

Psalms 90:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.

Analysis

Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.

This verse expands the opening's theme, moving from God's faithfulness across human generations to His existence before all creation and throughout all eternity. This is among Scripture's most profound declarations of God's eternity and preexistence.

"Before the mountains were brought forth" (בְּתֶרֶם הָרִים יֻלְּדוּ/beterem harim yuladu) uses birth imagery for creation. Yalad (to bear, bring forth, give birth) typically describes human or animal birth. Mountains—ancient, massive, seemingly permanent features of creation—are portrayed as being born, implying they had a beginning and a Creator. Terem (before, not yet) emphasizes that God existed before even the most ancient created things.

Mountains symbolized permanence in ancient thought. Peoples viewed mountains as eternal, unchanging, and divine dwelling places. Yet this verse declares that even mountains had a beginning—they were brought forth. Only God exists before all creation. Isaiah 40:12 asks: "Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?"

"Or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world" (אָרְיֵךְ וְתִבֵּל/vatecholel eretz vetevel) intensifies the point. Chul (to writhe, bring forth, form) continues birth imagery—creation portrayed as labor, divine energy bringing reality into existence. Eretz (earth, land) and tevel (world, inhabited earth) comprehensively describe all created reality. Before any of this existed, God was.

"Even from everlasting to everlasting" (עַד-עוֹלָם וְעַד-עוֹלָם/ume'olam ad-olam) declares God's eternity in both directions—no beginning and no end. Olam means eternity, everlasting, perpetuity, time immemorial. The phrase literally reads "from eternity to eternity" or "from forever to forever." God exists outside of and independent from time, uncreated and unending.

"Thou art God" (אַתָּה אֱלֹהִים/attah El) concludes with simple, emphatic declaration. El (God, mighty one) emphasizes power and deity. The pronoun attah (You) is emphatic: "You—You alone—are God." This echoes Deuteronomy 4:35: "The LORD he is God; there is none else beside him." And Psalm 102:27: "But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end."

The theological significance is profound. While humans live briefly (the rest of the psalm emphasizes our seventy or eighty years), God exists eternally. While creation changes, decays, and passes away, God remains eternally unchanging. This eternal God is the same God who is "our dwelling place"—almighty, eternal, unchanging, yet personally present with His people.

Historical Context

Moses, who received revelation of God's name at the burning bush (Exodus 3:14—"I AM THAT I AM"), understood God's self-existence and eternity more deeply than any before him. God's declaration "I AM" signifies eternal, independent, self-sufficient existence—God doesn't become, He simply is. This psalm reflects that revelation: God exists before and beyond all creation, eternal and unchanging.

Ancient Near Eastern cosmologies viewed various deities as emerging from primordial chaos or being born from other gods. Egyptian creation myths, Mesopotamian Enuma Elish, Canaanite Baal Cycle—all portray gods with origins,

conflicts, limitations. Against this polytheistic backdrop, Moses declares revolutionary truth: one God who exists before all creation, who brought forth everything, who is eternally self-existent without origin or end.

Genesis 1:1 establishes: "In the beginning God..."—God exists before the beginning, bringing beginning into existence. John 1:1-3 echoes and expands this: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made." Christ is revealed as the eternal God through whom creation came to be.

Jewish theology developed deep reflection on divine eternity. While pagan philosophies debated whether the world was eternal or created, Jewish faith affirmed: God alone is eternal; creation is temporal, contingent, dependent on God's sustaining power. Rabbinic tradition emphasized God's name HaShem (The Name), too holy to pronounce, signifying His absolute transcendence and eternity.

Christian theology affirms God's eternity as essential divine attribute. Augustine meditated extensively on God's relationship to time: God created time along with creation, exists outside temporal sequence, and sees all time—past, present, future—in eternal present. Reformed theology emphasizes God's aseity (self-existence), immutability (unchangeableness), and infinity, all rooted in this truth: God exists from everlasting to everlasting, uncaused and unending.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How does God's existence 'from everlasting to everlasting' provide security and hope when you're facing change, loss, or uncertainty?

2. What is the relationship between God's eternal transcendence (before and beyond all creation) and His intimate presence as 'our dwelling place' (v.1)?
3. How should the truth that God existed before the mountains and formed the earth affect our worship, priorities, and perspective on current events?

Interlinear Text

בְּטָרָם	קִדְרֵי	יָלְדוּ	וְלֹלֶךְ		
H2962	Before the mountains	were brought forth	or ever thou hadst formed		
	H2022	H3205	H2342		
אֶרֶץ	וְעוֹלָם	עַד	עוֹלָם	אֱלֹהִים	
the earth	and the world	even from everlasting	to	even from everlasting	H859
H776	H8398	H5769	H5704	H5769	
אַתָּה					
thou art God					
H410					

Additional Cross-References

Hebrews 13:8 (Parallel theme): Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.

Genesis 1:1 (References God): In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

Revelation 1:8 (Parallel theme): I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

Psalms 93:2 (Eternal Life): Thy throne is established of old: thou art from everlasting.

Habakkuk 1:12 (Eternal Life): Art thou not from everlasting, O LORD my God, mine Holy One? we shall not die. O LORD, thou hast ordained them for judgment; and, O mighty God, thou hast established them for correction.

Psalms 33:9 (Parallel theme): For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.

Isaiah 44:6 (References God): Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.

Isaiah 57:15 (Parallel theme): For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

Job 15:7 (Parallel theme): Art thou the first man that was born? or wast thou made before the hills?

Psalms 146:6 (Parallel theme): Which made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that therein is: which keepeth truth for ever: