

Bend and feel the tips of your being brush the sky!

This week let us reflect on Habakkuk 2:20,

The LORD is in God's holy temple; let all the earth be silent before Creator God.

At a retreat two summers ago we were invited to a time of “nature bathing.” This simply meant sitting still outside. I sat on a flat rock at the edge of an open field that looked over the valley of the Delaware River. What caught my attention that afternoon was the dance of the grasses and flowers, and I found my body moving with them. I wrote the following poem in response to this “nature bathing” experience:

The Web

A wolf-spider never builds her web
between two hard objects,
for when a windstorm arrives,
the web will be rent.

Instead, she chooses:

blades of grass,

leaves,

the tall, thin stem of a sunflower,

that, as the earth does breathe,

bend,

and sway,

and dance,

softening in the breath of life.

Every leaf and flower and tip of grass

becomes its own ribbon

woven into the landscape,

so that I too fall into

a gentle sway,

rhythmic

and softened.

Maybe a wolf-spider

might look upon my soul,

with the tips of my being

brushing the sky,

and decide to climb upon my arm

and build

her web.

It is difficult to be still. If we look around us, this is the natural order of all creation. Our days are ordered by sunshine and moonlight so that each day offers us a respite. In this season of spring, we are watching the earth awaken from the winter dormancy. God commands us to observe a Sabbath, a day of rest each week. Out of the stillness life breaks forth. In the stillness God's hand shapes life, heals, and creates wholeness. Psalm 46:10 says "Cease striving and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth."

Even in our stillness we are being called to bend, to change the rhythm of our lives. This too is a movement, but it is a deeper working of the spirit. This is true of nature as well. In the stillness of winter, the earth is composting and cleansing. The new life we are enjoying now is a result of the deep, internal work of the earth during the winter. So this time of stillness calls us to shape a wholeness in our life, to strike a different balance. Pay closer attention to life habits, how your body feels, and your connection with others - compost and cleanse. Bend. New life will emerge - restoration and wholeness and beauty will follow.

God is calling the whole of earth to this time of stillness and bending. As Habakkuk writes, "The LORD is in God's holy temple; let all the earth be silent before Creator God." God's hand is healing and restoring. Be still. Bend and feel the tips of your being brush the sky!,