



## Old Turtle

*Douglas Wood , Cheng-Khee Chee (Illustrator)*

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Who is God?

Is He a wind that is never still?

Is He a rock that never moves?

Is He high above or here among us?

Venerable Old Turtle answers quietly: God is all of these things.

*Old Turtle* first burst upon the publishing scene in 1992, and it was instantly recognized as a classic fable about ecology, peace, and the interconnectedness of all beings. Simple yet profound, it has since brought hope and inspiration to children and adults around the world.

## Old Turtle Details

Date : Published March 1st 2001 by Scholastic Press (first published October 1st 1991)

ISBN : 9780439309080

Author : Douglas Wood , Cheng-Khee Chee (Illustrator)

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## From Reader Review Old Turtle for online ebook

### Danica says

Yes, it is a children's book. I guarantee you will love it, though!

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### Laura Weakland says

Love this one! "God is very close; His love touches everything."

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### Emily says

A bit heavy on MESSAGE for my tastes, but gorgeous watercolor illustrations. Interesting flow to the book with placement of the illustrations and text. Tries to take on two big themes, environmentalism and the nature of God, and it just comes across as both too forced and too fluffy.

For more book reviews, visit my blog, Build Enough Bookshelves.

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### Valentin Eni says

Exaltare pseudo-mitologico-ecologico-panteisto-religioas? foarte confuz? ?i stupid?. Ilustrat? destul de dr?gu?, dealfel.

Despre animale vorbitoare (?i nu doar animale ci ?i ap?, pietre, copaci etc.) care îl caut? pe dumnezeu bla-bla-bla, despre oameni, mesagerii dragostei lui dumnezeu, care ?i-au uitat originea ?i predestinarea bla-bla-bla, provocând astfel o catastrof? ecologic? bla-bla-bla, despre o b?trân? ?estoas? care i-a oprit pe oameni ?i care i-a f?cut pe ace?tia s? asculte ?i s? aud?, ?i s? vad? pe dumnezeu în fiecare din ei, în frumuse?ea P?mântului bla-bla. ?i b?trâna ?esotas? ZÂMBE?TE ?i parc? se face aluzie c? ?estoasa este dumnezeu, ori c? duhul sfânt a intrat în broasc? ?i a f?cut-o s? vorbeasc?. Iar pe ultimele pagini, ca ?i pe primele, imagini care ar fi trebuit s? ne sugereze frumuse?ea naturii, cu multe pete de culoare, desenate parc? sub influen?a drogurilor. And so did God. Amin.

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### Ash Platt says

Without fail, every single time I read, 'Old Turtle' I cry. Even after Old Turtle smiles, which, by the way, is my all time favorite illustration. I actually have a colored copy of it up in my room! Don't judge me..

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### Canadian Reader says

This is not a picture book for the very young, and, frankly, the "wise", vague exhortation to love those different from us--as we really are all one people--and listen to the messages from stones, plants, etc. is a bit

precious, leaving me unmoved and unconvinced. While I don't quibble with the basic (unbroken) truth of the book that humanity is one, it would be refreshing to actually read a wise book that somehow communicated the extreme difficulty that sometimes (often?) exists when it comes to accepting and finding commonality with those whose ways are very different from ours! This is a "pretty" book--with flowery language and a sort of hushed and holy tone--that idealistic adults might like (it's much like Muth's *The Three Questions*, which I am also not a fan of) but I don't think it's a particularly great book for kids. If you prefer something a little more solid and truthful, and if you have problems with John Muth's other works, this story by Douglas Wood with illustrations by Muth won't be your cup of tea--as it wasn't mine.

(By the way, how did Old Turtle end up with the other half of the broken truth, anyway? The other half supposedly "blazed off through the night sky". Is Old Turtle a flying turtle? This is what I mean about preciousness. I like poetic books, but this book just seemed to be silliness masquerading as wisdom!)

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### **Kelly says**

Huh. A children's book?

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### **Vannessa Anderson says**

A young man asked Old Turtle, What is our purpose in life?

A woman asked Old Turtle, "How do we find happiness?"

A young girl wants to know all about family.

A little boy wants to know about play.

An old man asked about evil.

An old woman asked about death.

**Old Turtle** is a book you want to read because the answers are brilliant! Greg Ruth's illustrations were good.

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### **Krista says**

Read this book years ago and have always loved it. Such a beautiful message and such gorgeous watercolors. I just wish the pictures were bigger so I could enjoy the detail more.

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### **Beverly says**

After reading "Old Turtle: Questions Of The Heart," I had to read the first Old Turtle book. I love children's book and, especially, the ones with such profound messages.

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## Matthew Hunter says

Douglas Wood visited our congregation last year. As part of a worship service, he read passages, sang, and played acoustic guitar while Cheng-Khee Chee's artwork cycled through on large screens in the sanctuary. The adult-heavy audience and worship setting were perfect, and absolutely beautiful. The emotionally evocative presentation of the award-winning children's book worked among liberal leaning, mainline Christian churchgoers. But as for the children? Well, let's just say the story and performance set a mood conducive to a nap filled with sweet dreams. Despite the book's gentleness and beauty, there's not much in *Old Turtle* to captivate a young mind.

Don't get me wrong, I love *Old Turtle*! Cheng-Khee Chee's artwork is to die for. Wood's mystical and, in the end, hopeful take on conflict, diversity, divine mystery and environmental destruction speaks powerfully to me as a left-leaning clergyperson. But between the maturish message and subtle, softly lined artwork, I can't consider *Old Turtle* a children's book. A picture book for world federalists and universalists perhaps, but not for most little ones.

Stick to *The Lorax* if you want an environmental message presented in a vibrant and child-centered way. And you can't beat *The Story of Ferdinand* as an example of gentleness in the face of violence.

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## Elfdart says

this was a nice book on diversity. i think one of the things people get the most worked up over is spirituality. it's one of those things that can touch a person more deep than anything else, and everyone's perspective will differ, even if only minutely. wars have been started over the issue, and all because we're too pig headed and focused on our own validity. this book starts off with animals and rocks and trees each saying that what they think god is is indeed the true god, and that god seems to resemble the speaker. then the old turtle stops them and tell them of the coming of a new group, humans, and how they are supposed to be a message from god the the earth and a prayer from the earth to god. then people come and after while start to do not so nice things and nature says to stop. then the beings that said god was like themselves at the beginning of the book said they saw god in that which was opposite themselves. i guess the moral being have an open mind about that which is different from yourself, because it really isn't so alien to what you believe.

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## Bessana Kendig says

*Old Turtle* written by Douglas Wood, is about a wildlife ecosystem that argues about who God is. They each have their own personal version of what they believe but *Old Turtle's* position is that God is in everything. When humans inherit the earth they fight and kill over their own beliefs in God and the *Old Turtle* helps them find peace and see God in beauty.

I give this story a three star rating. I feel like it is sentimental and beautiful but not altogether inclusive because no matter what, God exists in this universe which demotes atheism. I know atheism is less common and the meaning of this book is larger than religion but it can also be viewed as too preachy and exclusive.

"And often the people misused their powers, and hurt one another, or killed one another. And they hurt the

earth. Until finally even the forests began to die..."(n.p.) this is some serious darkness entering the world which can either be because of arguments about God or because the people become godless. Either way, the message is clearly faith and hope are the strongest forces for positive impact.

This story makes me feel like there is more of an open door for young people to choose spirituality over a specific belief system. Back when I was in school you were usually committed to whatever religion your parents worshipped, and it is somewhat the same these days, but this story reveals that there is more of a understanding that as long as there is a belief in something larger than oneself (not atheism) then you have faith and the ability to find hope throughout life.

The classroom connection for this book could be the understanding that even when arguments arise and people see situations with very different perspectives they can find common ground with a positive platform.

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### **Katie says**

One of my all time favorite Children's Picture Books. Do not discount this book as a child only book...it speaks volume to all who will listen...love, love, love this book!

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### **June Pecchia says**

This book just came to me in "Recommendations". I know this book, and it is a treasure to me in its physical form, and in the mood it evokes in my mind even now, years since I've read it. The illustrations are watery and soft. The text moves slowly and peacefully. Today I need to find it on my shelf, and savor it again.

Read this for yourself, then read it to a child or two or even an entire classroom.

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