Encouragement

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Good Morning Friend,

The seas have lifted up, O Lord, the seas have lifted up their voice;
The seas have lifted up their pounding waves.
Mightier than the thunder of the great waters,
Mightier than the breakers of the sea –
The Lord on high is mighty. Psalms 93:3-4

This text of Scripture is on a bronze plaque on a rock at the Willowbank Resort in Bermuda. It is on a grassy hill overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. As we read the plaque, we not only saw the mighty waves but we heard them thundering at the ocean's edge.

The hurricane season of 2004 has been vicious. Three hurricanes struck Florida in a twenty-two day period. They have brought considerable damage to the southeastern parts of the United States. Other countries also experienced its fury. I ministered on Abaco Island, the Bahamas, this past weekend. I preached in Marsh Harbor, which was brutally battered by Hurricane Jeanne, just weeks before I arrived. The storm had sustained winds of 115 miles per hour. The winds caused storm surges along the coast-lines. Many spoke of the huge twenty foot wave that left many homes and businesses with 3-5 feet of water in their homes, occasionally accompanied by a foot of mud. Hundreds of homes lost roofs. Many homes were totally flattened. Yachts banged into each other, pushing many of them into the streets of the city. One harbor lost twenty yachts. They found pieces of three of them. The other seventeen are gone without any indication of what happened to them, assuming that they are buried at sea. The shorelines have experienced severe erosion. All utilities were down for various periods of time before restoration.

Indeed we witnessed what the Psalmist wrote about in Psalm 93. Perhaps the Psalmist knew about storm surges when he mentioned three times that *the seas were lifted up.* That is exactly what happens in a hurricane when the winds blow into the depths of the waters and lift them up. I observed this in Florida during a hurricane several years ago.

The winds and waves are mighty. We are helpless as we simply watch them unfold their fury and damage. The psalmist speaks of their *might*. Then he speaks of something, better Someone, who is mightier yet and uses that word *mighty* three times in describing the might of the Lord. His might is expressed and demonstrated throughout the Scriptures. One of His names in the Old Testament is *El Shaddai*, meaning the Almighty One. Omnipotence belongs to Him alone.

Let's take another look at the bronze plaque in Bermuda. Beneath the Scripture verses on the plaque, this phrase appears . . . GOD IS ALWAYS GREATER THAN ALL OUR TROUBLES. Here's the big question. How does God's power deal with us in our times of trouble? As I study Scripture it appears that He uses His power in one of two ways.

> [1.] Sometimes He uses His power to remove our problems. Not always . . . but sometimes. Sometimes He uses His power <u>to change us in circumstances that do not change</u>. When Paul asked for God to release His power to remove his *thorn in the flesh*, God intervened by changing him without changing his circumstances.

God's power is dispersed in accordance with His sovereignty. He will always do what is ultimately best. Are you finding this to be true?

Be encouraged,

Lareau Lindquist