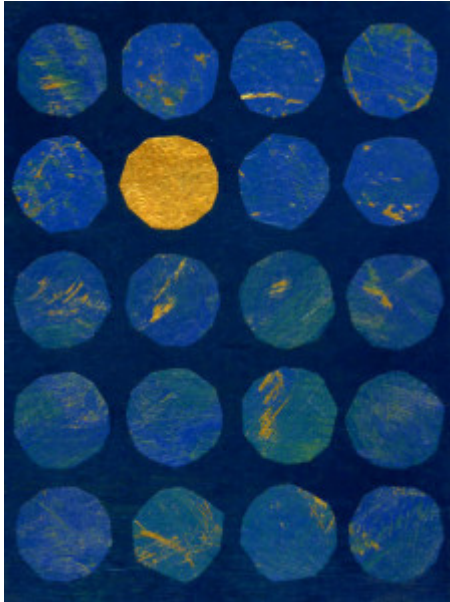


# Tearing Open the Heavens

**Midrash on First Sunday of Advent** (Isaiah, 1 Corinthians, and Mark) Text included below:



Advent is a season of waiting. It's active waiting though. We are in a state of anticipating the emergence of a new reality, a new mind, a new heart, and a "new heaven and earth". Each of the readings this week convey this sense of anticipation. Isaiah is waiting for the "heavens to be torn apart, an opening through which G\_d would "come down". Paul looks forward to the day of the "revealing of the Lord Jesus Christ". The author of

Mark's gospel anticipates the coming of the Son of Man – or better, the son of the human one.

Each of them is waiting for some kind of future historical event that will be redemptive or whole-making. The day is coming when what is broken will be fixed, what is separated will be reconnected with the Whole, and even death itself will be revealed as a means to the end of More Life and More Abundance.

"How come history takes such a long, long time", sings Bruce Cockburn, "when you're waiting for a miracle".

That miracle, in traditional religious consciousness, takes the form of apocalypse, the ending of an era of ignorance and oppression, by a dramatic inbreaking of G\_d into history. Apocalypse means a "revealing", a peeling away of the veil that reveals the hidden presence of G\_d everywhere and in all things. Mysticism is often defined as the capacity to see the hidden presence of G\_d in all things. Where once we saw only

surface appearances, we now see the Life of life. Where once we bought into the cultural definitions of the good life, our soul swears off allegiance to this picture. We simply lose interest. In the eyes of the world, we are weird. Where once we believed that it was all up to us to engineer a better future, now we find ourselves in a condition of trust. We are comfortable waiting to discover the future that wants to emerge, and acting on that.

We wait, not with impatience, but with the deep paradox that, judging by one set of standards, nothing is okay with the world. But through the eyes of faith, there is an intricate and elegant unfolding that may not coincide with our timing, but we nevertheless trust in the necessity of all things. We work for justice, peace, and ecological repair, challenging the principalities and powers that need to be challenged, but doing so with a trust that a Wholeness is living this world will have its loving way—and that we are an expression of that Wholeness.

Whenever I read in scripture of G\_d opening the heavens and “coming down” or the Son of the Human One coming in clouds of glory, or even waiting for the revealing of the day of Jesus Christ, I now relate it to my own yearning for a deeper awakening, for spiritual consciousness to replace egoic consciousness, for the barriers that I’ve set up to be torn down. To be waiting for the “son of the human one” to come in glory is to actively create the conditions to be apprehended by the archetype of a Human Being fully alive in me.



Evelyn Underhill (Practical Mysticism), writes about the path of purgation as the second step in the spiritual path. It is comprised of the growing awareness of the dissonance between

the life my soul wants to lead, and the life that culture has told me is worth living. The first stage of the spiritual path – recollection – is learning to focus our attention, through meditation on a thought, image, or aspect of creation, sufficiently so that the rational mind is quieted, and the soul can show us reality as it actually is, not as we've been taught to interpret it. Then comes the purgation, which is essentially the awakening which expresses itself in the question, "Where the f%^& have I been all this time? What have I been doing? How did I come to believe that? Why am I eating this food? How come I'm drinking so much? What am I doing?"

This awakening to my commitment to an illusory world, a rendering of the world that I thought was real to superficial status, is apocalyptic. The season of Advent is a time of allowing the growing darkness (in the Western World) to dim the bright lights of conventional reality, so that the Light that shines in the darkness can reveal and expose the illusion. It's less about waiting for the baby Jesus than it is preparing ourselves so that the light of Christ consciousness can shine through the darkness of all that parades as reality.

I've never noticed before Paul's line about one of the gifts of Christ consciousness. "For in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind". I can only think that this enrichment of speech means that our mode of discourse, what it is we want to talk about, inquire about, the conversation we are interested in is elevated. And I wonder if "knowledge of every kind" refers to ways of knowing that are beyond the merely rational—a spiritual knowing or gnosis that we need to inform the conversation about the future of humanity and the future of our planet.

### **Isaiah 64:1-9**

64:1 O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so

that the mountains would quake at your presence—

64:2 as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil— to make your name known to your adversaries, so that the nations might tremble at your presence!

64:3 When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.

64:4 From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him.

64:5 You meet those who gladly do right, those who remember you in your ways. But you were angry, and we sinned; because you hid yourself we transgressed.

64:6 We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.

64:7 There is no one who calls on your name, or attempts to take hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us, and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity.

64:8 Yet, O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand.

64:9 Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD, and do not remember iniquity forever. Now consider, we are all your people.

### **1 Corinthians 1:3-9**

1:3 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

1:4 I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus,

1:5 for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind—

1:6 just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you—

1:7 so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1:8 He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1:9 God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Mark 13:24-37**

13:24 “But in those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light,

13:25 and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

13:26 Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in clouds’ with great power and glory.

13:27 Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

13:28 “From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near.

13:29 So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates.

13:30 Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place.

13:31 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

13:32 “But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

13:33 Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come.

13:34 It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch.

13:35 Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn,

13:36 or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly.

13:37 And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”

Seeing as there are so various families buying online and likewise exploring the internet market place, it has become increasingly famous to purchase medications online. So the next question is where can you get data that is reliable. You can find useful information fleetly and conveniently by going online. The most common sexual problems in men are erectile dysfunction and ejaculation disorders. A lot of doctors think about “[levitra cost](#)”. Did learned something about “[buy levitra online usa](#)”? Other question we are going to is “[buy generic levitra online](#)”. In effect, a medicinal reviews found that up to three quarters of people on such preparation experience side effects. Luckily, most cases of sexual dysfunction are treatable, so it is momentous to share your concerns with your associate and physician. Today, there are many options for men who suffer from erectile dysfunction. Get emergency help if you have any of these signs of a side effect to this curing. Talk to your soundness care provider to see if it’s sure to make the switch.