

God of the Mountain & the Valley – Aug. 16, 2023

1 Kings 20 – King of Aram makes threats & demands to Ahab, the King of Israel. He brags about how he'll win. Ahab responds: "A warrior putting on his sword for battle should not boast like a warrior who has already won." **1 Ki. 20:11**

- Israel outnumbered. 7000 vs King of Aram & 32 allied kings & troops.
- Each Israeli soldier killed his opponent, the rest fled.

After that win, the enemy said: "The Israelite gods are gods of the hills; that is why they won. But we can beat them easily on the plains." **1 Ki. 20:23.**

- A prophet encouraged Ahab – **1 Ki. 20:28** – "Then the man of God went to the king of Israel and said, "This is what the Lord says: The Arameans have said, 'The Lord is a god of the hills and not of the plains.' So I will defeat this vast army for you. Then you will know that I am the Lord."
 - o Israel won again. 127,000 enemies were killed.
 - o God is the same God on the valley & and mountain.

God's power is the same power non matter where we are: mountain or valley.

Mountain represents – highs in life. Great things. Mountain top experiences.

- We see Jesus like never before. Feel especially close to God.
 - o Moses – up the Mtn to meet God, receive 10 Commandments
 - o Jesus w/ Peter, James & John - up a high Mtn. **Transfiguration.**
 - o Before Jesus left earth, met Disciples on a Mtn in Galilee. **Matt. 28**
 - Worshiped, commissioned, & reminded "I am w/ you always"
- Great to conquer a challenge . . . but danger is pride: look what I did!
 - o God made the crooked places straight. Gave us strength for climb.
- **We need those mountaintop experiences to get thru the valleys.**
 - o It's easy to praise God on the Mountain. Hard, valley.

Valley represents the difficult days of life. Dark times. Challenges. Death

Ps. 23:4 – "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, *for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.*"

- Valleys will come. We'll all face these times. They're part of life.

God works in valleys/mountains. He's still w/ us, but **His presence is different.**

- **Matt. 11:28-29** – "Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."

- - God is gentle with us in the valleys of life.
 - He healed so many people b/c “He had compassion on them”
 - He stopped for lepers – the outcasts of society
 - He spoke to women as people, not property
 - In our pain, it’s easy to miss His gentleness w/ us.
- **Isaiah 42:3** – “A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out. In faithfulness he will bring forth justice;”
 - A bruised reed is damaged, but reparable.
 - A smoldering wick can be reignited.
 - Man w/shriveled hand was a bruised reed. Woman in adultery
 - Woman w/issue of blood in Luke 8 was a bruised reed. Peter.
 - Jesus was “bruised for our iniquities.” **Isaiah 53:5**

Our valleys – trials - are places of healing & growth

I Peter 1:7 – “These trials will show that your faith is genuine. It is being tested as fire tests & purifies gold - though your faith is far more precious than mere gold. So when your faith remains strong thru many trials, it will bring you much praise & glory & honor on the day when Jesus Christ is revealed to the whole world.”

- **John 11** - Lazarus, Martha & Mary. Lazarus sick, Jesus delayed 2 more days.
 - Jesus didn’t abandon them. He was stretching their faith.
 - Jesus told disciples: *“Lazarus has died, and for your sick I am glad I was not there, so **that you may be believe**. Let us go to him.”*
 - Sometimes **we believe** in Jesus, but **not fully in His power**.
 - Jesus went to Martha, Mary. *“If you would have been here . . .”*
 - *“Couldn’t he who opened the eyes / blind kept this man from dying?”*
 - Sometimes we think **God failed us, instead He’s filling us . . .**
w/ more faith, w/ more belief, more purpose, more praise!
 - Jesus saw Mary weeping. He wept.
 - God weeps with us. He cries with us. He hurts with us.
 - So often we pray away the very thing God uses to build us up. Gently.
 - You may feel like a **bruised reed** right now – God is with you.

Song/week - “God on the Mountain” – by Lynda Randle

The God of the mountain is Still God in the valley,
 When things go wrong, He’ll make them right;
 The God of the Good times is still God in the bad times,
 The God of the day, is still God in the night.

God on the Mountain

[Verse 1]

Life is easy, when you're up on the mountain
And you've got peace of mind, like you've never known
But when things change and you're down in the valley
Don't lose faith, for you're never alone

[Chorus]

And the God on the mountain is still God in the valley
When things go wrong, He'll make them right
And the God of the good times is still God in the bad times
The God of the day is still God in the night

[Verse 2]

We talk of faith when we're up on the mountain
But talk comes so easy when life's at its best
But in the valley of trials and temptations
That's when faith is really put to the test

[Chorus]

And the God on the mountain is still God in the valley
When things go wrong, He'll make them right
And the God of the good times is still God in the bad times
The God of the day is still God in the night
The God of the day, is still God in the night