

This God Comes Down

Excerpt from Brad Jersak's new release

Out of the Embers: Faith after the Great Deconstruction

The revelation of Good News—through Scripture and the incarnation of Jesus—is that God is gracious and compassionate.

This God hears the cries of our groanings and comes down. This God always descends to be found among the lowly in the low places. Nearly every major revelation of God in Scripture occurred not in the glory of the temple but in the darkness and dread of afflicted people. That's where the prophets show up, where God shows up, where Jesus shows up.

This God comes down and comes from within a people in bondage for four hundred years—and liberates an entire nation.

This God comes down and comes from within a parched people wandering through the wilderness, struggling to understand where they're going—and he serves living water to the thirsty.

This God comes down and comes from within the cave of Adullam—and he reveals himself to the fugitive David, delivering him from the hand of Saul.

This God comes down and comes from within those under siege who are singing lamentations but also "Great is Thy Faithfulness" in the midst of their devastation—and he answers their cries.

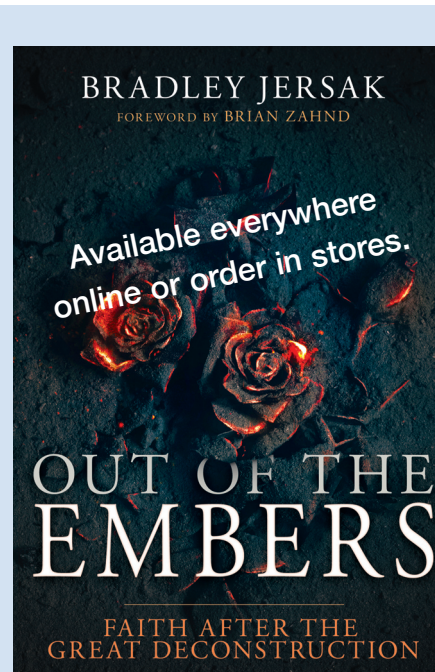
This God comes down and from within the prophets in exile—and brings hope in a strange land, offering a vision of their redemption but also proclaiming the God who suffers with them and among them.

This God comes down and from within the occupied territories through the incarnation of Jesus, the Light of the World—and preaches freedom for the oppressed, even while they're still downtrodden.

Most of all, *the Light who comes down also*

shines from within the wounds he bears on the Cross for the salvation of all. The epicenter of human evil (our crucifixion of God's Son) becomes the cruciform throne upon which Christ is revealed as *Pantocrator* (i.e., Ruler of the Universe—a term used ten times in Scripture).

Where does this God come from? From HERE! Not in



DECONSTRUCTION: Trendy brand name for "backsliding"? Or a process essential to authentic faith? Liberation or trauma? Prison break or exile?

In *Out of the Embers*, Brad Jersak explores the necessity, perils, and possibilities of the "Great Deconstruction." Will it sabotage our communion with God or infuse it with the breath of life of Christ himself?

"Finally, someone has written what I think will be the textbook on the deconstruction of belief."

—David Hayward

an otherworldly elsewhere or utopian future. From within THIS world, in MY humanity, in the REAL human condition, MY falling-apart world. Out of the embers of my deconstruction!

After all that, where was the Light? *Here, in this world, in the darkness. It looks like a cross. It looks like a cruciform and wounded God.* It looks like the people who, by necessity and tragedy and evils done against them, have been thrown out and thrown down at the foot of the cross. The light shines through those who've experienced assault and those who've wondered where God is in all of this.

God is hanging there... with you. From within your wounds, the light shines. The wounds of every bullet hole, every shrapnel wound, every sexual assault, every molestation of a child—all our wounds are drawn up into him and into his self-sacrificial love.

And then he says, "I want you to take up your cross now." *The Jesus Way of the cross* (cruciformity) is just this: "active, voluntary, self-offering love which is the life of God himself."

That's the light that shines from within, the life that rises from the embers of deconstruction.

The faith that is...

- wise but not clever.

- deep but not ethereal.
- engaged but not ideological.

Jesus says, "You are the salt of the earth, the city on the hill, and the light on the lampstand" (Matthew 5:13-15)—meaning we are to *embody the grace of the Beatitudes*: poverty of spirit, mourning, meekness, hunger for righteousness, mercy, purity of heart, peacemaking, and even persecuted witnesses for his sake.

We pray, "Let your kingdom come," meaning "reign in me, here today, from the inside out."

And we surrender our lives to his care, trusting in the grace of today. ☐

Brad Jersak serves as editor and art director for *CWRm*.

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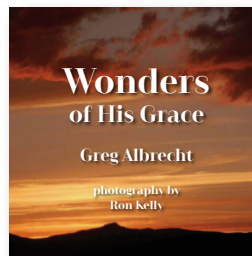
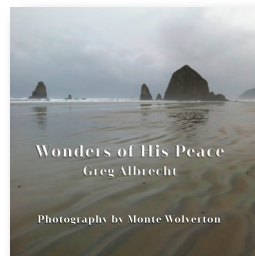
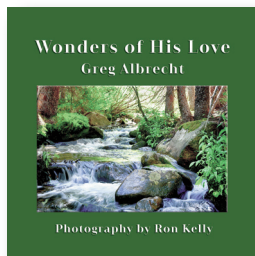
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