

Mount Angeles



On a clear June morning a young man named James Hoskins climbed to the top of Mount Angeles. There he had an unobstructed view of some of the most beautiful scenery in North America. To the north, many miles away, he saw a long band of water known as the Strait of Juan de Fuca. Across the water he could see the dark green hills and mist shrouded mountains of Vancouver Island. To the west, south and east from this vantage point he could see the encircling jagged blue peaks of the Olympic Mountains.

Another man and his stepchildren had also hiked up Mount Angeles that morning. Although they were strangers, they asked James to snap their photo. In return they clicked a photograph of him and told him they would send it to him. In the photo James is straddling the tilted, jagged volcanic rock that forms the peak of the mountain. A deep valley, thickly overgrown with hemlock and Douglas firs, seems to be just one step behind him and, yet a greater distance in the background, a line of snowcapped mountains reaches up into the sky.

When James headed down the mountainside, he mistakenly turned off the main trail onto a path formed by wild animals. At first this side trail looked hikeable, but it soon became tortuously narrow and unsuited for people. Maybe James thought that just around some upcoming corner the path would broaden out and be more negotiable.

Three days later James was reported missing, and a search-and-rescue effort was organized to find him. When the man who had snapped his photo heard of the search effort, he told the park authorities that he had seen James on Mount Angeles. The terrain where James disappeared is so rugged that after four days of searching in the area they had not found him.

A pair of rescue workers followed the same trail James had taken. After a short time of winding their way down the path, they could not believe that anyone would attempt to go down the trail because it was so dangerous. However, they kept going because they wanted to pursue even the slim chance that James had tried to follow it. Hiking further, they saw a set of skid marks down a loose bank of shale next to the path. The bank of shale was nearly vertical; about fifty feet along, it ended at a sheer cliff with a drop-off of several hundred feet. They realized the skid marks most likely belonged to James, and by carefully climbing down the mountain they were able to locate his body. He had died on impact after his terrible slide and fall.

Mountains, because of their great height, are always dangerous. They demand our respect. Our lives are like a trip down a mountainside where there are several paths down, but only one safe way. "I am the way, the truth, and the life," Jesus said. The Lord Jesus is the way because it is only through Him that any person can know God. Do you want to know God? Then you must know Jesus. He is the way.

He is the way to the forgiveness of sins. "Be it known unto you therefore . . . that through this man [Jesus] is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from all things" (Acts 13:38-39).

And He is the way to heaven and eternal life. "He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (John 5:24).

However, if you don't know the Lord Jesus as Saviour, your walk through this life will eventually end in trouble. "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." To live without the Lord Jesus is to miss the best things this life has to offer, but to die without the Lord Jesus is far worse. It means hell and suffering forever.

We might like to think that we don't need the Lord Jesus--that we can go our own way and our life will be just fine. This attitude stems from the belief that we are self-sufficient, and it always leads to disaster. Read what Jeremiah wrote to plead with, people to turn them to God:

"Hear ye, and give ear; be not proud: for the Lord hath spoken. Give glory to the Lord your God, before He cause darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains But if ye will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride" (Jeremiah 13:15-17).

What is the alternative to coming to the Lord Jesus for salvation? Stumbling upon the dark mountains of unbelief where one future step will be the last one--then death and a Christless eternity. What a tragedy! And most tragic of all, it doesn't have to happen. Christ died for all, and salvation is offered free to all. The Lord is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

Won't you give glory to God by acknowledging that you are a sinner and need the Saviour? The Lord Jesus is the way. Will you not take the way of salvation He freely offers? — by B.P.

**"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ,
and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31).**

**"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways
of death."**

Proverbs 14:12

End