

The God of the Valleys (4)

The Valley of Baca

Often, as we read through the sacred Scriptures, we find a singular mention of a word or phrase which yields an abundance of precious truth. Such is the case with the Valley of Baca (Ps. 84:6). It is mentioned only once, but O, what blessed thoughts does it provide for the child of God to consider.

While we do not know the exact location of the Valley of Baca, the meaning of its name is clear. The word, “*Baca*” means, “*weeping*”. It has been suggested by some as being near Jerusalem. Pilgrims travelling towards Jerusalem, would eventually pass through the Valley of Baca, before reaching home. How true of the Lord’s dear people today. Many will pass through the Valley of Baca before reaching their heavenly home.

The Psalm begins with a longing for the presence of God. The writer tells of the blessedness of those who dwell in the house of the Lord, who continually praise Him. He also tells of the blessedness of those who acknowledge that their strength is in the Lord, who have set the pilgrimage towards Jerusalem in their hearts. (vs. 1-5).

Abraham recognized that he was a pilgrim and a stranger on this earth. He looked for a city that has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Like so many others, he desired a better country, a heavenly one, which God has prepared (Heb. 11:10-16).

Those who pass through the Valley of Baca, the valley of weeping, and rely on the Lord and His sufficient supply of divine grace for strength, understand that all of their circumstances are ordered and directed by the God of all grace (1st Pet. 5:10) and the God of all comfort (2nd Cor. 1:3). They understand that all things are working together for their good and the ultimate purposes of God, that they might be conformed to the image of His blessed Son (Rom. 8:28-29).

Those who acknowledge and experience the presence of God in the Valley of Baca, find it becomes a place of refreshing springs, showered upon with an abundance of blessings from the Lord. “*The rain filleth the pools*”. Solomon wrote, “*the blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it*” (Prov. 10:22).

David wrote, “*yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me*” (Ps. 23:4). The writer of the epistle to the Hebrews reminds of His unfulfilling promise, “*I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee*” (Heb. 13:5).

How reassuring to know that, no matter how dark the valley, the Lord has promised His presence with us. Our blessed Lord Jesus, while He was here on this earth knew much of the Valley of Baca, the valley of weeping. Remember that He wept at the graveside of Lazarus (Jn. 11:35). He wept over the city of Jerusalem (Luke 19:41). Remember, as well, that in the Garden of Gethsemane, as He contemplated the cross, He said to His disciples, “*my soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death*” (Mk. 14:34).

The writer of the epistle to the Hebrews wrote of the Lord Jesus, “*Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared*” (Heb. 5:7). The prophet Isaiah described Him as, “*a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief*” (Isa. 53:3).

Small wonder then, that the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews reminds us once again of the one who knows all that we pass through and infinitely cares for us, *“for we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin”* (Heb. 4:15).

How the presence of our blessed Lord Jesus makes every bitter circumstance sweet. When the children of Israel came to the waters of Mara, they could not drink of the waters, for they were bitter. The Lord instructed Moses to cast a tree into the waters, which, when he did so, the waters were made sweet (Ex. 15:23-25). The tree may be a reference to the cross of our Lord Jesus, who through the shedding of His own precious blood on the cross, has made all of our bitterness sweet.

Passing through the Valley of Baca, our strength increases, as we contemplate very soon, appearing in the presence of our Lord Jesus, who shall present us faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy (Jude vs. 24). The apostle Paul wrote, *“For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal”* (2nd Cor. 4:17-18). He also wrote in the book of Romans, *“For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us”* (Rom. 8:18).

We look to the Lord Jesus, our great example. The writer of the epistle to the Hebrews exhorts us, *“Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God”* (Heb. 12:2).

Soon, we shall leave the Valley of Baca behind, when we shall be caught up into the glad presence of our blessed Lord Jesus Christ. Until then, we persevere, with the blessed assurance of seeing Him face to face and the promise before us, *“And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away”* (Rev. 21:4).

“Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning” (Ps. 30:5).

*Through the valley of weeping,
We are ordained to go;
Entrusted to God’s keeping,
Our every step below.*

*The grace of God sustaining,
His Word our guide and stay;
No grumbling or complaining,
Though rough may be the way.*

*This vale abounds with blessing,
Though sorrows we endure;
Our faith in God confessing,
Our future is secure.*

*Aided by Christ’s power,
We go from strength to strength;
And wait the blessed hour,
We see His face, at length.*

*But soon the vale of sorrow,
Will be forever past;
We wait the blessed morrow,
To be with Christ at last.*
Bernie Payne