

ASCENDING THE HOLY HILL OF GOD



**THE EARTH IS THE LORD'S AND THE FULLNESS THEREOF, THE
WORLD AND THOSE WHO DWELL THEREIN, FOR HE HAS FOUNDED
IT UPON THE SEAS AND ESTABLISHED IT UPON THE RIVERS.**

**WHO SHALL ASCEND THE HILL OF THE LORD? AND WHO SHALL
STAND IN HIS HOLY PLACE? HE WHO HAS CLEAN HANDS AND A
PURE HEART, WHO DOES NOT LIFT UP HIS SOUL TO WHAT IS
FALSE AND DOES NOT SWEAR DECEITFULLY.**

**HE WILL RECEIVE BLESSING FROM THE LORD AND
RIGHTEOUSNESS FROM THE GOD OF HIS SALVATION. SUCH IS
THE GENERATION OF THOSE WHO SEEK HIM, WHO SEEK THE
FACE OF THE GOD OF JACOB. SELAH**

(PSALM 24:1-6 ESV)

(I) THE TRIALS OF LIFE PREPARE OUR HEARTS TO ASCEND THE HOLY HILL AND SEE GOD ...

1. The trials of life purify our hearts and allow us to ascend the holy hill of God and see God.

- a. Job ascended the holy hill of the Lord when the LORD purified him through his trials.
- (Job 42:5 ESV) I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, **but now my eye sees you.**
 - (Matthew 5:8 ESV) **Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.**
 - (1 Timothy 1:5 ESV) The aim of our charge is love that issues **from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.**
 - (Psalm 24:3–5 ESV) **Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord? And who shall stand in his holy place? 4 He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully. 5** He will receive blessing from the Lord and righteousness from the God of his salvation.
- b. Job was one of the most godly men in the Bible.
- (Ezekiel 14:14 ESV) Even if these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, **they would deliver but their own lives by their righteousness,** declares the Lord God.
- c. In fact there was none like Job on the earth.
- (Job 1:8 ESV) And the Lord said to Satan, “Have you considered my servant Job, **that there is none like him on the earth,** a blameless and upright man, **who fears God and turns away from evil?**”
- d. But one day “there is none like me” confronted “none like him on the earth” out of the whirlwind.
- (Isaiah 46:9b–10 ESV) **I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me,** 10 declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, “**My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose.**”
 - (Job 38:1–2 ESV) Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind and said: 2 “**Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge?**”
- e. So “I am of small account” found himself before “I am God” ... and shut up.
- (Job 40:3–4 ESV) Then Job answered the LORD and said: 4 “**Behold, I am of small account; what shall I answer you? I lay my hand on my mouth.**”

2. The trials of life test the genuineness of our faith in the LORD and give us opportunity to bring praise and glory and honor to God.

- (Job 2:3 ESV) And the Lord said to Satan, “Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil? **He still holds fast his integrity, although you incited me against him to destroy him without reason.**”
- (1 Peter 1:6–7 ESV) In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, **7 so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.**

3. The testing of our faith is often a very lonely and hurtful journey.

Satan was ruthless in his attempt to discredit God by destroying Job’s faith. He isolated Job from his wife and his friends and used them to vocalize his taunting and hurtful accusations against Job.

- (Job 4:17–19 ESV) **Can mortal man be in the right before God? Can a man be pure before his Maker? 18** Even in his servants he puts no trust, **and his angels he charges with error; 19 how much more those who dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust, who are crushed like the moth.**
- (Job 11:3–6 ESV) Should your babble silence men, and when you mock, shall no one shame you? 4 **For you say, ‘My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in God’s eyes.’ 5** But oh, that God would speak and open his lips to you, 6 and that he would tell you the secrets of wisdom! For he is manifold in understanding. **Know then that God exacts of you less than your guilt deserves.**

4. Rejoicing in the trials of life produces endurance and the blessing of steadfast hope and confidence in the sure purpose of the Lord.

- (James 5:11 ESV) Behold, **we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job,** and you have seen **the purpose of the Lord,** how the Lord is **compassionate and merciful.**

- (Romans 5:3–4 ESV) Not only that, but we **rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, 4 and endurance produces character, and character produces hope.**
- (Romans 15:4 ESV) For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, **that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.**
- (2 Corinthians 6:4–8 ESV) But as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: **by great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities,** 5 beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; 6 **by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love;** 7 **by truthful speech, and the power of God;** with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; 8 **through honor and dishonor, through slander and praise.** We are treated as impostors, and yet are true.
- (Hebrews 10:36–39 ESV) **For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised.** 37 For, “Yet a little while, and the coming one will come and will not delay; 38 **but my righteous one shall live by faith, and if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him.**” 39 But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls.
- (Hebrews 12:1 ESV) Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, **and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us.**
- (Revelation 1:9 ESV) I, John, your brother and partner in the tribulation and the kingdom **and the patient endurance that are in Jesus,** was on the island called Patmos on account of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.
- See also Revelation 2:2, 2:19 and 3:10.

(II) ANY ATTEMPT TO CLIMB THE HOLY HILL IN PRIDE ENDS IN DESTRUCTION ...

5. Satan unsuccessfully attempted to ascend the holy hill to be like God and was thrown down to earth.

- (Isaiah 14:12–17 NLT) How you are fallen from heaven, O shining star, son of the morning! **You have been thrown down to the earth,** you who destroyed the nations

of the world. 13 For you said to yourself, **‘I will ascend to heaven and set my throne above God’s stars. I will preside on the mountain of the gods far away in the north. 14 I will climb to the highest heavens and be like the Most High.’** 15 Instead, you will be brought down to the place of the dead, down to its lowest depths. 16 Everyone there will stare at you and ask, **‘Can this be the one who** shook the earth and made the kingdoms of the world tremble? 17 **Is this the one who destroyed the world and made it into a wasteland? Is this** the king who demolished the world’s greatest cities and had no mercy on his prisoners?’

6. He deceived Eve with the same temptation.

- (Genesis 3:5 ESV) For God knows that **when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God,** knowing good and evil.
- a. Their eyes were opened but it was neither what was promised nor what was expected as Eve admitted she had been deceived.
 - (Genesis 3:7 ESV) **Then the eyes of both were opened,** and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.
 - (Genesis 3:13 ESV) Then the Lord God said to the woman, “What is this that you have done?” **The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”**

7. Satan’s great rage toward us is ultimately an attack on God and is best understood in the context of his failed attempt to become like God.

- (1 Peter 5:8–9 ESV) Be sober-minded; be watchful. **Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.** 9 **Resist him, firm in your faith,** knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world.
- a. The devil was thrown down from heaven because of his pride and rebellion.
- b. He will tempt us through our pride as he did Eve who failed to obey the one command she had been given.
- c. Our victory comes in resisting him by remaining firm in our faith—the sound doctrine of Scripture.
- d. The solemn duty of a pastor as he oversees the flock of God is to hold firm in the faith.

- (Titus 1:7–9 ESV) **For an overseer, as God's steward**, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, 8 but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. 9 **He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.**

e. Satan's great joy and victory would be proving that the LORD was not worthy of praise and glory and honor by destroying Job's faith.

- (Job 1:11 ESV) But stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, **and he will curse you to your face.**

(III) THE VIEW FROM THE HOLY HILL ... WHAT DOES JOB "SEE" NOW THAT HE SEES THE LORD?

8. Job now sees that the LORD—"I am God"—can do anything.

- (Job 42:2 ESV) **I know that you can do all things**, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted.
- (Jeremiah 10:6 ESV) **There is none like you, O LORD**; you are great, and your name is great in might.
- (Psalm 115:3 ESV) Our God is in the heavens; **he does all that he pleases.**
- (Psalm 135:6 ESV) **Whatever the Lord pleases, he does, in heaven and on earth, in the seas and all deeps.**
- (Daniel 4:34–35 ESV) At the end of the days I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High, and praised and honored him who lives forever, for his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom endures from generation to generation; 35 **all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, and he does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand or say to him, "What have you done?"**

9. Job now sees that no purpose of the LORD—"I am God"—could be thwarted.

Thwart ... to be impossible or to become incapable of occurring or being accomplished or dealt with.

- (Job 42:2 ESV) I know that you can do all things, **and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted.**
- (Psalm 138:7–8 ESV) **Though I walk in the midst of trouble**, you preserve my life; you stretch out your hand against the wrath of my enemies, and your right hand delivers me. 8 **The Lord will fulfill his purpose for me**; your steadfast love, O Lord, endures forever. Do not forsake the work of your hands.
- (Proverbs 16:4 ESV) **The Lord has made everything for its purpose**, even the wicked for the day of trouble.
- (Proverbs 19:21 ESV) Many are the plans in the mind of a man, **but it is the purpose of the Lord that will stand.**
- (Isaiah 14:24 ESV) The Lord of hosts has sworn: **"As I have planned, so shall it be, and as I have purposed, so shall it stand.**
- (Ephesians 1:5 ESV) He predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, **according to the purpose of his will.**
- (Ephesians 1:11 ESV) In him we have obtained an inheritance, **having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will.**

10. Job now sees that what Satan meant for great evil God works for great good for those who love God—who are called according to his purpose.

- (Romans 8:28 ESV) And we know that **for those who love God** all things work together for good, **for those who are called according to his purpose.**
- (Genesis 50:19–21 ESV) But Joseph said to them, "Do not fear, for am I in the place of God? 20 As for you, **you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive**, as they are today. 21 So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones." Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.