Q: Who am I to God?

Who we love may be who we are.

If there ever was a question that can only be answered with more questions, this is it.

The above question arose one morning when I began to pray. I was reflecting on something said to me days before that left a lasting impression:

Remember who it is you are approaching when you pray.

That morning I tried to imagine how I saw God. How He might physically appear when I approached to commune with Him in prayer.

But the tables quickly turned and I began to wonder:

How does God see me? Or does He see me at all?

"She gave this name to the Lord who spoke to her: 'You are the God who sees me,' for she said, 'I have now seen the One who sees me.'"
GENESIS 16:13

I spend a great deal of time thinking about who God is, what He does and doesn't do, what He promises, and what He forbids. If I want to forge a relationship with Him, I need to envision Him, know who He is, and what underpins His commands.

So, I asked:

What does He see when He sees me?

Do I appear to Him as I am, or in some other form?

Am I a number? A formula? A complex code?

Does He have a different name for me?

Science estimates 117 billion humans ever have walked the earth. Over 8 billion are alive today.

Does He know all of us? Does He track us? Does He monitor us every second?

"From heaven the Lord looks down and sees all mankind; from his dwelling place he watches all who live on earth—he who forms the hearts of all, who considers everything they do."
PSALM 33:13–15

Scripture says He not only considers us and watches over us but knows us in vivid detail. He knew us before we came to be. He designed each of us, knitted us together in the womb one precious stitch at a time.

"But even the hairs of your head are all numbered."
MATTHEW 10:30

A WORD ON THE WORD

In the Bible, the ancient Hebrew word for name is "shem" (SHEHM) - identity, reputation, renown, standing, or authority. Modern Hebrew has added another rather esoteric word for identity: "zehut" (zeh-HOOT). Literally: "this-ness" - the quality of being this particular person or this unique thing. Shem, in its biblical use, invites the question: "Who am I known to be and by whom?" Zehut asks: "What makes me uniquely me?"

As a sojourner, a wandering pilgrim feeling almost always out of place inside His creation, I wonder how He sees me?

Does He view me a sinner, a wretch, a fraud?

Or does He see me as a fragile but hopeful man living under the curse of sin seeking to secure my own salvation?

"What is mankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them?"
PSALM 8:4

Does He see me as a receiver of His grace? A humble, God-fearing being in the process of transforming his own heart with the aid of the Holy Spirit?

Or does He only see me as I see myself - a prideful, deceitful man who believes he can fool God by proclaiming his faith while battling doubt?

"I never knew you."
MATTHEW 7:23

To me, this is the single most horrifying verse in the Bible.

I envision the moment I am called to step forward to be judged by the One who redeemed me from the bondage of sin with His own blood. He lifts His head to look upon me and fails to see me as His own. A stranger standing before Him.

"Do not hide your face from me, do not turn your servant away in anger."
PSALM 27:9

Then again, perhaps He sees me as an incomplete form emerging to become what He originally designed me to be?

And then I wonder, are His expectations high or low?

"Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me."
PSALM 51:11

In the end, God may see me much differently than I can imagine.

I dream He sees me as a glorified reflection of Himself.

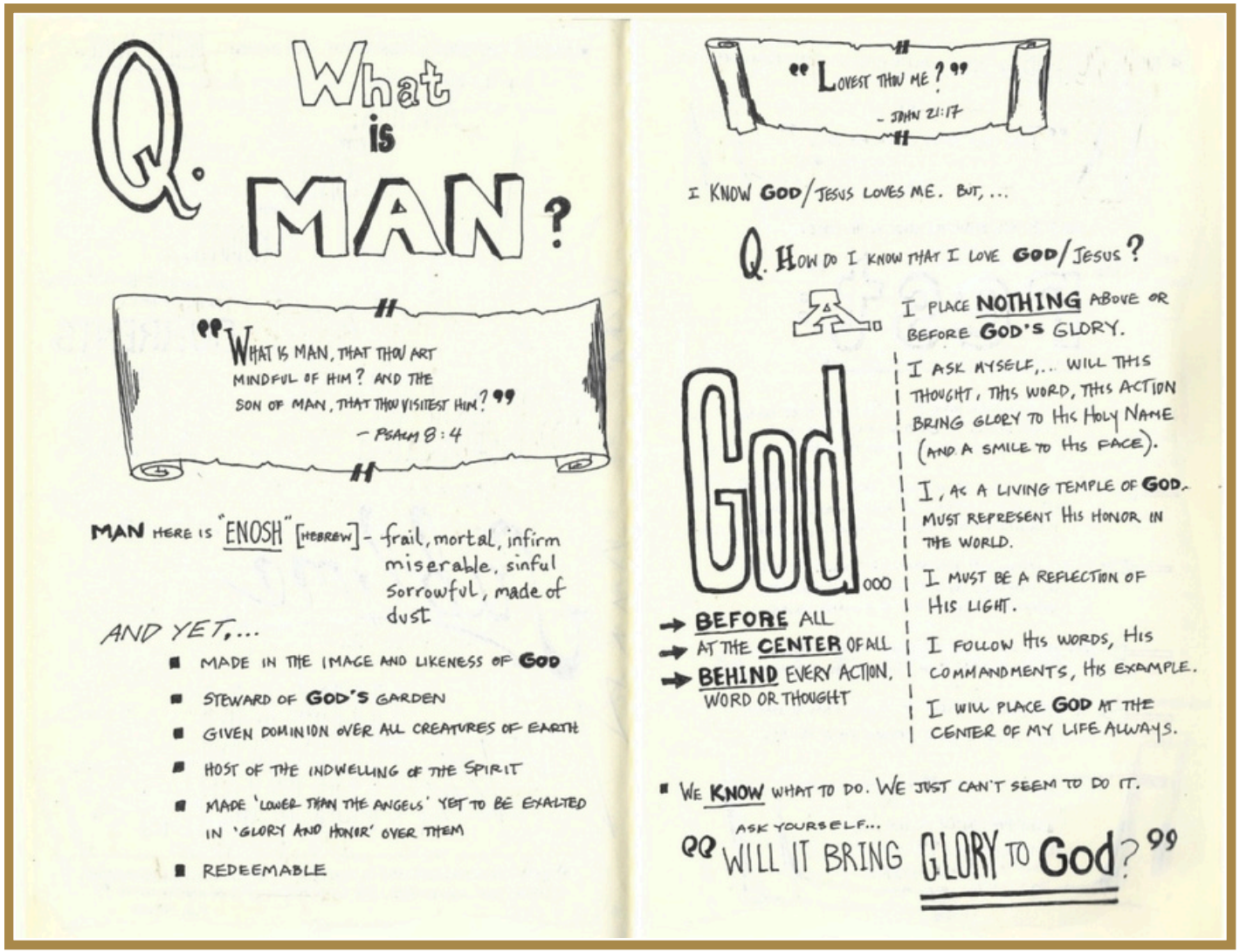
Or perhaps a mosaic, a constructed image of those I have loved, helped, and cared for while alive – a tapestry of His reflected love.

> *"I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well."*
> **PSALM 139:14**

We are reminded of the Samaritan woman Jesus meets at the well. Jesus could see into the woman's past, her relationships, and the intimate details of her life. Yet, He did not turn away. He chose to engage with her, offer her grace, and reveal Himself to her.

She runs back to town to exclaim:

> *"Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did."*
> **JOHN 4:29**



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