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May The Force Be With Us

The new star wars installment is in theaters, and for those who have been following the saga since the late seventies, it fills some gaps in the story, while creating new ones. The idea of the force, the central element, is given added dimension as we explore the dark side, as well as the “good” side. The Sith lord argues that the dark side is simply another aspect of the force that must be understood in order to increase one’s awareness and power. This is fiction of course but the idea of an energy created by all living things is in fact a real belief. Over the years it has been called by various names, animism being one of them in the ancient world, and Gaia in the most recent rendering. The thought is that there is no God, there is only the force of life, from which we come, and to which we will return, remaining an active, though unseen element in the grander scheme of the universe. That is comforting to some. In the film one of the characters is advised to let go of those which are loved, realizing that in death they simply move on into the force. The same idea is expressed in various religions from the Middle East. Watching the film I was reminded of the books that I have read which discuss this. Envisioning this impersonal force however does not seem comforting. There is a loneliness and isolation to it. A feeling of being lost and unable to grasp the greater reality, since life and it’s manifestation is ultimately nothing more than a discharge of energy creating more questions than answers. If this is all there is to life then why do we seek answers in the first place. Why not simply learn to manage our energy and when the time is right pass on to the greater pool where we will wait for recycling.

The Bible tells us in the beginning that man was made in the image of God (**Gen 1.26**). God then breathed the breath of life into man and we are told that Adam became a “living soul” (**Gen 2.7**). There are those who criticize the Bible by saying that God is a creation of man, not the other way around. There are those who propose that mankind, perhaps in loneliness and despair at not being able to understand life, created a father figure that provided stability. The idea caught on and, according to those who do not believe, became ingrained in our thinking to the point that we are afraid to accept “reality” and admit that the idea of God is only that, an idea.

Perhaps this is the dark side of the force trying to seduce us into believing that there is no God. Is it not equally possible that the soul, given by God, has a sense of the creator and inwardly desires to be with the Heavenly Father? Speaking of the spiritual nature of man, Paul states, “***For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.***” (**Rom 8.19**). Being mortal, we desire to be with the creator, reunited in the true home of the soul, free of the influence of the darkness of this world which corrupts and blinds. Paul later states, “***For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.***” (**Rom 8.22**). In this Paul taps into the inner being which seeks to reach the peace that comes through knowing and serving God. Through the word of God we learn that the world is lost in sin because of rebellious attitudes. Because of this Paul tell us “***For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope...***” (**Rom 8.20**). The hope is that of liberation from the confines of a world that has turned from God. Describing this, Paul states, “***Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.***” (**Rom 8.21**). Christ promised that he has gone to prepare a place where we may be with him (**John 14.1-3**). This is the hope that we have as Christians if we live faithfully to the Lord.

This is ridiculous to some who maintain that God is a myth, an expression of our insecurity and dependency. God becomes the ultimate teddy bear in a world of beings who are afraid to live alone, according to this line of reasoning. The Bible on the other hand reveals the nature of man and God. We are told that there is a loving creator who desires to save and with whom we can have a personal relationship as well as an eternal home. Meanwhile, those who argue against God, lead the world into confusion and anarchy, calling it progress and enlightenment. Those who believe in God are seen as being blind to the nature of the world and life. Yes, I believe in God, and his son, with whom I can have a personal relationship and hope for a home where the ills of the world cannot exist. Is this misguided? We shall all find out when we enter the realm of the departed. As for me, the force is with me; the force of the power of God, revealed in his word as long as I am faithful to him. I like that idea. It makes sense. What do you think? Are you prepared to risk your soul on ideas that have never produced any evidence for their validity? Think about it.

For those who seek solidity and assurance, there is God. We have his word, which has survived the test of time and opposition. We have God’s promise which provides us with incentive. And, we have the Gospel that leads us to the Lord, tells us how to live and provides a pattern for a life of true meaning and fulfillment. Isn’t that what we all seek? The alternative to this is undefined, filled with doubt and shadows. Reasonable people will see the truth in this and will seek God.

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