

## Faith can move mountains

by Douglas E. Cox

When Jesus said that even a *tiny* quantity of faith could *move a mountain*, no doubt, he referred to the mountains of Israel. They were the subject of many prophecies, including the prophecy of Isaiah 40:2-5, that said all mountains will be made low, and all valleys filled, or exulted, which was a theme taken up by John the Baptist.

Jesus said:

Mark 11:22-26

And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them. And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.

Jesus was probably not speaking of moving literal mountains, but he may have meant the mountains of Israel, which are symbolic of the revelations of God, and the scriptures, and the promises of God. He indicated that in some sense, these mountains might become mobile. They may be moved around, even across oceans!

In the New Testament, one particular mountain, mount Zion, is raised up to heaven. The author of Hebrews said, "But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels." [Hebrews 12:22] It was raised up, as Isaiah had foretold, [Isaiah 2:1-3] when Jesus ascended to heaven.

The author of Hebrews demonstrated the kind of faith that moves mountains. All believers, wherever they live, have come to mount Zion or Sion. This does not require travel to Palestine. Other mountains of Israel are mobile too.

The Psalmist alluded to this mobility of the mountains in Psalm 114:4, which says, "The mountains skipped like rams, and the little hills like lambs," when Israel went out of Egypt. When lambs and rams skip, they become *airborne*.

Just as the promises, and revelations of God, went out from Egypt with the children of Israel, the promises and revelations of God apply to the *saints* in all nations, who are the citizens of the *heavenly city*.

Paul attributed *mobility* to Mount Sinai, in his epistle to the Galatians, by moving it from Arabia to Jerusalem. He applied the label *Sinai* to the earthly Jerusalem, and he applied the label *Jerusalem* to the heavenly city.

Galatians 4:22-26

For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.

During his ministry Jesus often went up into mountains to pray. He gave his sermon on the mount upon one of the mountains of Israel. It begins with several promises. Blessings are promised to the poor in spirit, they that mourn, the meek, those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, and those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake. Promises such as these are represented by "the mountains of Israel;" they apply to the saints, wherever they live on the earth. They do not need to migrate to Palestine, in order to possess these spiritual "mountains."

The promises and revelations of God, represented by the mountains and hills of the promised land, are the inheritance of those who believe in Jesus. John described the saints standing with Jesus on Mount Zion:

Revelation 14:1

And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads.

Revelation 14:4

These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.

The 144,000 are the saints, the church of the firstfruits, identified with the 12 tribes of Israel in chapter 7, who are sealed with the Spirit, and who inherit the promises.

In his Olivet Discourse, Jesus said "flee to the mountains."

Matthew 24:14-16

And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all

nations; and then shall the end come. When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains:

The mountains Jesus refers to are not literal ones, and he was not speaking of preserving one's life. Jesus said:

Luke 17:33

Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it.

When he said "flee to the mountains," Jesus meant seek the *promises* and revelations of God, which are represented by the mountains of Israel.

David said:

Psalm 36:6

Thy righteousness is like the great mountains; thy judgments are a great deep.

When he said "flee into the mountains" Jesus alluded to God's *righteousness*. Clothes represent righteousness too. Jesus said: "Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes."

Job wrote:

Job 29:14

I put on righteousness, and it clothed me: my judgment was as a robe and a diadem.

The clothing that Jesus wants his saints to have is spiritual. That's why he said don't return for our old ones.

Psalm 132:9

Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness; and let thy saints shout for joy.

The prophet Isaiah said:

Isaiah 61:10

I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.