

My God Has Morphed: A testimony of the unfolding of my relationship with God, our Heavenly Parent

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June 1, 2015



Being raised a Catholic in a family of three girls, I had my issues in relating to God. There was a point in my mid-teens when I decided I was finished with all the religious dogma I had toyed with. I knew it was easy to say you believed in something but just as easy to live your life as if your belief was not true or vital to all decisions made on a daily basis.

I just wanted to connect with God. Those days of my youthful quest led me to the “peace movement” of no war, flower children and back to nature. I moved into an adobe house with no running water in the mountains of northern New Mexico.

In my quest to “see God’s face,” I fasted for 40 days on water. I saw lots of colors and entities, but no God. A few weeks later, I did another 40 day water fast, figuring I’d get it right this time. It ended with a horrid experience in which the devil peeked out from behind the mountain and laughed until the whole world vibrated. With that, I headed off to really find God. I did not want any part of living in Satan’s land.

I landed at the Denver bus station and sat on the floor. It was 2 a.m. and I was faced with the night life of downtown Denver after living in a simple, safe cocoon for two years in my adobe house. I was then approached by an understanding fellow who offered me a place to stay until morning. How nice, he was going to take care of me.

But he brought me to a basement apartment in an urban neighborhood. Inside there were more men. Apparently I was to be the life of the party. After being assured that the gun was loaded with one bullet and the trigger pulled once to prove they were serious, I was raped by several of these men. As they proceeded, I called out to God. I said these guys should kill me since I had pretty much screwed up my life until that point. But I added, “If you can be in charge of my life absolutely, then let me live.”

After a few hours, I found myself back at the bus station in the café. Suddenly, a guy came and sat next to me, looked right into my eyes and asked if I believed in world peace. What? Who is this guy? I looked questioningly at him and immediately knew I was kept alive to meet him. He introduced me to the teachings of Rev. Sun Myung Moon and the Divine Principle. The teachings answered all the musings I had about religion and introduced me to the nature and heart of God.



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From then on, I found myself fully invested in the activities of the Unification Movement. I prayed, studied, cooked, fundraised, cleaned, listened, served, traveled, and grew in my relationship with God. Over the years I was matched and married to my husband, raised three children, visited and lived in various countries and states. My faith in God was always the center of my strength and life. As anyone knows, life throws all kinds of hooks and sinkers at us. I was not immune to suffering, struggles, stress, or depression.

Philosophical angst regarding my faith is probably one of the most difficult crosses. When I finally wanted to clear out that angst, I was confronted with a powerful realization: God understands me. This may not sound earth shattering but I am a woman. I was raised with sisters by a strong mother who comes from a long line of strong women. I was looking for comfort from God the Father and was embraced by the love of God the Mother. It is a real, tangible love that completely took me by surprise and immediately changed my vantage point.

It never occurred to me that I was missing a vital component in my relationship with God. My prayers, for the most part, are a running conversation in my head, just about 24/7. For most of my life, I really considered God my best friend. I would discuss relationships, the future, needs and wants, dreams and regrets. I always felt there was a watchful eye protecting me and willing ears to listen, and as I got older, I

realized I had to make time to hear God's guidance, so I did.

When an ontology conference at Messina House in Barrytown was announced in 2013, I was drawn to attend; after all, God is my favorite topic of conversation. Ontology, the study of the origin of being, would bring me to a deeper knowledge of God. When the notion of Mother God was addressed, I was interested, but not particularly convinced. Yet somehow, in the course of discussion, a fire ignited deep inside of me.

I could not deny that up until that point my relationship with God was as a Father. I make no apology. In the early 80's feminist theologians wrote about the female God. In those days, I felt much of their writing was anti-male and a bit militant so it did not resonate with me. Therefore, I was already jaded regarding the thought of God being or having feminine aspects.

Of course, in the Principle of Creation, the *Divine Principle* teaches that God has dual characteristics, male and female. But the reality of that concept was not consistent throughout the teaching. The remainder of the "black book" is almost exclusively male-dominated. When God's heart is addressed, it is primarily a male heart. The father/son relationship is given incredible value, but I was neither a father nor a son.

Then the floodgates opened. Do you mean the feminine aspect of God is real? There is a silenced woman within my understanding of God? There was the possibility of Eve to discuss her problems with a mother? Suddenly not only was a light turned on but an immense paradigm shift took place at the very core of my being. No! How could it be?

I tried to understand that I had lived my life looking at God's female manifestations all around me and still did not fathom how I solely related to God as Father. Pitifully and surgically I went through my connection with God, and at each juncture I questioned, "Is this Heavenly Mother or God the Father?" As much as it was liberating, it was angst-ridden. I could not keep this information to myself. Half the people on the planet are female and deserve to know in a very real and positive way that they are reflections of their Heavenly Mother.



The essence of how women do things, how we create, convince, incorporate, nurture, teach, network, dream, and hope is uniquely feminine. Since we are the reflection of the Creator, it stands to reason that those qualities of the Creator — Mother God, Heavenly Mother, Queen of Heaven, the Goddess — are terms we may be familiar with, but are we serious about establishing a real and dynamic relationship with Her? Why should we feel uncomfortable beginning a public prayer with "Dear Heavenly Mother"? How is it that we sheepishly, under our breath, say, "Mother" as we

pray?

The only solution is to "Just do it!" Just try, pray strictly to Heavenly Mother. Ask for understanding, connection, or (my favorite), a sign. If there is a Divine Mother hoping to make Herself known, she will surely take that opportunity to dance into your life. This relationship in no way diminishes our relationship with Father God, but it enhances it. Our "God" just more than doubled in size.

Mother God knows the dread a woman feels when she has to walk past *those* guys and hear vulgar comments about her body; the ecstasy of holding a tiny, damp, warm bundle to your breast just after it exited your own body; and, the tragedy of seeing your precious child suffer with addiction, mental illness or physical ailments. All this can be shared at such a profound level with your Heavenly Mother. She is your Mother, she knows.

Looking at history, the sorrows of God are also magnified in viewing them from the vantage point of a Mother. Why didn't Eve talk to her Mother God? How painful it was to see the suffering of the innocents? Women and children have borne the painful results of war, disease and famine more than men. Even today we see that those most adversely affected by social upheaval, economic strife and the spoils of war are women and children. Rape has become a weapon of war; girls are the prizes of the greedy and lustful to be bought and sold over and over until their beauty or health fades and they are thrown away, or worse, killed.

It is high time we greet our Mother in Heaven with hearts of fullness, understanding and love. Let's greet an entirely new way of relating to the omniscient and omnipresent God. Foundation Day brought the historical equilibrium back to the pre-fall standard. Such a balanced and pre-fall understanding of the True God is needed.

We cannot leave the dual characteristics of God on the first pages of the Principle of Creation. The entire reality of God's nature must be honored in its complex and gender-inclusive glory. There is no mistake that women around the world have been heeding the call of Heaven. They are speaking up, setting examples, winning elections, and making the world fully aware of the historical animosity toward women for being descendants of Eve.

Everyone came from their mother's womb. For our sisters and ourselves, let's rush toward the open arms of our Mother in Heaven. Listen to Her whisper in the breeze, feel Her excitement in the caress of your lover, allow her to assure you of your value in the reflection of your face. If not today, when will we begin to have a truly broad and embracing relationship with Heaven?

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Artwork at top by Evelynne M. Hatchard, from illustrations in her new ebook, Heavenly Mother's Day: Are You My Mother?