from the beginning. Remember the former things of old, for I am God and there is none else I am God, and there is none like me. Declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. In Isaiah 65, 20 it lists the potential length of time given for whosoever will to improve character during the iron rule of the mediatorial reign. There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days for the child shall die an hundred years old but the sinner, being a hundred years old, shall be accursed.

As sure as God controls day and night, he will never break his covenants. As we read in Jeremiah 33, 20 Thus saith the Lord, if ye can break my covenant of the day and my covenant of the night, and that there should be not day, not be day and night in their season. Ezekiel 4:4,6 sounds like God is telling the Jews which side of the bed they should sleep on, not sorry, which side of their body they should sleep on, and once again we are told that Jehovah often numbers a day for a year Lie thou also upon thy left side, and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it, according to

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the number of the days of that thou shalt lie upon it thou shalt bear their iniquity for I have laid upon thee the years of their iniquity, according to the number of the days, 390 days so shalt thou bear the iniquity of the house of Israel and when thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah. 40 days I have appointed thee each day for a year.

Daniel 9, 24, and 25 foretells our Lord's first advent. 70 weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy. Know, therefore, and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto Messiah, the prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks the street shall be built again, and the wall even in troublous Times and verse 26 describes when Jesus would die and after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself and the people of the prince that shall come and shall destroy the city, and the sanctuary, and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war and desolations are determined Daniel 12 amazingly contains a series of time prophecies, the Lord's return, the time of trouble, and the time of the end in Daniel 12, 1, 4, 6 and 7 and at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people, and there shall be a time of trouble, and such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time and at that time thy people shall be delivered every one that shall be found written in the book. But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and sealed the book even to the time of the end.

Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven and swear by him that liveth forever, that it shall be for a time, times and a half and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished, and here we know that a time refers to 360 years. In Acts 1:7 the apostle recalls that Jesus is admonished his followers that only God determines the times and seasons, no one else, and he said unto them, it is not for you to know the times or the seasons which a father hath put in his own power. Recall that the word depth was missing from our description of the three dimensions of our world.

Have you ever heard of the deeps of time or the depths of time? In modern literature, the deeps of time is defined as loosely referring to the vast extent of time in the unfathomable past or future. Romans 8:38, 39 reads, For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. To me the word depth here seems to be an indication of time. Now think of a scripture that contains the word deep.

In 1 Corinthians 2, 9, 10 we read, but as it is written, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit. For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. Have you ever noticed that we Bible students are preoccupied with time? Why is that? With the aid of the chart of the ages, we understand some of the deep things of God because we know where we are on the stream of time first Timothy 1:17 confirms once again that God is eternal.

Now unto the King, eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen. First Peter 5:6 gives us an example of the phrase due time. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time. 2nd Peter 2:3 8 we get

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an important hint for our study of chronology.

But beloved be not ignorant of this one thing that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. Revelations 10:6 is an amazing text and swear by him that liveth forever and ever, who created heaven and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer. So eventually, after the kingdom is turned over to the Father, no one will need to keep track of time, because every being will have eternal life. Just think of that Time will have no meaning now let us look closely at the Chart of the Ages. We are familiar with this chart that covers the range of human experience from paradise lost to paradise restored.

But on the right side the chart also has a small addition called the Ages to Come, denoted as capital H. Please notice the extreme upper right of the chart. I have circled it here and let's zoom up on that. You may notice that it looks somewhat like an arrow. Now why did I circle that?

Well, lets look at the full chart again. Here is the time span of the chart up through the ages to come. 7,000 years. Now I'm going to shrink that time span down so we can modify the chart's timeline. This is how God thinks about time.

Jehovah had no beginning and has no end. Therefore we cannot put a date on when he first came into existence, and the entire 7,000 years of mankind's experiences are just a tiny fraction of eternity, and we too, brethren, may, if faithful, continue throughout eternity with God, the completed church, head and body, the great company, the faithful angels, and whosoever will, all his other obedient creations, and then we can look forward to helping prepare other abodes for future creations that will learn from the experiences of mankind. The Psalmist says in reprint 156 sorry, reprint 1560 is an eloquent summation of God's four dimensions of love and his identification as the Master of time.

The Psalmist says, the Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works. This sweeping statement takes in the utmost bounds of the material universe and also the humblest, as well as the most exalted sentient being. The whole creation is his care. Jehovah our God is the great emperor of the whole universe, and his wisdom, power, goodness, and benevolence are abundantly equal to all the responsibilities of so exalted an office. The human mind staggers in its efforts to comprehend the mental resources of a being who is able to assume and to bear such responsibilities.

Reprint 1560 continues Think for a moment of the memory that never fails, of the judgment that never errs, of the wisdom that plans for eternity without the possibility of failure, and that times that plan with unerring precision for the ages to come, of the power and skill which can harness even every opposing element, animate or inanimate, and make them all work together for the accomplishment of his grand designs, of the tireless vigilance that never ceases, never seeks relief from the pressing cares of universal dominion, whose eye never sleeps, whose ear is ever open, and who is ever cognizant of all the necessities, and active in all the interests of his broad domains. 1560 continues well has the Psalmist said, in consideration of the immensity and the minutiae of God's providence, the over all his works, such knowledge is too wonderful for me it is high. I cannot attain to it. No, we cannot. But oh, what a thrilling sense of mingled reverence, love, and adoration fills the heart.

When thus we catch a glimpse of the intellectual and moral glory and majesty of our God as we thus contemplate him, all nature becomes eloquent with his praise the heavens truly declare his

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glory, and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. Psalms 19, verses 1 and 2. Reprint 1560 concludes they tell of the order and the harmony of the circling spheres, and the benevolent purposes of their great creator and controller. As the changing seasons and the alternating days and nights fill up the copious horn of plenty, and refresh and invigorate the animate creation.

I will end with a video recitation of the familiar words of the wise man in Ecclesiastes 3:1:8, which shows how God determines all the times for every activity in our lives.

There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens a time to be born, and a time to die a time to plant, and a time to uproot a time to kill and a time to heal a time to tear down and a time to build a time to weep, and a time to laugh a time to mourn and a time to dance a time to scatter stones, and a time to gather them a time to enjoy, embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing a time to search and a time to give up a time to keep and a time to throw away a time to tear and a time to mend a time to be silent and a time to speak a time to love and a time to hate a time for war and a time for peace.

By the way, these scriptures in Ecclesiastes 3 are some of the few which have inspired popular folk songs. In this case, the song is Turn, Turn, Turn, which many of you have heard, and it was introduced in 1959 May the Lord add his blessing.