

Unseen Existences Online Book Study

Week 6: Chapter 6

1. How does this chapter's epigraph, the quote from *The Lord of the Rings* on page 94, speak to you? What did seeing the star do for Sam? Can you think of a personal experience that has worked in the same way in your life?
2. Where are some favorite places that make it easier for you to be contemplative?
3. Why was it necessary for God to lead Abraham outside to show him the stars?
4. Abraham was a pilgrim, always on the move, living in tents. How does cultivating a pilgrim mindset help you to deal with political anxieties, financial insecurity, and other potential worries?
5. Psalm 147:4 says, "he counts the stars and calls them all by name." How does this make you feel?
6. How does looking at the vastness of the universe—like the constellations of Orion or the Pleiades—help us reconcile the smallness of our immediate problems with the absolute care of the Creator?
7. Ponder the words of Nick Cave quoted on page 100. He claims cynicism "is the most common and easy of evils," while hopefulness is "hard-earned, makes demands...and can be lonely." How have you experienced this?
8. Look up Romans 8:18,19 and I John 3:2. How do these verses complement one another?
9. Brian tells the story of hearing the words "it's all a gift"—referring to creation. Do you see the world around you as a gift? Do you see your life as a gift?
10. The brothers Ivan and Alyosha Karamozov represent two ways through life. What are these two paths? What other names might you give these paths?
11. BONUS QUESTION Brian says, "The high calling of our humanity is to grow into full maturity as the sons and daughters of God through participation with God." (pg 101) Read aloud the words of David Bentley Hart on page 102 and ponder each sentence.