

Updated 2-4-18

Thank you for your interest. I pasted recent poems in chronological order, shortened to five pages. I welcome comments, accolades, and critiques; alert me of typos, syntax issues, mixed metaphors. I'd be honored if you wish to pass any on; please credit me and my site, petervenable.com

Sunday Mood

We walk by faith, and not by sight—
Yet godly eyes gaze at the height

Above the sky, beyond the stars:
The gates of heaven are ajar,

For all who see through dark to light
And hold His hand in sheer delight.

Squaring The Circle

Better minds than mine teased through
The paradox of trinity.
Distinct but different they say;
A perplexity most agree.

The conundrum is *essence*,
Something beyond mere energy
Or space or time or blind force—
Metaphysical quandary!

They are viewed as three persons,
A *Deity* in unity:
Father, son, Holy Spirit.
These persons, no one disagrees,

But what is this . . . this *substance*?
What words bare this reality?
Or must we yield to image,
Symbol, metaphor and simile?

Essence is *relationship*
Since three is one, and one is three—
A *personal* paradox:
This three, always, in harmony.

Blood Test

This morning
I cringe, dreading that syringe prick for
a blood panel test. *Mr. Venable, ready?*
The phlebotomy tech greets and smiles.
She ties my arm with a rubber tube,
and my left inner-arm vein bulges
to a purple knob. Rubbing alcohol
leeches into my nose. "Never, never
stare at the glistening, stainless needle."
I squeeze my eyes shut, sealed as a vice.
Dissociating into blackness, some dark
shadow forms, skulks in bottomless pitch,
faceless, almost shapeless, but very there.
A voice, my voice? steeped in Spirit rebukes:
Did Jesus of Nazareth come in the flesh?
The thing winces, shrinks into nothingness.
All brightens. *Are You OK? We're done*
as she tapes a cotton swab over a red drop.
Blinking, the overhead light seems a nova.
I rise from the shadowless lab office for home.

This afternoon
two-year-old Emma fusses at a nap-time
shadow, *A Ghost?* I crack blinds, *No way!*
and soothe her. She lays down, clamping
her bear and Ellie. I know, once again,
that shadows flee light.

The Last Great Mythology

Study, with unbiased, impartial eyes,
That Jew—Jesus of Nazareth.
He walked around the temple monoliths—
Thought nothing of their massive size

But traveled to herald in rural parts.
He spoke on hills, by paths, on boats,
Told stories about shepherds, sheep and goats . . .
Words piercing through listeners' hearts

Who either were convicted or inflamed.
(Wise words history soon forgets—
Like small fry flowing through fishermen's nets—
No matter what truth someone proclaimed.)

This Nazarene would tell, or touch, to heal:
The bent stood straight, paralyzed walked,
Blinded men saw—and the crowds stared and gawked.
He stayed with some, broke bread at meals.

To a dead girl, *I tell you to get up*
And she rose out of her bed,
Ran to her father, cuddled, and then fed.

At his last meal, *Drink from my cup.*

Everyone knows the rest of the story:
This man Jesus, nailed on a cross—
Roman billboard warning for rebel dross.

So, is this myth, allegory?

He rose from a tomb: The King of Glory
Who walked about for forty days
And ascended through Galilean haze—

History's last fabled story?

To Be Continued . . .

That night in the dead of night
scraping . . . grating . . . clawing . . .
gnawing . . . scurrying . . . fingernails
scratching on sleep's blackboard . . .

Bedroom light switched on. Above the ceiling:
attic alien. *Rodentia* member. Furry fiend.
Rapturous rodent. Incisors beaver sized,
sharp as wood chisels.

Quiet now—it dreams in its insulation nest,
warmed enough from my heat pump
this winter evening. Light out.

Hardware store tomorrow.

. . .

Up the attic trap door. Stale cold.
Skeletal beams form numerous triangles.
Shingle nails jut iron stalactites for my brow.
I position mouse traps, a rat trap, animal cage trap,
mouse and rat glue traps—all dappled with delectable
walnut bits, cracker crumbs, peanut butter

and one homemade miniature guillotine,
with a weighted and angled razor blade,
mounted on an upright frame,
WD-40 oiled, posed, baited
for a whiskered head—
an empty-half walnut shell
for a basket.

All Is Well. Really.

At Fifty. Sixty. Seventy.
At each decade you stop, dwell—
Ten more years. Are they gained or lost?
Blow out candles. *All is well.*

But at an unguarded moment,
Trudging up a long stairwell,
You pause, clamping a slick handrail
Hearing a mute alarm bell.

The mind flips to erotic times
At a Myrtle Beach hotel . . .
Rested, you trudge to the top step,
Glad at least my feet don't swell.

You know your time is running out—
You'll breath your final farewell.
What then? Extinction? Afterlife?
What follows? Heaven or hell?

To the bedroom. Switch on the light.
On the desk is a seashell,

A memento from Myrtle Beach.
Sniff. *Still has a salty smell.*

Whose Well?

We strive for Biblical exegesis,
 So in the light of the Spirit, He sees us.
But as we gaze into the well of verse,
 There is the risk of an image perverse:
Do we see the reflection of Jesus
 Or our face—and hence, teach eisegesis?

Optical Illusions

Perception is reality, the glue
Of Post-modernism, humanists sing:
“Seeing truth depends on your *point of view*.”

Not true! Says the Muslim, Jew, or Hindu;
The universe is more than quarks or strings:
“Seeing Truth depends on God’s point of view.”

The skeptic pronounces a bold adieu:
“Your absolutes all have an empty ring—
Seeing truth rests on a relative view.”

The mystic sees through such optical stew
And delusions, to which some dearly cling:
“Seeing Truth as One, has no point of view.”

Around and around we strive to construe:
“Are there absolutes behind thoughts and things?
Is there any Truth beyond *point of view*?”

Beyond a zoom lens or wide-angle views—
Besides any theory of everything—
An ancient man was nailed, buttressed, and skewed:
The Truth came incognito, as a Who.

