

STRONG BULLS OF BASHAN HAVE HEDGED ME IN

Psalm 22 is a prophetic psalm concerning the suffering and death of our Savior, YAHSHUA. Verse twelve is of great significance for us to understand the meaning of the phrase "Strong bulls of Bashan have hedged Me in." It requires us to know a piece of history of its past and why this prophecy included the mountain of Bashan in YAHSHUA'S trials. Mount Hermon, a well-known mountain, is identified with Mount Bashan, for it forms the northern border of the region of Bashan, a geographical reality found in Psalm 68:15-17: "Is Mount Bashan the high mountain of summits, Mount Bashan [east of the Jordan] the mount of God? Why do you look with grudging and envy, you many-peaked mountains, at the mountain which God has desired for His dwelling place? Yes, the Lord will dwell in it forever."

Psalm 22 is a prophetic description of the sufferings of our Savior to take place many years later. You see, the atonement of mankind was in YAHWEH'S mind from the foundation of the world. The Old Testament pictures this event in various passages of its prophetic pages. Genesis 3:15: "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her Offspring (Seed YAHSHUA); He will bruise and tread your head underfoot, and you will lie in wait and bruise His heel;" Psalm 22; Isaiah 52:14-15; Isaiah 53. In Psalm 22:12-13 the psalmist uses the bulls of Bashan as YAHSHUA'S foes coming to attack Him: He says, "Many bulls have surrounded me; strong bulls of Bashan have hedged me in. *Against me they opened their mouths wide, like a ravening and roaring lion.*" Prophecy from Moses concerning the tribe of Dan connects to the word of the Psalm 22:12-13. He said of Dan: "Dan is a lion's whelp that leaps forth from Bashan" (Deut. 33:22). The Psalmist uses the term "a ravening and roaring lion." Before the death of Jacob, he said this of Dan: "Dan shall be a serpent by the way, a horned snake in the path that bite at the horse's heels, so that his rider falls backward..." (Gen. 49:17). That's what Dan became and will become in the frame of time. In the book of Judges chapter 18, we read the idolatrous acts of Dan's tribe's idolatry. Separated from God through their rebellious and unfaithful ways, this tribe is excluded from the 144 thousand to be chosen and sealed for their protection in the tribulation time, as they become God's messengers of the Gospel.

History tells us through the book of Enock that the mountain of Bashan and mount Hermon were places for spiritual evil, in particular the Watches- fallen angels. These mountains constituted the places where the giants chose to dwell and there they engaged with women. "There were giants on the earth in those days – and also afterward- when the sons of God lived with the daughters of men, and they bore children to them. These were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown" (Gen. 6:4).

Because geography was overlooked concerning the events of our Lord's ministry, we have missed the impact and understanding of YAHSHUA'S message related to the region and its background history. The event mentioned by Matthew chapter 16:13-20 took place in Caesarea Philippi, a city situated in the northern part of Bashan, which is at the foot of Mount Hermon.

Mount Hermon stands at nine thousand feet; the tallest peak in Israel. It was there that YAHSHUA asked the disciples the question, "Who do people say that I am? They answered, some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets. He said to them, but who do you say that I am? Simon Peter replied, You are the Christ, the Son of the living God... And I tell you, you are Peter – [Greek Petros – a large piece of rock], and on this rock [Greek, Petra – a huge rock like Gibraltar] I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it." YAHSHUA was the Rock Himself. The Rock where the foundation of the church was established. Why do you think YAHSHUA chose that mount to ask the disciples this question? It has a very significant reason we must know to understand why. According to Dr. Michael S. Heiser Mount Hermon was the place which the Watchers (fallen angels) bound themselves with an oath to corrupt humanity. The book of Enoch describes the deeds, connecting with Gen. 6:1-4: It reads: "And when the sons of men had multiplied, in those days, beautiful and comely daughters were born to them. And the watchers, the sons of heaven, (fallen angels) saw them and desired them. And they said to one another, "Come, let's us beget for ourselves children." (1 Enoch 6). This was a region of spiritual warfare, as we notice in the words and actions of our Savior. It was there, where Peter declared YAHSHUA to be the Son of God. "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God..." in the entire region of Bashan, which had its association with giants and evil spirits according to Genesis and 1 Enoch.

Days later, "YAHSHUA took with Him Peter, James and John his brother and led them up on a high mountain by themselves and His appearance underwent a change in their presence; and His face shone clear and bright like the sun, and His clothing became as white as light and behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, (representing the Law and the Prophets) who kept talking with" Him (Matt. 17:1-3). Mount Hermon was possibly the mount, where that took place; the place where the fallen angels had taken possession. It was without a doubt, a region of spiritual warfare. "The gates of hell" that that mount represented stood rebuked and powerless before the presence and words of YAHSHUA. "He went to ground zero in biblical demonic geography to announce that Bashan will be defeated. It is the gates of hell that are under assault and they will not prevail against the church. Hell has no claim on those who align themselves with Jesus. He will reverse the curse of death and His own will rise on account of Him." (Dr. Michael S. Heiser). "God will swallow up death. And the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces..." (Isa.25:8a); Paul asks the question, "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?... And when this perishable puts on the imperishable and this that was capable of dying puts on freedom from death, there shall be fulfilled the Scripture that says, Death is swallowed up in and unto victory. But thanks be to God, Who gives us the victory through our Lord YAHSHUA Messiah" (I Cor. 15: 54,57).

When YAHSHUA went up the mount with His three disciples, heaven opened up and Moses and Elijah appeared to discuss concerning His death and resurrection; YAHSHUA was transfigured; God spoke through a shining cloud accompanied by His voice: "THIS IS MY SON; MY BELOVED, WITH WHOM I AM DELIGHTED. LISTEN TO HIM" (Matt. 17:5). God's voice resounded loudly and clearly, declaring YAHSHUA to be His Son to those on earth and to those under the earth, while taking possession of Mount Hermon -Bashan "the gates of hell." "When YAHSHUA will be highly exalted and every knee will bow in heaven and on earth and **under the earth**, and every tongue

confess and acknowledge that YAHSHUA Messiah is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil. 2:9-11), the world of Satan and his demons will be closed in a lake of fire. Death will be no more, for YAHSHUA’S blood forgave and freed us from Satan’s power of eternal death.

Reference: Reversing Hermon, by Dr. Michael S. Heiser, Defender Publishing