

# BACK INTO THE VALLEY

*“...the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble...” —2 CORINTHIANS 1:3-4*

There are many Christians who can reflect on the most devastating time in their lives when they had turned to God. It may have been a slow, arduous journey, but they had climbed the mountain and savoured the victory.

God often does His best work in our lives when we are in the darkest times of our lives. Our experiences of Him allow us to come to know Him more deeply and richly, a wonderful blessing in itself, but it isn't simply to get us out of a fix. It's not a, “Whew, thank You, God. Couldn't have done it without You,” and then happily be on our way.

We are not intended to remain on the mountaintop, revelling in our God-given triumph, but are meant to venture back into the valley of everyday stress and hardship, equipped and guided into service for God. Oswald Chambers writes this:

*“We have all experienced times of exaltation on the mountain, when we have seen things from God's perspective and have wanted to stay there. But God will not allow us to stay there. The true test of our spiritual life is in exhibiting the power to descend from the mountain to the valley.”*

*“If we only have the power to go up, something is wrong. It is a wonderful thing to be on the mountain with God, but a person only gets*

*there so that he may later go down and lift up the demon-possessed people in the valley.”*

*“We are not made for the mountains, for sunrises or for the beautiful attractions in life - these are simply intended to be moments of inspiration. But we are made for the valley and the ordinary things of life, and that is where we have to prove our stamina and our strength.”*

*“The times of exaltation are exceptional and they have their meaning in our life with God, but we must beware to prevent our spiritual selfishness from wanting to make them the only time.”*

To not pass on what God has given is to be like the rich man who hoarded all his money and walked away from Jesus (Luke 18:23). In our sufferings, God helps us, not so we can live happily ever after, but that we may be a source of blessing to others with the same comfort we have received from God.

***PRAYER: Dear Lord, in times of trouble, You are my strength, comfort and refuge. I pray I can pass that on, so others will come to know You for themselves. Thank You, Lord.***

***TO REFLECT UPON: Have I been able to help anyone in their time of need with the comfort I have received from Christ?***