

Mountains of The Bible and Their Significance (3)

As the Israelites were living in hilly and mountainous land and surrounded by other mountains and hills, e.g. Edom, Moab, Gilead, Lebanon..., the mountains imagery was a persistent component of the OT literature, especially in the book of Psalms. We can identify some mountains characteristics that qualified them to be frequently used in Biblical imagery:

1) Enormity

In Psalm 65: *"Who established the mountains by His strength, being clothed with power."* (Ps 65:6). While praising God for all His mighty power seen in His creation, mountains, with their grandeur and enormity, are included as an evidence and a testimony of God's power and strength.

2) Antiquity

Because they were an element of creation that existed since the foundation of the earth, the absoluteness of God's eternity was affirmed when compared to the relative antiquity of mountains: *"Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever You had formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, you are God."* (Ps 90:1-2).

In The OT, there was references to Wisdom. Many of those references were in the book of Proverbs. Wisdom in those references is not just a human wisdom, but referring to the Son of God, the Second Hypostasis of the Holy Trinity. That's why it was only Wisdom who can claim to be older than mountains and hills: *"The Lord possessed me at the beginning of His way, before His works of old. I have been established from everlasting, from the beginning, before there was ever an earth. When there were no depths I was brought forth, when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, Before the hills, I was brought forth"* (Prov 8:22-25).

3) Haven and Refuge

The nature of mountains qualified them to be a haven and a refuge, and as mountains consisted of rocks, God was depicted as a rock that grants refuge to His people: *"The Lord lives! Blessed be my Rock! Let God be exalted, the Rock of my salvation!"* (2 Sam 22:47); *"The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust.."* (Ps 18:2).

4) Height

The heights of mountains, along with the depths of the sea, are used to express the measurable and relative extremities of God's power and access. This imagery was depicting the judgment of God that no one can hide from: *"And though they hide themselves on top of Carmel, from there I will search and take them; though they hide from My sight at the bottom of the sea, from there I will command the serpent, and it shall bite them"* (Amos 9:3).

We can find also in the Bible a negative use of mountains' height imagery to express the pride of man who wants to challenge God's authority: *"For the day of the Lord of hosts shall come upon everything proud and lofty, upon everything lifted up, and it shall be brought low, upon all the cedars of Lebanon that are high and lifted up, and upon all the oaks of Bashan; upon all the high mountains, and upon all the hills that are lifted up"* (Isa 2:12-14).

At the end of this series about the mountains of the Bible and their significance, we would like to emphasize what the Church is teaching in her praises inspired by the Bible that all the creation is praising God, and that we should see God through His creation, even the inanimate of it.



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