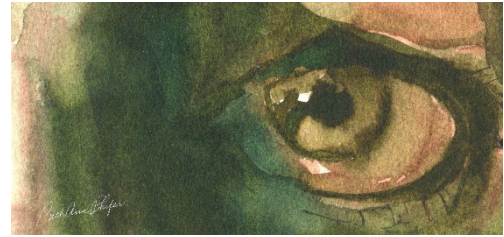




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writings by Beth Ann Phifer



Intimate Counselor

Our Exquisite Time with Him

I will counsel you with My eye upon you. (Psalm 32:8b)

October 2, 2023

There is something about a thing being common that takes away from its exquisiteness. In nature, there are no two things alike. The examination of every flower presents a breathtaking unique capsule in time. This fall, the butterflies, praying mantis, bees, and grasshoppers were fascinating in their detail.

There are unique habitats for eagles. If you want to see these majestic creatures in all their beauty, you must travel there.

There are exquisite oil paintings. To feel their beauty and see the light creating shadows on the thick paint strokes, you must stand in front of the painting under the right light at the right time of day.

There is a place I like to walk. In that place on a certain trail by the river on October 9, 2020, at 9:14 in the morning with my friend, Shana, the trees were audaciously showing off their fluorescent orange garb while reflecting the colors in the water with the exact same vibrancy. I never saw that view again even though I went back to that spot again at the same time of year.

There was a moment when a friend and I shared a memory that unexpectedly filled us with joy. We sat in silence hoping the moment would last. We could not recreate it. But God would surprise us again.

There is a place where we meet Him, Yahweh **יהוה**, the Great I AM, the Creator and Ruler of His unfathomably-vast universe.¹ He is the very essence of love, beauty, order, purity, truth, and kindness. He has a detailed design for each of us for each day. To find it, we must travel there to His heart which He has disclosed to us in His words in the Bible, and through the incarnation of Himself in Yeshua (Jesus) the Messiah, and by His voice speaking through the Holy Spirit given to us when we received His sacrifice on our behalf.

Read His words and ask Him to speak to you personally. Be willing to yield to His lead because He is perfect and knows you perfectly. Receive and rest in His words.

This moment in time with Him will never be duplicated for you or anyone else. It is His secret between you and Him. He speaks to you intimately and confidentially in ways He speaks to no one else. Psalm 139 tells us that He cares for you in a way He cares for no one else. And there is no one like you, no one who responds to His love the way you do. And there is no day like today.

In Psalm 25:14, the beloved King David wrote,

“The secret of Yahweh is for those who fear Him, and He will make them know His covenant.”

The word *secret* in this verse is the Hebrew *sôd* (pronounced *sode*). The primary meaning of *sôd* is “confidential speech.”² The word *sôd* is distinct from *counsel* or *advice* because it is *confidential* or *hidden*, meant only for that person at that time. And it is meant to be shared only with trusted friends.

David’s words in Psalm 25:14 mean that the person who walks in reverence to the Lord will have the promise of His secret counsel. Here are a few other examples of this word *sôd* in Scripture:

- Proverbs 3:32b – “He is *sôd* (intimate) with the upright.”
- Amos 3:7 – “Surely Adonai (Master) Yahweh does nothing unless He reveals His *sôd* (secret counsel) to His servants the prophets.”
- Job 29:4 – Job speaks of a time when “the *sôd* (friendship) of God was over His tent.”
- Isaiah 9:6 – The prophet Isaiah spoke of Yeshua:
For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us;
And the government will rest on His shoulders;
And His Name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.
Our Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace Who has established His covenant with us through the blood of Yeshua is our intimate Counselor.

There is nothing wrong with seeking godly, earthly counselors, but it is good to remember that we have a Counselor Who knows us like no one else. Here are two examples of how He counseled me recently:

- A few weeks ago, I asked God for His personal counsel. I felt torn about a decision I needed to make. I couldn’t think of anyone who would understand the details that had led me to that point. God knew what I had been through, and He knew the best path forward. Within the hour He spoke to me through Scripture saying, “I AM the Way, the Truth, and the Life. I will be your Way forward.” I trusted His word. Then, as I went about my day, He brought clarity and understanding to the situation.

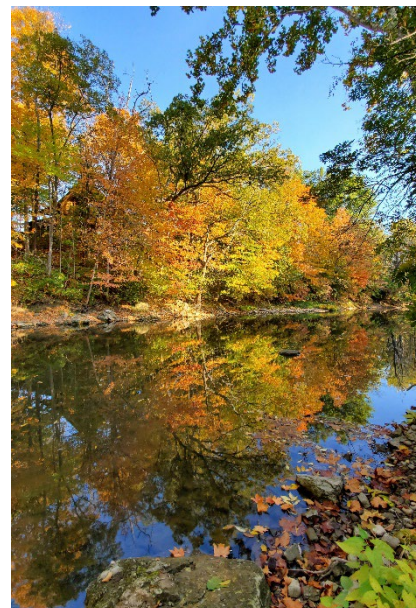
- Another time, I was so deeply grieved about some news I had received. The prophecy of Yeshua in Psalm 45 comforted me. Verse 7 says of Him, “You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore, God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of joy above Your fellows.”

Yeshua was anointed with the love of righteousness. He said, “Blessed are those who mourn...” (Matthew 5:4) because God mourns over evil. His Spirit is within us since our new birth and so we share in His grief and love righteousness.

The Apostle John wrote, “As for you, the anointing you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you, but as His anointing teaches you about all things and is true and is not a lie, and just as the Spirit has taught you, you abide in Him.” (1 John 2:27) He is with us in our grief, and He speaks to us about His heart by the emotions we experience because of His Spirit in us. He comforts us with the hope that He will make all things right.

Father, make us watchmen with eager, listening, patient, available ears to hear as You unfold Your guidance to us. We commit our way to You in Jesus’ Name!

I will instruct you and teach you
in the way you should go;
I will counsel you with My eye upon you.
(Psalm 32:8)



¹ Exodus 3:13-15; Although we don’t know how to pronounce this Name Yahweh, God declared it of Himself and shared it with Moses. It means that He will be known by what He does in the integrity of His love.

² Information from the Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, Harris, Archer, Waltke