



September 2018 – *A MERRY MEETING*

In his book *Miracles*, published in 1947, C.S. Lewis observes that, at a certain period in his life, he had “passionately desired that Nature should exist ‘on her own.’” He believed the idea that Nature had “been made, and could be altered, by God, seemed to take from her all that spontaneity which [Lewis] found so refreshing.” While Lewis’s views had changed earlier, he notes that at every stage in writing the book *Miracles*, he had found his idea of Nature “becoming more vivid and more concrete... She has never seemed to me more great or more real than at this moment.”¹ Lewis explains:

The reason is not far to seek. As long as one is a Naturalist, “Nature” is only a word for “everything” And Everything is not a subject about which anything very interesting can be said or (save by illusion) felt... But everything becomes different when we recognize that Nature is a *creature*, a created thing, with its own particular tang or flavour... It is not in her, but in Something far beyond her, that all lines meet and all contrasts are explained...

To say that God has created her is not to say that she is unreal, but precisely that she is real. Would you make God less creative than Shakespeare or Dickens?...



(O)nly Supernaturalists really see Nature. You must go a little away from her, and then turn round, and look back. Then at last the true landscape will become visible. You must have tasted, however briefly, the pure water from beyond the world before you can be distinctly conscious of the hot, salty tang of Nature’s current. To treat her as God, or as Everything, is to lose the whole pith and pleasure of her. Come out, look back, and then you will see... this astonishing cataract of bears, babies, and bananas: this immoderate deluge of atoms, orchids, oranges, cancers, canaries, fleas, gases, tornadoes and toads. How could you ever have thought that this was the ultimate reality? How could you ever have thought that it was merely a stage-set for the moral drama of men and women? She is herself. Offer her neither worship nor contempt. Meet her and know her. If we are immortal, and if she is doomed (as the scientists tell us) to run down and die, we shall miss this half-shy and half-flamboyant creature, this ogress, this hoyden, this incorrigible fairy, this dumb witch. But the theologians tell us that she, like ourselves, is to be redeemed. The “vanity” to which she was subjected was her disease, not her essence. She will be cured, but cured in character: not tamed (Heaven forbid) nor sterilised. We shall still be able to recognise our old enemy, friend, play-fellow and foster-mother, so perfected as to be not less, but more, herself. And that will be a merry meeting.²

While we enjoy many blessings from God in our daily lives, the consequences of our own fallenness and the fallenness of the whole creation are always present. Let us be thankful that we live in the hope of the resurrection and that God will redeem the whole Earth.

“But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.”

2 PETER 3:13 (ESV)

¹ C.S. Lewis, *Miracles*, Touchstone: New York, 1996, pp. 85-87.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 87-90.