

I Am the Great Leveler

By Connie V Scott

Just the other day, I was praying for a situation and I heard Dad (God) say, *"I'm going to bring balance to this. I will bring the high places low, raise up the valleys, make the crooked places straight, and smooth out the rough paths."* In that moment, those words from Dad spoke directly to a specific event, but as I continued to meditate upon them, I heard Him say this to me... *"Connie, I Am the Great Leveler! There is not a situation that you will walk through that I can't bring balance to. You do not have to climb mountains of circumstance. You do not have to walk through dark valleys. You do not have to go around in circles and trip over things. I Am the great Leveler and I will bring balance as you trust in Me, keep your eyes on Me, and place your hope in Me alone."*

Oh, how Dad wants to be all in all for you, His children, everyday and in every circumstance you encounter in this life! Luke 3:4-6 says, *"...As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, 'The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare you the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth; And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.'..."* Now, we know this passage in Luke is referring to the coming of Messiah Jesus, but let me break down the verse and share what Dad spoke to my heart concerning His abiding and active presence in our lives.

The Voice

Often times, people say they can't hear God speaking to them, or that He has withdrawn His voice. I'm sure at some point in our lives all of us have felt that way. I myself remember a very specific time when I couldn't feel or hear God. Out of that brief season, a song was birthed, but more importantly, the answer I needed came through the song too. The chorus and bridge go like this:

"Oh God, I'm crying out. A warrior child in doubt. Running this race on my own, way off course, feeling alone... Where are You?"

Then I retreat to a place of solitude, to worship and seek Your face. That's when I begin to hear from You, and You lift me to a higher place" (Questions, ©2004).

I've learned a vital lesson over the years... God never stops speaking! He never withdraws Himself from His beloved ones. He is always with us and He is always communicating. **The problem is never Dad, it's always us.** We are the ones who cannot hear or discern His voice! However, as we retreat to the secret place; that place where it's just you and God alone - that place where you shut off the world and press into the heart of the very Lover of your soul... Then His voice will become increasingly

more clear, because you are tuning your heart, your spirit to hear the frequency of heaven.

Dad says to you today, *"I Am the Voice you hear in the desert. I Am the Voice you hear in times of rest and times of challenge. I Am the Voice in the wind. I Am the Voice in the rain. I Am the Voice in the thunder and lightening. I Am the Voice, the still small Voice that speaks within you. I Am the Voice that speaks to you through My creation. I Am the Voice that speaks to you through a loved one or friend. I Am the Voice that echoes through all generations, through all space and time. I Am the Voice that is never silent and can never be quieted. I Am the Voice that is always speaking to you!"*

No Valley too Deep or too Dark

"Even when I walk through the darkest valley, I will not be afraid, for you are close beside me. Your rod and your staff protect and comfort me" (Psalms 23:4 NLT).

In another translation it says, *"even though I walk through death's dark valley, I'm not afraid because you've already been this way before."* Beloved, there is no valley we will ever face on this side of eternity that is too deep or too dark for God. Jesus, our Savior, Lord, and King has already walked that path, and darkness can't overtake the Light of the World!

A while back, I was meditating on this passage of scripture and Dad revealed some powerful truths. He showed me that light will always disperse the darkness, and in reality (Dad's perspective), **that dark valley of death is simply a shadow.** Sure, we may encounter challenges that seem larger than we can endure on our own, but the awesome promise of God is this - He will never leave you or forsake you (Deut 31:8). The One who knows the way, because He has walked that path before is with you and will protect you always. I like to picture it this way... What we have our eyes fixed on - that thing that is in front of us will cast a shadow upon us. We can follow the circumstances and things of this world, and we will walk into valleys of death, or we can fix our eyes on Jesus! When we do this, we know the glory of the Lord is shining upon Jesus and since He goes before us, that Light casts a shadow. We have nothing to fear when we are standing in the Shadow of the Almighty!

Today, Dad says, *"Rise up. Do not be afraid. Some say there is great darkness increasing, but I say there is greater light being released into the earth. Your time to arise and shine is now! Keep your eyes fixed on me. Do not turn to the right or to the left, but look straight ahead and shine as I shine, and the darkness will flee."*

Dancing on Mountains

Song of Solomon 2:8-10 says, "Ah, I hear my lover coming! He is leaping over the mountains, bounding over the hills. My lover is like a swift gazelle or a young stag."

Look, there he is behind the wall, looking through the window, peering into the room. My lover said to me, 'Rise up, my darling! Come away with me, my fair one!...'"

All of Song of Solomon speaks of Jesus' desire for His bride... Us! In the passage above, He is overcoming mountains of circumstance, and invites us to scale the mountains with Him. He is likened to a swift gazelle and a young stag. Have you ever seen a ram, a mountain goat, an antelope, or even a deer climb up a mountain? It is effortless for them. And, it doesn't seem to matter how steep that mountain is or how small the path may be, because they are sure-footed and know the way.

Remember, Dad said that we would not have to climb the mountains of circumstance! I can hear people reading this say, "Are you saying we won't have problems?" Of course I'm not suggesting that we will go through life without problems, however, I am saying that when we lean on Jesus and trust Him alone, then no matter what "mountain" comes our way, we will be sure-footed.

A Straight Smooth Path

Psalm 37:23 (NLT) says, *"The Lord directs the steps of the godly. He delights in every detail of their lives."*

As we walk through this thing called life, we will face obstacles (John 16:33), but Jesus tells us to not fear, because He has overcome! **God delights in you!** Do you believe that? He has your best interest in mind and He is only good! So, no matter what we may encounter, His desire is for us to walk on straight smooth paths.

The children of Israel walked in the desert for forty years, when scholars suggest that it was only about a two week journey to the promised land. Did God cause them to walk in circles? NO! However, they ended up walking crooked and bumpy routes, over hills and through valleys because of doubt, fear, and bad choices along the way. They didn't take Dad at His word and in doing so found themselves in some rough terrain.

Dad says, *"My word is still a lamp to your feet and a light to your path. I will illuminate every step for you. I will place you on the highway through the desert. You will not stumble. You will not falter, because I Am the Light of the world. My Light is in you, upon you, and will shine through you. I will bring great balance as you learn of Me and trust My words."*

The Great Leveler

Our Daddy God is the great leveler and He is filling in the gaps! Fix your eyes on Him today. Press into His heart and you will hear His voice directing your steps. When the storms of life come along, trust Him completely, because His promise is still for you today! *"Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low:*

and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the LORD has spoken it" (Isaiah 40:3-5). You will experience the salvation of our God, and His glory will be revealed to the world as you allow Him to be the great leveler in your lives today!

Don't Build an Altar, Take a Stone!

By Connie V Scott

Many people live their lives in the past. They had an encounter with God at one time in their lives and the experience was so profound that they stopped right there and lived in that moment as long as possible, many times way beyond what God intended. They built an altar, a permanent structure to memorialize the event.

In the Old Testament, the children of Israel were led through the wilderness for forty years. Scripture tells us that they had a cloud by day and a fire by night (Exodus 13:21). God told them to build a tabernacle in the desert, a place the Ark of the Covenant (the very presence of God) could rest. This tabernacle was not a permanent structure, but a large mobile one. Moses would go in and speak with God and get direction and directive for these three million people he was leading through the wilderness. He was instructed to follow the cloud of the presence of God. When the cloud lifted, the children of Israel were to take up their tents and move with God (Number 9:22).

God is always forward motion. He may allow us to settle for a short time. In that time, we may get rest, revelation, and further clarification of the journey ahead. Then, God moves. It is in that moment that we are presented with a choice. We can stand and get in the flow of what God is doing; moving forward with Him, or we can pitch our tents, build an altar, and stay in that place.

Don't get me wrong, God wants us to remember the things He does in us. Our encounters with Him are vital to our lives in Christ. The revelation you receive from God is invaluable. It is these events that shape who we are. We should treasure the moments, as they create a testimony of God's goodness! At times, God has us build an altar to that encounter with Him. He wants us to rest in that moment and never forget what He had done. Our salvation experiences should be altars in our lives. We should go back often and give an offering of praise and adoration to God for awakening our spirits to the reality of Jesus Christ.

However, most of the time, God does not want us to camp out on that mountain top experience. Instead of building an altar, He simply wants us to take a stone! What does that mean? God wants us to take the memory with us, allow it to do the work in us that it was meant for, and continue onto the next thing He has in store. We learn the lesson and then continue in the flow of what God is doing in the now.

"Look to the here and now, through which all future plunges into past" (Yates). God is eternally now and wants us to live this day to its fullest! We can't stall out trying to relive the awesome moments of the past, nor can we be consumed with what may be coming. *"This is the day The Lord had made, I will rejoice and be glad in it"* (Psalm 118:24). Live for today, fully abandoned to what God has for you today.

Matthew 6:28-34 says, *“And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”* We are called to live from our position in heaven and God only lives in the now. As we press into His heart today, then He will prepare us for the “tomorrows” of our lives. And when you face tomorrow, know that it is already today!

Daddy God has great "ah-ha" moments, great encounters with His Spirit, and revelation that He desires to drop into your heart! When those moments in your life come, don't halt your lives! Don't be too eager to build an altar and stay in that place the rest of your life, because God has so much in store for you. He wants to impart His heart into you, so you can reach those who've yet to encounter Him themselves. So, learn all you can from that encounter, grab a stone, and live full on for Jesus.

Those Who Have an Ear to Hear

By Connie V. Scott

www.vohministries.org

God speaks! Not too many will argue with that statement. The first account of Dad speaking is in verse one of Genesis one... **“And God said...”** Throughout scripture we read of the accounts of God speaking to His people. In the Old Testament, He spoke through His prophets, priests, and kings. At times, He spoke through fire, wind, cloud, and rain. He even spoke through an animal. In the New Testament, He spoke through Jesus, the apostles, prophets and prophetesses, and through Holy Spirit. **The fact is God is always speaking!**

Even though we do not doubt that Dad is always speaking, we certainly doubt whether He is speaking to us. Just the other day, while I was driving the 85 mile route back to my house from my teaching job, I kept hearing one phrase over and over in my spirit. **“Let those with an ear hear. Let those with an ear hear. Let those with an ear hear what I Am saying.”** I meditated on this as I drove that day and Dad downloaded some amazing truth to me about His character. I shared this encounter with my ministry partner Kym and she replied by saying, **“LISTEN.”**

Beloved, as simple as it may sound, that is the very KEY that Holy Spirit was speaking to me. **“Let those who have an ear hear what I Am saying. Let those who will - LISTEN to what I Am saying.”** Dad is always speaking to us, always answering our questions, always pursuing us to inquire of Him, but we aren't always listening. All too often the noise of this world is drowning out His voice. We need to **“come away with Him”** (Mark 6:31 & Song of Solomon 2:10). We need to start listening!



I believe we can learn a great deal from the Chinese character for **“Listening”**. As you can see in the picture, it encompasses our ear, eye, undivided attention, heart, and the KING. We see that listening is much more than simply hearing something, even though we often think the two are synonymous. In order to really **“hear”** what God is speaking to us, every part of our being must be involved. We must **“incline our ears”** (Isaiah 55:3a) to hear His voice. We must set

our gaze upon Him with single vision (**Matthew 6:22**)... division = dual vision = double vision. ***“Pay attention! Listen to what I have to say; Pay attention, and hear my speech” (Isaiah 28:23 ISV).*** As we set ourselves to Listen, Dad must have our undivided attention and our whole heart. The last part of this Chinese character is the King. In **John 15:5**, Jesus says, ***“I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.”*** Apart from the King of kings, we will not hear Him, and we should not expect to.

Over the years, I have heard so many people give many explanations as to why they don't believe God is speaking to them. Most of these reasons (if not all) are in stark contrast to the character and nature of our Daddy God. This leads me to believe one of several things: first, people don't really know Him; second, they are angry at Him because of the circumstances of life; or third, they won't quiet themselves long enough to hear Him speak. Unfortunately, often it is all three of these things muffling and deadening our Father's voice in our lives.

Psalm 46:10 says, ***“Be still, and know that I am God...”*** I once heard this verse like this..

“Be still and know that I AM!”

“Be still and know...”

“Be still...”

“Be...”

Be is the beginning of listening! Until we can **BE**, I do not believe we will hear Dad's voice with clarity. ***“For thus the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel, has said, “In repentance and rest you will be saved, in quietness and trust is your strength.” But you were not willing...” (Isaiah 30:15).*** Change your thinking and trust Dad! Learn to rest, to abide in Him and He will teach you how He speaks to you personally. ***“My sheep know My voice...” (John 10:27).***

I know we all have busy lives. We have family obligations, work obligation, church obligation, and so on; but there is one thing that is true for each and every one of us – we each have 24 hours in a day and we will spend our time, attention, and resources on that which is important to us. If you aren't hearing Him speak to you, perhaps you need to set aside some time to simply ***“BE”*** in His presence. It is worth the time!

There are times when Dad will draw us away to the wilderness. Oh, but we have a wrong perception of what the wilderness looks like and its purpose. ***“Therefore, behold, I will allure her, will bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfort to her. I will give her her vineyards from there, and the Valley of Achor (trouble) as a door of hope; She shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, as in the day when she came up from the land of Egypt” (Hosea 2:14-15).*** You see, Dad does not take us to a desolate place (*wilderness*) to leave us out there in silence. He allures us to the wilderness – wide open places – so that He can speak to us! It is in this place, with Him that He will give us vineyards; places of fruitfulness as we listen to His comforting voice. But, when we have the wrong idea of what He is doing, it automatically closes our eyes, ears, and hearts to hear Him, thus the wilderness is a lonely quiet place, where He isn't speaking to us.

Let's get His eyes and heart on this: ***“I will lead you beside still waters and give you rest in green pastures” (Psalm 23).*** This is the wilderness to our Father; an expanse of lush land; a

place where He can have you all to Himself, in quietness and peace, and speak to you! It is in this place where He restores us, strengthens us, and gives us direction and hope. He can't do that if we are unwilling to be where His is.

Our Father is always speaking to you! Are you hearing Him? Are you listening? I encourage you today to stop for a moment and simply **“Be”**. Quiet yourself in His presence and ask Him to speak to you. You may not always hear what you want to hear, but I promise if you are really seeking – really listening, you will hear His voice! What He has to say is what you need to hear, and it is always good!

“Let those who have an ear hear what the Spirit is saying to you! LISTEN!”

I Will Seek Your Face: 31 Days of Knowing God By Name

by Connie V. Scott

Day 3 - Abba - Father

For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." Romans 8:15

Close your eyes for a few moments and think back to your childhood and the relationship you had with your father. When I think back to my childhood, I have fond memories of spending time with my dad. I recall playing football in the front yard of our house in California. I remember the two story playhouse he built us, because there were no trees in the yard. I even remember him running beside me as I was learning to ride my bike. But, the most powerful memory I have of my father was the day he jumped into my grandmother's pond, fully clothed to save my life. I have amazing memories of the love my dad has shown throughout the years, but I know not everyone has had such warm memories.

Oftentimes, our earthly relationships shape our heavenly perspectives. We see God through the experiences and filters developed by the relationships we've had with our own fathers. If our interactions were healthy, then our perceptions of God is more positive, but if *dad* wasn't quite all he could have been, we tend to see God in similar light. One thing I've learned about my Father in heaven is that His love for me far exceeds any love and kindness I have known from my earthly father.

By all rights, we don't deserve such goodness. However, through Jesus, we have been adopted into the family of God. He chose us and will never let us go! His love is not dependent upon our works or goodness, because His love is constant and never-ending. There is nothing you or I can do to make Him love us any more than He does today. Regardless of our earthly relationships, we can know God as Abba - Daddy or Papa God. Abba wants us to know Him intimately. His desire is for us to cry out to Him when we fall down, and jump on His lap and tell Him our secrets. Papa wants to play hide and seek with us and He'll even let us win from time to time. He'll protect, guide, and comfort us. He'll sing over us, rejoice with us. Abba is the best Dad we could ever have, and He calls us His own.

Prayer: Abba, today I am truly thankful I've been adopted into Your family. You've chosen me and I choose You. No matter how my relationship was and is with my earthly father, I ask You to show me a right view of You as my Daddy, my Abba. Where there are *father wounds* in my life, I ask You to heal my heart and bring restoration to my life. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

I Will Seek Your Face: 31 Days of Worship & Praise

by Connie V Scott

Day 29

"As the deer pants for the water brooks, so pants my soul for You, O God." Psalm 42:1

We live in a day and age where people are thirsty for many things. Some thirst for success and wealth, while others pant for love and acceptance. Regardless of the desire, many will give all they have simply to quench that thirst. What do you hunger and thirst for? In the verse above, we are told to thirst and pant for the water just like the deer. However, in order to really understand the significance of this verse, you need to know a little bit more about the deer. You see this was not an animal that was casually walking through the field in order to take a drink. Picture this - it is a beautiful day, as the sun is shining and the skies are clear. The deer is feeding contently in the field, when the lion rushes from its hiding place to capture its prey. Sensing that something is not quite right, the deer begins to run. It knows if it can make it to the river and run in the water, the lion will lose its scent. Running as fast as it can, the deer finally reaches the water and begins to run up stream until the lion is gone. Panting, the deer drinks of the water and rests in the green grasses next to the river. Do we long for the presence of God like that deer for the rivers of water? It was life or death for the deer. Do we consider our time with God to be life or death to our spirits? Is there an enemy who has your scent? God is there to protect you. Are you thirsty for more? God is there to satisfy (Matthew 5:6)! Run into His loving arms and be immersed in His very presence.

Father, You are the living water that will satisfy our longing souls. Today, we come to drink deeply of Your presence, Your love and Your grace. As we saturate ourselves in You today, may our lives cause a thirst in others. In Jesus' Name, Amen.