The Lord made it known to me, and I knew. (Jeremiah 11:18)

Who is the greatest?

And Jesus took a child in his arms and said, "whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes not me, but the one who sent me."

Who is the greatest?

Not me, but the One who sent me.

I.

Who is this One?

How can we know this One?

The Lord made it known to me, and I knew.

When I was small, I knew the Lord in the most finite expressions of the world.

The crocus in the snow, tiny daffodils.

The presence of a cloud of purple, alive and smiling.

Later, it was Jesus Christ who took my hand

Gently touched my head

And led me over the threshold

Showed me my place at the great banquet.

But it has always been You.

who have loved me so carefully and fervently and insistently.

On a long bike ride in France

Fields of flowers, grapes, cows

Stretching out under the sun to the vanishing point of blue sky

Clusters of red tiled roofs

The warm golden light the scents

The absolute liberty of movement

(with my body I thee worship)

The love that was expanding from my very rib cage

Was directed, at first, toward the man Jesus.

But in a flash I knew

That the man Jesus was a teacher in Palestine

Focused on mission and message

Lived in a time and place far from me.

The One whose delight I felt was You!

It is You who are in ecstasy

In the joys of a summer day in the French countryside

Your ek-stasis, Your out of body experience is to feel through mine

For it is Yours- You made it! All of it!

The blackberries on the side of the road on the way to prayer

The sky, dark and voluptuous with stars

It is You who wake me gently in the middle of the night

To fill my whole being

With iridescent silver polyphony of rain in the leaves.

It is You with me as my feet run

And I fly along the river

Under bursts of flame colored leaves.

And it is You whose heart is broken

Who feels our suffering and our disaster with sharp sorrow:

"Oh that my head were a spring of water and my eyes were fountains of tears, that I might weep day and night for my people."

II.

The Lord made it known to me and I knew;

Then you showed me their evil deeds.

The more deeply I love

The One

The more deeply I love

You, my people.

The more deeply I love the One

The more outrageous

Stupid

Our evil seems.

This is Jeremiah: of God he says, "You have seduced me, and I have been seduced." He is captivated by the very heart of God. And this great love opens his eyes to see the ways in which all of us are "committed to deceit," unwilling to turn back, unwilling to admit our "manifold sins and wickedness." As a church, this is true! We have literally expunged those words from our liturgy.

We will grudgingly confess that we have done some imperfect things, but we do not wish to discover how deeply lost we are, how deeply wicked our lifetsyle is, destroying man and creation alike, even as we sit here. Every one of the ways we analyze what is terrible about our time relies on locating the blame on someone else. Which means we are committed to deceit- committed to avoiding our complicity in, our continued creation of this time of terror and sorrow.

Prophets don't have action plans. They don't 'speak truth to power.' They speak to everyone. They don't 'meet people where they're at,' or try to 'speak in a way that wont lose people.' They don't care about being effective or convincing. Prophets feel deeply, agonizingly, the simultaneous joy in the rapture of the One and the unbearable sorrow at our suffering. Jeremiah doesn't give the people a way back- he says the bad times are what we have sown and what we will reap and they are going to last a long time and there is no going back, there is no fixing. Not, it will be ok if you turn back to God. Just, it will not be ok. The wickedness of this nation will have consequences that can not be avoided. This message has angered everyone who heard Jeremiah. In fact they're trying to kill him so they don't have to hear it.

The prophet wants you to feel what they feel. Just that. To be captured and mastered by the love of the One, the Great I AM, and to be overwhelmed by God's own sorrow at our evil. Pope Francis has said we should spend a lot more time weeping, weeping. Oh that my head were a spring and my eyes were fountains that I might weep day and night for our people.

And what then of this Jesus, the Christ?

Who is this Christ, but the same One.

This Christ, the Word, from the beginning, in the beginning

Whose communion with the One who sent him

Was so full, so perfect

This Christ who wished for us to see through him

To be like him

In communion with the great I AM

Cristo vive en mi!

This Christ lives in me

And opens the gate:

Christ puts his arms around me, you, children

Welcomes me, you, children

It is so I may know I am held by none other than the Lord.

Will this do anything? Get us anywhere? I do not know.

I know

I have heard my Lord

The Creator

And dwelt in Him

And He in me

We are of the same Source.

Christ in me

The Father so close

Who is

The greatest.