

The God of the Mountains (1)

It is a very worthwhile study to trace the experiences of the people of God in various places in the Scriptures. Of particular interest is to see how God meets the needs of His people in their circumstances in these different places. What is specifically before me in this next series of articles, is to consider God's dealings with His people in the various mountains and valleys that we find in the sacred Scriptures.

The Syrians, enemies of God's people Israel, did not understand the unlimited power of God, nor did they understand God's unfailing care for His people. When Israel defeated them in the hills, the Syrians decided they would fight against Israel in the plains and hopefully overcome them. They reasoned, *"The Lord is God of the hills, but he is not God of the valleys"* (1st Kings 20:28).

It is my purpose, in these articles, to show the all sufficiency of our God to meet the need of His people, whether on the mountain or in the valley. There are many valuable lessons that can be learned from the experiences of God's people in the past that can be applied to the circumstances of believers today, that can be of tremendous benefit and blessing.

The first mountains mentioned in the Word of God are the mountains of Ararat, where the ark rested following the great flood which the Lord sent to destroy man from the face of the earth (Gen. 6:7- 8:4). So tremendous was that storm, it is recorded, *"the same day were the fountains of the great deep opened up, and the windows of heaven were opened"* (Gen. 7:11).

The ark, passing through the waters of God's judgment on the earth, is a picture of the Lord Jesus enduring the wrath of God against sin. Interestingly, the psalmist wrote prophetically of the sufferings of the Lord Jesus, *"Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts: all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me"* (Ps. 42:7).

In another psalm it is written prophetically of the experience of the suffering of the Lord Jesus, *"Save me, O God; for the waters are come in unto my soul. I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me"* (Ps. 69:1-2). Jonah described his experience in the belly of the great fish, *"I went down to the bottoms of the mountains"* (Jon. 2:6).

While the ark was enduring the storm of God's wrath, Noah and his family were safe inside the ark. The Lord had instructed Noah to build the ark, in view of the impending storm and flood, then invited Noah and his family into the ark (Gen. 6:14-16; 7:1). Just as the Lord provided the ark as a means of protection from the great flood, He provided the Lord Jesus as a means of safety from judgment, for all who trust Him for salvation and the forgiveness of sins.

The prophet Isaiah wrote, *"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all"* (Isa. 53:6). Peter wrote of the substitutionary work of the Lord Jesus, bearing the judgment of God in the sinner's place, *"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God"* (1st Pet. 3:18). Paul concluded, *"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus"* (Rom. 8:1).

One of the first things we learn about Noah, is found in the statement, *"Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord"* (Gen. 6:8). How true that is for us today. Paul wrote to Titus, *"the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men"* (Tit. 2:11). In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul wrote, *"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace"* (Eph. 1:7).

One suggestion for the meaning of the name, “Ararat”, is, “*the curse reversed*”. How wonderful to know that for all those who put their trust in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation, the curse has been reversed. Paul wrote in the book of Galatians, “*Christ hat redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree*” (Gal. 3:13).

Another suggested meaning of the name, “Ararat”, is, “*sacred land*”. How sacred is Calvary, to all who have been redeemed by precious blood! It is the place where the Lord Jesus took our place, and bore the storm of the wrath of God on account of our sin.

Noah’s name means “*rest*” or, “*comfort*”. The Lord Jesus extends this gracious invitation, “*Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest*” (Matt. 11:28). The language of the Scriptures is most precious and fitting in the case of ark on the mountains of Ararat. The Word of God tells us that after the storm had passed, the ark *rested* on the mountains of Ararat (Gen. 8:4).

What a lovely picture this brings to our minds, of the Lord Jesus, who, after He had endured the storm of God’s wrath against sin and had accomplished the work of redemption, through the shedding of His own precious blood, gave that loud, triumphant cry, “*it is finished*” (Jn. 19:30).

The writer of the epistle to Hebrews wrote, “*But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God*” (Heb. 10:12). The apostle Paul tells us of the high, exalted place the Lord Jesus occupies, as a result of the finished work of redemption and His glorious resurrection out from amongst the dead, “*he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power; and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come*” (Eph. 1:20:21).

What is most amazing, is that we who have been sheltered from the storm of God’s wrath, have been raised up together and made to sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus (Eph. 2:6) and our life is safely hid in Christ with God (Col. 3:3).

*He left a heavenly, holy scene
In condescending grace
Twixt God and man to intervene
To take the sinner’s place*

*Beneath the waves and billows tossed,
Bearing God’s wrath alone;
Our blessed Lord, for sinners lost,
Enduring grief unknown;*

*Those angry waves those billows deep
By which He was submerged;
Across His holy soul doth sweep,
That sins might thus be purged*

*He must for man the curse endure
Suffer the vengeful storm;
He, the holy, sinless and pure,
Was God in human form.*

*The storm had passed; upon His breast,
He bowed His sacred head;
Seated now, in heaven, at rest,
Risen out from the dead.*

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