

THE TOPOGRAPHY OF THE SOUL

Pause to think about how God condescends to speak to us in terms of our “creatureliness.” We are subject to threats and fears—He is not. We feel the pull of gravity—He does not. Many of us are claustrophobic—He is not. But He stoops and accommodates to our terrestrial topography and speaks to us in terms that we instinctively understand. The following Scriptures are worth meditating on as you navigate the steep places of this earthly life—and the dense thickets, and the slippery places, and the safe places, and the other features of your “soul topography.”

ROOM TO BREATHE

A SPACIOUS PLACE

Psalm 18:19-22, *He brought me out into a spacious place; he rescued me because he delighted in me.* ²⁰ *The LORD has dealt with me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands he has rewarded me.* ²¹ *For I have kept the ways of the LORD; I have not done evil by turning from my God.* ²² *All his laws are before me; I have not turned away from his decrees.* --**SET-UP OF THE PSALM: Psalm 18:1**, *For the director of music. Of David the servant of the LORD. He sang to the LORD the words of this song when the LORD delivered him from the hand of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul. He said: I love you, O LORD, my strength.*

PLEASANT BOUNDARY LINES

Psalm 16:6, *The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; surely I have a delightful inheritance.*

SAFETY AND SECURITY

QUIET WATERS

Psalm 23:2, *He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters...*

SLIPPERY PATH FOR ENEMIES

Psalm 35:6, *may their path be dark and slippery, with the angel of the LORD pursuing them.* --**SET-UP OF THE PSALM: Psalm 35:1**, *Of David. Contend, O LORD, with those who contend with me; fight against those who fight against me.*

A FIRM PLACE

Psalm 40:2, *He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand.*

LEVEL GROUND

Psalm 26:12 *My feet stand on level ground; in the great assembly I will praise the LORD.* --**SET-UP OF THE PSALM: Psalm 26:1**, *Of David. Vindicate me, O LORD, for I have led a blameless life; I have trusted in the LORD without wavering.*

Cf. **Isaiah 40:4**, *Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain.*

SET ON A ROCK

Psalm 27:5, *For in the day of trouble he will keep me safe in his dwelling; he will hide me in the shelter of his tabernacle and set me high upon a rock.*

Cf. **Psalm 61:2**, *From the ends of the earth I call to you, I call as my heart grows faint; lead me to the rock that is higher than I.*

Cf. **Isaiah 26:4**, *Trust in the LORD forever, for the LORD, the LORD, is the Rock eternal.*

Cf. **Matthew 7:24-25**, *"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock." ²⁵ *The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.**

CONFIDENT DIRECTION

A STRAIGHT PATH

Psalm 27:11, *Teach me your way, O LORD; lead me in a straight path because of my oppressors.*

A PATH THROUGH THE SEA

Psalm 77:19, *Your path led through the sea, your way through the mighty waters, though your footprints were not seen.* --**SET-UP OF THE PSALM: Psalm 77:1**, *For the director of music. For Jeduthun. Of Asaph. A psalm. I cried out to God for help; I cried out to God to hear me.*

THE PATH OF LIFE

Psalm 16:11, *You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.*

A BROAD PATH

Psalm 18:36, You **broaden the path** beneath me, so that my ankles do not turn.

HIGHWAY OF HOLINESS

Isaiah 35:8 And a highway will be there; it will be called the **Way of Holiness**. The unclean will not journey on it; it will be for those who walk in that Way; wicked fools will not go about on it.

Cf. **Jeremiah 31:21** "Set up road signs; put up guideposts. Take note of **the highway**, the road that you take. Return, O Virgin Israel, return to your towns.

HAZARDS AHEAD

BARREN AND HOWLING WASTE

Deuteronomy 32:10 In a desert land he found him, in a **barren and howling waste**. He shielded him and cared for him; he guarded him as the apple of his eye,

SHAKEN TOPOGRAPHY

Isaiah 54:10 Though the **mountains be shaken** and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace be removed," says the LORD, who has compassion on you.

VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF DEATH

Psalm 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.

VALLEY OF DECISION

Joel 3:14 Multitudes, multitudes in the **valley of decision!** For the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision.

THE THICKETS BY THE JORDAN

Jeremiah 12:5 "If you have raced with men on foot and they have worn you out, how can you compete with horses? If you stumble in safe country, how will you manage in **the thickets by the Jordan?**

OFF THE PATH

Lamentations 3:11 he **dragged me from the path** and mangled me and left me without help.

ESCAPING TO THE DESERT

Psalm 55:6-8 I said, "Oh, that I had the wings of a dove! I would fly away and be at rest-- ⁷ I would **flee far away and stay in the desert**; Selah ⁸ I would hurry to my place of shelter, far from the tempest and storm."

INNER REFRESHMENT

RIVER OF DELIGHTS

Psalm 36:8 They feast on the abundance of your house; you give them drink from your **river of delights**.

Cf. **Psalm 46:4** There is a **river whose streams make glad the city of God**, the holy place where the Most High dwells

Cf. **Isaiah 48:18** If only you had paid attention to my commands, **your peace would have been like a river**, your righteousness like the waves of the sea.

Isaiah 66:12 For this is what the LORD says: "I will extend **peace to her like a river**, and the wealth of nations like a flooding stream; you will nurse and be carried on her arm and dandled on her knees.

STREAMS IN THE DESERT

Isaiah 35:6-7 Water will gush forth in the wilderness and **streams in the desert**. ⁷ The burning sand will become a pool, the thirsty ground bubbling springs. In the haunts where jackals once lay, grass and reeds and papyrus will grow.

VIEW PROPERTY

HOLY HILL

Psalm 15:1 A psalm of David. LORD, who may dwell in your sanctuary? Who may live on **your holy hill?**

Timothy G. Walton
Alderwood Community Church
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