



The Mountains and Valleys of life

God makes us walk the valleys and hills of Israel – which is the pattern of Christ...

Intro:

On the mountain we see the glory of God, we are blessed, at peace, we say: let Christ come...:

Luke 9:28 It happened about eight days after these words that He took Peter and John and James and climbed up the mountain to pray.

29. And it happened as He prayed, that the sight of His face was changed and His clothes became shining white.

The valley is where the tired and hungry multitude is, where the work is, the sins, the sickness – where Christ is present through His grace:

Luke 9:37 It happened the next day, when they descended from the mountain, that a great multitude came to meet Him.

38. And behold, a man from the multitude cried, Master, I pray thee, yet look at my son, for he is my only child.

39. And behold, a ghost seizes him, and at once he cries; and he makes him convulse so much that he gets foam on his mouth; He barely moves away from him and mistreats him.

40. And I asked Your disciples to drive him out, but they could not.

On the same day, the apostles experience both the high of a vision of the heavenly Father and the low of the banal reality of sinful man.

Sometimes we think, can't we always stay on a high, why can't we always stand on Mount Zion with Christ? Answer: no, it's meant to be this way...God doesn't want us to stay either high or low...we must go through the mountains and the valleys, follow Christ!

Some immature thinkers keep saying, but if God exists, why do good things have to happen to good people?

Answer: we should not think that the world is a playground where for every booboo there is a band-aid. The world is a hard place and life is a struggle. The intention is that we go through our mountains and valleys and learn from them. The highest knowledge is the knowledge of God. God gives us the wisdom that leads us to repentance and reconciliation with Himself through the blood of Jesus Christ our Lord.

No “plain” life:

Don't try to stay “flat”, don't live on a plain...

Why was the gospel situated in Israel, a land of hills and valleys and plains, and not in Holland or Germany or inner Mongolia?

It's the patterns of the landscape...Israel is like walking with Jesus through the hills and valleys of life.

Do you get it?

You can see far, but the enemy can see you...gradually the plains start sinking you...you lose whatever you had...it's just levelling out. You need some change, some highs and lows...



Living without mountains and valleys, that seems to be the goal of many people in the present tense. Avoiding stress and pain and leading an easy and comfortable life...

But here's a big pitfall. Comfort leads to complacency and sin...that's our human nature...we need constant countermovement, highs, and lows to keep us busy in Christ.

Otherwise:

Philippians 3:18 For many—I have often spoken to you of them, and now say it with tears—walk as enemies of the cross of Christ.

19. Their end is perdition, their god is the belly, and their honor is in their disgrace; they invent earthly things.

20. However, our citizenship is in the heavens, from which we also expect the Savior, namely the Lord Jesus Christ,

21. Who will change our humiliated body, so that it becomes conformed to His glorified body, according to the action by which He can also submit all things to Himself.

Moses had a life of mountains and valleys.

Valleys:

Almost killed when he was born.
Had to flee in a basket on the river
Had to flee from the Pharaoh after he killed a man.
Was almost killed by the angel.
Was rejected by the people.
Was rejected by Pharaoh, ten plagues.
Golden calf and breaking of the stone tablets.
People's Revolt
Murmuring of the people
Spies in Canaan
Hitting the rock

Mountains:

Was found by the Princess of Egypt
Got a rich life as prince of Egypt.
Married Zipporah in Midian and had a son Gerson.
Burning bush
Miracles and signs in Egypt
Exodus and Passover
Wonder of the Red Sea
40 days on Mount Sinai and the stone tablets
.... what a life....!!!

Numbers 11:11 And Moses said to the LORD, Why have you done your servant harm, and why have I not found grace in your sight, that you may place the burden of all these people on me?

14. I alone cannot bear all these people, for it is too heavy for me.

Paul had a life of mountains and valleys.

Life as a high-profile Pharisee

Persecuting Christians for the Protection of the People of Israel and the Temple

Damascus experience, temporarily blind

Born again, regains sight.

Persecuted by brothers.

Jews try to kill him.

He fled from Damascus to Tarsus

Spent three years in the desert.

Had to defend himself against false brothers.

Was called for mission trips with Barnabas.

Quarrel with Barnabas over John Mark

Travel with Silas

Imprisonment in Ephesus

Shipwreck at sea near Malta

Arrival in Rome

Education in Rome

Assassinated by Emperor Nero in Rome

...what a journey...!!!

2 Corinthians 11:25 Three times I have been flogged with the rod, once I have been stoned, three times I have been shipwrecked, a whole day I have spent in the high seas.

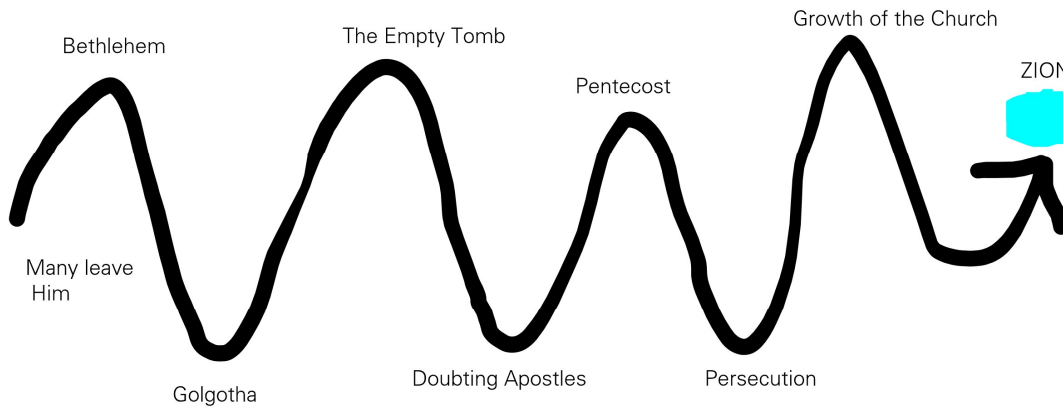
26. On my journey I was often in danger by rivers, in danger by robbers, in danger on the part of fellow-citizens, in danger on the part of pagans, in danger in the city, in danger in the desert, in danger at sea, in danger among false brethren,

27. in exertion and effort, often in nights without sleep, in hunger and thirst, often in fasting, in cold and nakedness.

28. Apart from what comes from outside, the care for all the municipalities strikes me every day.

Moses, Paul, Me, You

Ephesians 4:10 The One Who descended is also the One Who ascended far above all heavens to fulfill all things.



Christ is the only stable factor:

Do not even try to remain stable without Christ, this is doomed to fail because man cannot hold on to what he has...

*Isaiah 40:7 The grass withers, the flower falls off,
when the Spirit of the LORD blows over it.*

Verily, the people are grass.

*8. The grass withers, the flower falls off,
but the Word of our God exists forever.*

*9. Climb a high mountain,
Zion, preacher of a good message;*

raise your voice with power,

Jerusalem, preacher of a good message.

Raise it, do not be afraid.

Say to the cities of Judah:

Behold, your God!

We need to go up, on a mountain, we need a vision of God in our lives. But don't keep it in a bottle, to try to "get" it...let go, trust Jesus, walk on the contours of the landscape of your life in Christ follow the hills and valleys of Israel...

Matthew 16:25 For whoever will keep his life will lose it; but whoever will lose his life for me, he will find it.

Christ is the constant factor, the only who remains the same...

Isaiah 48:12 Listen to me, Jacob,

Israel, My Called:

I am the same, I am the First,

also I am the Last.

13. Also my hand has founded the earth,

and My right hand has stretched out heaven.

I call them,

Then they are there together.

God is the One who made the mountains and valleys, literally, the highest, the heaven, and the lowest, hell, and he is also the one who does not change.

God does not change; therefore, He is God. He does not grow old, He does not die, does not change His opinion, does not sin, does not grow stronger or weaker, his words always remain valid, etc.

Malachi 3:6 For I, the LORD, am not changed,

you, children of Jacob, therefore did not perish.

We believe that we are constantly changing, getting older, weaker, or stronger, we think differently, feel differently, live differently, nothing lasts...

Our peaks and valleys are images of the life of Christ! He ascended and descended, He is the High and the Low in our lives...

Ephesians 4:9 What does this "when He ascended" mean other than that He also first descended into the depths, namely the earth?

10. The One Who descended is also the One Who ascended far above all heavens to fulfill all things.

The death and resurrection of Christ can be seen in our own lives in the mountains and valleys in our walk with Him!

Romans 4:24 but also for the sake of us, to whom it will be imputed, namely to us who believe in Him Who raised Jesus, our Lord, from the dead,

25. Who is delivered up for our transgressions, and resurrected for our justification.

Acts 1:11 which also said, Galilean men, why are you looking up to heaven? This Jesus, Who was taken from you to heaven, will return in the same way that you have seen Him go to heaven.

Our Valleys are Christ's, He is the Lowest in our life, the Rock bottom, the Foundation

No one can go lower than Him...

God allows valleys, it is even inevitable, because it is only in the valleys that we really come to know Him and trust Him, and not in ourselves or in the world...

2 Corinthians 1:8 For we do not want, brethren, that you should not know of our tribulation, which befell us in Asia: that we have suffered extremely hard, beyond our ability, so that we despair even of our lives.

9. Yes, we had already received the death sentence itself before our own knowledge, that we might not trust in ourselves, but in God, Who raises the dead.

10. He has delivered us from such a great danger of death, and He still delivers us. In Him we have placed the hope that He will also redeem us further,

God instils in us a certain spiritual toughness and discipline in times of adversity.

Hebrews 12:10 For they have punished us for a short time according to their will, but He does so for our benefit, that we may partake of His holiness.

11. And every punishment at the moment seems not to be cause for rejoicing, but for sadness. But later it gives those who have been trained by it a peaceful fruit of justice.

Christ is our soil, our Rock, we always have our foundation on Him.

1 Corinthians 3:11 For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid is Jesus Christ.

In our weakness and in our valleys, Jesus Christ is our grace. It is in times of weakness that the grace of God is revealed

2 Corinthians 11:30 If there is to be praise, I will boast in my weakness.

31. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is to be praised forever, knows that I do not lie.

Temptations in the valleys

Satan will try to tempt us to sin and apostasy in the valleys. Therefore, the valleys were full of demonically possessed and sinners.

1 Corinthians 10:6 And these things have been done as examples for us, that we might not desire evil things, as they also desired.

7. And do not become idolaters like some of them, as it is written: The people sat down to eat and drink, and they rose to feast.

8. And let us not commit fornication, as some of them have practiced fornication, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell.

9. And let us not tempt Christ, as some of them tempted Him and perished by the serpents.

10. And mor not, as some of them have grumbled and perished by the perdition.

11. All these things now have happened to them as examples to us, and they have been described as a warning to us, about whom the end of the ages has come.

Well the bear will be gentle
And the wolves will be tame
And the lion shall lay down by the lamb, oh yes
And the beasts from the wild
Shall be led by a child
And I'll be changed, changed from this creature that I am, oh yes

There will be peace in the valley for me, some day
There will be peace in the valley for me, oh Lord I pray
There'll be no sadness, no sorrow
No trouble, trouble I see
There will be peace in the valley for me, for me

**Our mountains belong to Christ, we cannot go higher than Christ!
Christ is the alfa and omega, the lowest and the highest!**

God shows us His glory on the mountaintops of our lives. Moses indirectly saw the glory of God for 40 days, and he honoured another man through it.

On the mountains, we come to know God's glory and gain new courage and strength to keep going. It is there that God's glorious is confirmed and penetrates us.

It is on the mountains that we are filled with the Holy Spirit

The mountains are where God's glory and greatness see.

Risk on the mountains: arrogance, resignation, passivity

Revelation 3:14 And write to the angel of the church in Laodicea: This says the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the beginning of God's creation:

15. I know your works, and know that you are neither cold nor hot. If only you were cold or hot!

Think of King David. At the height of his power, he fell into a deep valley due to his affair with Bathsheba and the murder of Uriah to try to hide it... It cost him almost everything after that...

We therefore need a constant alternation of peaks and troughs in order not to fall asleep... to grow in Christ... to act...

An example of someone who could not cope with success was Solomon.

1 Kings 11:9 Therefore the LORD became angry with Solomon, because his heart had departed from the LORD, the God of Israel, Who had appeared to him twice.

10. He had commanded him not to go after other gods in this matter, but he did not keep what the LORD had commanded.

When I think of the goodness of Jesus

And all He has done for me

Oh, my soul cries out, Hallelujah!

Praise God for saving me

How can you endure the valleys?

1) Communicate with God in the valleys, Christ is there!

Philippians 4:6 Do not be anxious in anything, but let your desires be known to God in all things, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving;

7. and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

2) Keep your eyes on the heavenly promise

2 Corinthians 4:16 Therefore we do not lose heart; On the contrary, even though our outer man perishes, the inner man is renewed from day to day.

17. For our light tribulation, which is short-lived, brings about in us an all-conquering eternal weight of glory.

18. For we do not keep our eyes fixed on the things one sees, but on the things one does not see; for the things one sees are temporary, but the things one does not see are eternal.

3) Accept and endure through the power Christ gives us

Philippians 4:11 Not that I say this because of want, for I have learned to be content in the circumstances in which I find myself.

12. And I know what it is to be humiliated, I also know what it is to have abundance; in every way and in everything I am initiated, both in being satiated and in starving, both in abundance and in want.

13. All things I can handle through Christ, Who gives me strength.

4) Look for encouragement in the positive effects of the valleys, such as preaching the gospel

Philippians 1:12 And I want you to know, brethren, that what has happened to me has rather served to promote the Gospel,

13. so that it has become known throughout the courthouse and to all others that I am a prisoner for Christ's sake,

5) Exercise patience.

Hebrews 12:1 Well, then, now that we are surrounded by such a multitude of witnesses, let us also lay down all the burden and sin that so easily entangles us. And let us run with perseverance the race that lies before us,

2. while keeping our eyes on Jesus, the Guide and Finisher of the faith. He endured the cross and despised the shame for the joy he had been promised, and now sits at the right hand of the throne of God.

3. For watch him who has endured such a contradiction of sinners against himself, lest you weaken and succumb in your souls.

Although I do not agree with these activists in everything, we see that now after 150 years the Dutch government and the king have finally made excuse for their role in slavery – the elite of the time earned well from it, not the ordinary Dutch citizens. But waiting 150 years and constantly reminding people has had an effect.

Let this be a lesson for us as JA church. Our doctrine doesn't seem to land anywhere yet. But if we persist and believe that we are fighting for the truth in Christ, then one day the whole world will believe in 1 God, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

There will come a day when mountains and valleys will disappear from our lives:

And there is a deep valley for all sinners who are not in the book of life.

Revelation 20:14 And death and the realm of death were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

15. And if a man was not inscribed in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire.

The mountains and valleys are taken away from people's lives.

Isaiah 40:3 A voice of one calling

In the desert:

Prepare the way of the LORD,

Make justice in the wilderness

a beaten path for our God.

4. All valleys shall be increased,

all mountains and hills shall be lowered;

what is crooked will become straight;

what is rocky will become a plain.

5. The glory of the LORD shall be revealed,

and all flesh together shall see it,

for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

Then there is only 1 single height: Zion the new Jerusalem!

Micah 4:1 But it will come to pass in the last days

that the mountain of the house of the LORD

will stand fixed as the highest of the mountains,

and that he shall be exalted above the hills,

and that the nations will flow to it.

2. Many gentiles will set out

and say, Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,

to the house of the God of Jacob;

then he will teach us about his ways,

and we will walk His paths.

For out of Zion shall the law go forth

and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

Amen