

HOW THE BIBLE DEFINES LIVING

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The concept of living is linked to God. The Psalmist declared, “My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God” (Psa. 84:2). Thirty times in the Bible God is referred to as “the living God.” Those who know and love the God of the Bible are inextricably tied to him with a deep desire for him as is displayed again in the forty-second Psalm: “As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?” (vv. 1-2). Life is linked to the living God.

When the wicked and jealous presidents and princes within the Medo-Persian Empire tricked King Darius with a plot to have Daniel, who had risen in prestige and prominence above them all, cast to his death into a den of ferocious lions, the forlorn king hastily approached the den in the dawn of discovery crying with a lamentable voice, “. . . Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions? Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live for ever. My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions’ mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt” (Dan. 6:20-22). The subsequent decree of Darius disseminated on an international spectrum the delight of Darius that Daniel had escaped death because he served the living God. Daniel wrote of this decree, “Then king Darius wrote unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you. I make a decree, That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: for he is the living God, and stedfast for ever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end. He delivereth and rescueth, and he worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions” (Dan. 6:24-27).

When the admirable apostle Paul spoke to the Athenians on Mars’ Hill unveiling the one true God, the heart of his sermon dealt with the truths of God as the source and the sustainer and the resuscitator of life. In showing God to be the source of life he said, “God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshipped with men’s hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; And hath made of one blood all nations of men

for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us” (Acts 17:24-27). In showing God to be the sustainer of life he said, “For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man’s device” (vv. 28-29). In showing God to be the resuscitator of life he said, “And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead” (vv. 30-31).

Paul reasoned about the responsibility required of the human race to research and reach out to the real God who commands all men to repent. Life is not just as agnostic Colonel Robert Green Ingersoll (1833-1899) said, “A narrow vale between the baron peaks of two eternities; we lift our voice and cry aloud but all we hear is the echo of our own despair.” To the contrary, God upholds all things by the word of his power (Heb. 1:3). He is “the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein: Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness” (Acts 14:15-17). The eternal God is the source, the sustainer, and the resuscitator of life.