

God of the Sparrow God of the Whale by Jaroslav Vajda #120 The United Methodist Hymnal

God of the sparrow God of the Whale God of the swirling stars
How does the creature say Awe
How does the creature say Praise

God of the earthquake God of the storm God of the trumpet blast
How does the creature cry Woe
How does the creature cry Save

God of the rainbow God of the cross God of the empty tomb
How does the creature say Grace
How does the creature say Thanks

God of the hungry God of the sick God of the prodigal
How does the creature say Care
How does the creature say Life

God of the neighbor God of the foe God of the pruning hook
How does the creature say Love
How does the creature say Peace

God of the ages God near at hand God of the loving heart
How does the creature say Joy
How does the creature say Home

“A noticeable feature of this hymn is its lack of punctuation and rhyme. To the singer this creates a sense of openness... Each of the 6 stanzas is perfectly balanced: the first 2 lines of each stanza offer a glimpse into the actions of God in the world and the bond God has with God’s creatures. The last 2 lines of each stanza ask 2 rhetorical questions: ‘How does the creature say...’ The lack of question marks gives one the sense that that these questions are not so much expecting an answer as making a statement of profound wonder about the relationship between the Creator and the Creator’s creatures.”

(C. Michael Hawn, The History of Hymns, 7/18/2013, umcdiscipleship.org)

How does the pattern of the hymn, the lack of punctuation, make you feel? Do you agree that the lack of question marks makes a “statement of wonder”?

God of the sparrow God of the Whale God of the swirling stars
How does the creature say Awe How does the creature say Praise

Psalm 65:4b-8 “We expect our fill of good things in Your house, Your heavenly manse. All Your salvation wonders are on display in Your trophy room. Earth-Tamer, Ocean-Pourer, Mountain-Maker, Hill-Dresser, Muzzler of sea storm and wave crash, of mobs in noisy riot. – Far and wide they’ll come

to a stop, they'll stare in awe, in wonder. Dawn and dusk take turns calling 'Come and worship.'"
The Message

Can you relate to these names for God? Does one speak to you? Which one? Why?
Do you have a name for God? How did you choose it? What significance does it have for you?

God of the earthquake God of the storm God of the trumpet blast
How does the creature cry Woe How does the creature cry Save

Nahum 1:3 "He is slow in getting angry, but when aroused, His power is incredible, and He does not easily forgive. He shows His power in the terrors of the cyclone and the raging storms; clouds are billowing dust beneath His feet." The Living Bible

Storms of life – whether in nature or in our personal lives – can leave us feeling lost and alone. Can you ask God to be with you during those times? If you can ask God, describe how that feels. If not, why not? Describe how it might feel to try?

God of the rainbow God of the cross God of the empty tomb
How does the creature say Grace How does the creature say Thanks

Romans 5:1-2 "Since then it is by faith that we are justified, let us grasp the fact that we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through Him we have confidently entered into this new relationship of grace, and here we take our stand, in happy certainty of the glorious things He has for us in the future." JB Phillips New Testament

Genesis 9:12-13 "And I seal this promise with this sign: I have placed a rainbow in the clouds as a sign of my promise until the end of time, to you and all earth." The Living Bible

God's promises were fulfilled in Jesus' death and resurrection. Where have you seen God's grace in your own life? In the lives of others? How do you show your appreciation for God's goodness?

God of the hungry God of the sick God of the prodigal
How does the creature say Care How does the creature say Life

Luke 15:20 "So he returned home to his father. And while he was still a long distance away, his father saw him coming, and was filled with loving pity and ran and embraced and kissed him." The Living Bible

Where do you see care for others in the world? In what ways do you help care for the sick, the hungry, the lost?
Have you ever had a prodigal experience with God? Describe the experience, and what it means to you.

God of the neighbor God of the foe God of the pruning hook
How does the creature say Love How does the creature say Peace

Matthew 5:43- 45 Jesus said: “You’re familiar with the old written law, ‘Love your friend,’ and its unwritten companion, ‘Hate your enemy.’ I’m challenging that. I’m telling you to love your enemies. Let them bring out the best in you, not the worst. When someone gives you a hard time, respond with the supple moves of prayer, for then you are working out of your true selves, your God-created selves. This is what God does. He gives his best—the sun to warm and the rain to nourish—to everyone, regardless: the good and bad, the nice and nasty.” The Message

Prayer is a powerful way to deal with our “foes” and neighbors alike. Is this something you do? If you do, how does it feel to pray for people you disagree with? Do you ask God to bless them? To give you understanding? If this is something you don’t do, why? Could you do as Jesus’ directs? How do you think this can “bring out the best in you”?

God of the ages God near at hand God of the loving heart
How does the creature say Joy How does the creature say Home

Psalm 23:6 “Your goodness and unfailing kindness shall be with me all the days of my life, and afterwards I will live with You forever in Your home.” The Living Bible

We humans are “creatures” too. How do you define home? Does your “home” include God? Why?
How do *you* say joy?

*“What a wildly wonderful world, God!
You made it all, with Wisdom at Your side,
made earth overflow with Your wonderful creations.”*
Psalm 104:2 The Message