

Word Pictures in the Word

The Word of God is full of “word pictures” that describe the beauty and greatness of God. Word pictures may sound archaic... Maybe an illustration, or an analogy, is better? Or, if we are thinking of Jesus, we could use a parable. Whatever you want to call them, the Lord through the writers of Sacred Scripture frequently likens Himself to an object, place, or thing... In doing so, the Spirit opens up links in our imagination that help us grow in the faith!

For example, in Psalm 125:2 we read: *“As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the LORD surrounds his people, from this time forth and forevermore.”* The psalmist illustrates the protection and power of God’s hand upon His people, to the mountains that surrounded and protected Jerusalem from foreign enemies. The LORD speaking through the prophet Isaiah said: *“As one whom his mother comforts, so I will comfort you; you shall be comforted in Jerusalem”* (Isaiah 66:13). The maternal love of a mother for her child is only second to the comforting love of God the Father for us as His children.

One of my favorite word pictures of Truth is a quadruple sequence of God’s character that is revealed in Psalm 36. We read as David once prayed: *“Your steadfast love, O LORD, extends to the heavens, your faithfulness to the clouds. Your righteousness is like the mountains of God; your judgements are like the great deep; man and beast you save, O LORD”* (5-6). Starting from the top and working down towards the bottom of bottoms. David covers the peaks of creation to describe the righteous and loving character of God. He says that God’s love, which, to quote Paul, is the greatest (1 Corinthians 13:13), extends to the heavens. And as high as the clouds are from the earth, so is the faithfulness of God. God’s righteousness is as sturdy and mighty as the mountains. And God’s judgments and wisdom are as vast as the ocean’s deepest points. With just a few strokes of the inspired pen, David brought to life the wonderful character of our God. Although we can’t see the complete picture of who God is on this earth, by using these images, we can refine our glimpse of the God of Glory.

As you read the Bible for yourself, take note of these word pictures. And put them to memory as you meditate, feast on, and grow in your knowledge of the Word of Grace. As you carry out the Gospel in your daily life, look for these real-life examples and remind yourself of who God is. And share them with others. The ocean, the mountains, the clouds above, the sun and the stars, a mother’s love and affection, the soil, the plants, you name it... There are many illustrations in the natural creation that God, our Creator, uses to reveal the supernatural transcendence of His character. And in the same breath, as good as these word pictures are, they still fall short of touching even the fringe of the train of God’s royal robe. For Isaiah 40:18 says: *“To whom then will you liken God, or what likeness will you compare with him?”* Wow... Just think and try to imagine what this means... The deepest ocean, the tallest mountain, the brightest part of the sun, the puffiest storm cloud, they are but sketches on the Creator’s canvas in comparison to the radiance and magnificence of God Himself!

May the word pictures in the Word help you better see the God of the Word!

Respect the Blood,
Dalton Mathis