



“ARE YOU ON TOP OF THINGS?”

By Mary Mayko

Ps.91:4 “He shall cover thee with his feathers and under his wings shall thou trust: is truth shall be thy shield and buckler.”

Ps.17:8 “Keep me as the apple of the eye; hide me under the shadow of thy wings.”

When we are faced with difficulties and oppressions in life, we often hear the phrase “I just *have* to get on top of this problem!” This usually means things are way out of control from our viewpoint! Another saying is, “Under these circumstances, I guess I am doing okay”. This also reveals that “out of control” feeling! When this happens, fear tries to take over! We wonder how will all this end, what will the results be?

Does the Lord really want us to get on top of everything? It seems we want to do anything we can to get away from the hard things in our lives. Is this God’s Promise? A careful look at the Word shows us time and again, the answer is not *around* the problem, it is not *being on top of it*, and we are *not to be underneath* the problem, so just what it is He expects of us? What we really need is to be under His protection! Under His wings, we can rest under His covering!

There is a wonderful and revealing statement made in Isaiah 43:2

“When you go through deep waters and great trouble, I will be with you. When you go through rivers of difficulty, you will not drown! When you walk through the fire of oppression, you will not be burned up- the flames will not consume you.”

Look again! “*When you go through*” “*Great troubles*” “*Difficulties*” “*Oppression*”!

The Promise in this Passage is that we *will go through* these kinds of problems in our lives. He did not say we could go over them, be under them, or go around them! More than the knowledge that this is part of life is the Promise that *He will be with us*! He does not expect us to handle the heartaches alone!

In Isaiah 43:1 the Lord tells us not to be afraid, yet that seems to be the first reaction many have in the midst of dreadful situations. We need to get our head and heart in line with His Promises! Joshua was a man who understood what it was to face many difficult days as he walked with Moses through the Wilderness all those forty years! When the twelve spies were sent out, only Joshua and Caleb believed the Lord would keep His Promise to bring them into the good land! When people walk in fear, they not only cause themselves sorrow, but they hinder those who trust the Lord to bring them through safely! In Joshua 1 we see the Lord reaffirming His Promises to Joshua. Jos.1:9 “Have I not

commanded thee? Be strong and of good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord they God is with thee whithersoever thou goes.”

Was Joshua going to walk around or go over the top of all the problems of following God’s commands? Certainly not! But He had the assurance of God’s Presence in what he was facing! What about us? We say we trust in the Lord with all our heart. We can quote many verses containing the promises of God! Have we fully believed He will go with us through our times of oppressions and hardships? Have we said to ourselves, “What time I am afraid, I will trust in Him?” (Ps.56:3) To say we are never afraid of anything or at anytime is not being truthful! There are dangers out there! But when we *are* afraid, call upon His Name! He will walk us through those fearsome times!

“Amid fears and confusion, and awesome grief, The Light of the Lord brings sweet relief! When dangers surround us and fill our hearts with fear, God’s Presence brings peace as His Promises are made quite clear!”

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“GOD’S HANDKERCHIEF”

By Mary Mayko



Ps.56:8a LB “You have collected all my tears and preserved them in a bottle. You have recorded every one in Your Book.”

Tears are flowing like rivers, soaking your pillow at night! There you are, tossing and turning all night long! When sleep does come, it is restless and full of disturbing dreams! Your heart is simply overwhelmed! What a sad and fearful thing to have your reputation attacked and doubts planted in the minds of others!

False accusations! You have just been accused of wrong doing! Your reputation is at stake! People you know meet you with a glare in their eye or turn away from you! You have been pronounced guilty without the facts being made known to them! Did the accuser misunderstand something you said or did? You know in your heart you have been falsely judged! You are innocent, yet the rumors fly!

Your heart cries out to the LORD! Sleep does not come easily! In the night seasons, the Lord reminds you of Psalm 56:3-5 NIV “When I am afraid, I will trust in you. In God, whose word I praise, In God I trust. I will not be afraid. What can mortal man do to me? All day long they twist my words; they are always plotting to harm me.” The Lord reminds me that when I am afraid I can call upon His Name! He knows my heart and brings me comfort. Our prayers ascend into the heavens like a sweet perfume before our Lord!

The heart is quieting down now, as a renewal of scripture verses begin to flood your soul! Psalm 56:8a “You have collected all my tears and preserved them in a bottle. You have recorded every one in Your Book.” How amazing! The LORD collects our tears and saves them in a bottle! Why? I believe He turns all those tears into precious pearls! He keeps a record of our lives and writes all the details in His Book. He knows when we are treated unfairly and promises to take care of those charges in His proper time. Rom.8:33 “Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies.”

When He wipes our tears with His handkerchief, it never gets wet! As He touches those tears they are turned into precious pearls and beautiful stones! Some day He will place all our jewels in a royal crown that we will lay at His feet! All our tears and sorrows will be turned into jewels of joy! Psalm 126:5-6 LB “Those who sow tears shall reap joy. Yes, they go out weeping, carrying seeds for sowing, and they return singing, carrying their sheaves.”

God is a Collector! Our tears in a bottle, and our prayers in golden vials!

Rev. 5:8b LB “The twenty four Elders fell down before the Lamb, each with a harp and golden vials filled with incense, the prayers of God’s people!

“TEARS AND TREASURES”

By Mary Mayko

**Tears in a bottle that our Lord calls His own,
He’ll make into jewels that celebrate His throne.
For Heaven is filled with treasures so grand**

He's making for us with His very own hand

**So trust Him with your tears without any shame
And tell Him your sorrows as you call out His Name.
He listens intently to all our cries and comforts our soul
Until we come and rest in His presence, for that is our goal!**

**“Life's journey has seasons of sorrows as well as sunshine,
And many tears may fall today, breaking this heart of mine!
God wipes them with His handkerchief to comfort and ease my pain.
He strengthens my heart with joy and stops the falling rain!**

**We are reminded of Your Promises in our times of groaning,
Weeping only lasts the night and joy comes in the morning!
One day there will be no more sad tears or fearful cries,
For God will use His handkerchief to dry them from our eyes!**

**“Dear Lord, Thank You for being my comfort and defender! Turn my tears into
jewels of joy as I trust in You, even in my times of fear and pain! Amen!”**

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“IN GOD’S WORKSHOP”

By Rev. J.K. Golding



Phil 1:6 “Being confident of this one thing, He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.”

When God takes charge of a life, He begins a process which will make it valuable and useful to Him. That life becomes beautiful to those who see it. They even marvel at the change!

As an upholsterer, it is my job to take an old worn out chair which no longer has value or use and change it into one of beauty and service. This involves a process. The process begins as the chair is entrusted to my judgment and work. I sit for awhile and examine it, and wonder how it got in this condition, all torn and dirty, even broken and wobbly. Certainly, this chair is of no use the way it is! It really is a challenge but I know I can handle it. I know just where to begin. I reach into my toolbox and pull out just the right tool, *a ripping chisel!*

The process begins as I dismantle the chair. If the owner was present he would quickly stop me saying, “No! I want you to fix it!” I would reply, “I am fixing it! It has to be done this way or the work would never last. Trust me. I know what the chair needs. First I have to remove all the old dirty and ugly material to inspect what is underneath! It would not do to add new fabric to a broken frame or weak springs!”

After I’ve ripped the chair all apart, I check for necessary repairs. The process continues as I repair the chair. It takes a bit of glue and the pressure of Bar Clamps to repair the weak and broken frame. The process is complete as I restore the chair. New fabric and a few finishing touches and the chair looks and feels like brand new!

God’s process in changing our life is very similar to the process an upholsterer uses. First, He will tear down all your old ways and remove all the dirty, ugly, and useless things in your life. The assault on your life will feel like He is tearing your heart out! You will feel like you are losing everything! Just remember, He is the Professional! Trust Him to do the job right!

He will remove all your crutches so you will learn to lean only on Him. He will remove all your walls, that He might be your only defense, your only protection. He will not leave a thing that is not like Him. Only trust Him to do the work. His creation will be perfect if you do not prevent Him from working in your life. Be assured! He is able to bring the work to completion. He will not leave you stripped, alone and empty!

He will continue the process and repair the damage He finds. Our hurts and pain, all that we have gone through that makes us the way we are, these are the things He seeks to heal and mend. He knows how serious the damage and just how to repair it. It took many years of hardship to get us the way we are, and it will take time to heal. Gently and tenderly He works on us with the glue of love and the pressure of the Holy Spirit.

God's dealing sometimes makes us uncomfortable and the suffering may last for a time but it will make you strong. There are no shortcuts, but in the hands of a professional, we have the assurance He knows how much we can stand and He will apply just the right amount of pressure to make us strong, but will not break us!

It is at this point in my upholstery work that if someone happens into my shop and sees my work, they are totally unimpressed! Nobody appreciates the progress but me! Only God sees you and realizes how far you have actually come. We must not be discouraged by people. It doesn't matter what they think! It is God's work in us and causes His joy over our progress.

The real beauty starts at the end of the process of restoration. When God has finished with a vessel, it is truly a vessel of honor! He gives us beauty for ashes and oil of joy for mourning, a garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; and there is great rejoicing for the wonderful change He has made. The process is long and hard, but the results are certainly worth it!

It doesn't matter what condition we are in, how far gone we are or the process we are. Submit to His work and see what great and mighty things He will do. His work may be different and varied from "*chair to chair*" but allow Him to do it, He is the Professional!

Step through the door of God's little shop by falling on your knees in His Presence. Ask Him to change you into that beautiful vessel you could and should be! For as you commit your life, you will be able to sing: "Something beautiful, something good, all my confusion, He understood. All I had to offer Him was brokenness and strife, but He made something, beautiful of my life."

Written by Rev. J. K. Golding

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