

***Question: I know it is not a theological issue, but does the Bible say anything about snow?***

A quick computer search reveals that some form of the word snow is found in the New International Version of the Bible twenty-three times. The whiteness of snow is used to describe leprous skin (Exodus 4:6), the brightness of the Princes of Sodom before the blackness of sin (Lamentations 4:7), the clothing of the “Ancient of Days” (Daniel 7:9), the clothing of the resurrected Jesus and the white hair of the one “like a son of man” who walked among the lampstands in Revelation (Rev. 1:13-14). Although the presence of the word snow is not a major issue, it is used to illustrate at least two important theological matters.

First, an examination of snow – like that of every other part of God’s creation – can reveal something about its maker. God is the one who keeps the “storehouses of snow” (Job 38:22) and who tells the snow when to fall on the earth (Job 37:6). The Psalmist said: “Praise the LORD from the earth, you great sea creatures and all ocean depths, lightning and hail, snow and clouds” (Psalm 148:7-8). In 1885, Wilson Bentley began photographing snowflakes. Before his death in 1931, Bentley managed to capture more than 5,000 of the tiny ice crystals. He found that no two snowflakes are exactly alike. After years of studying the intricate details and beauty of snowflakes under a microscope, Bentley said: “Here is a gem bestrewn realm of nature possessing the charm of mystery, of the unknown, sure richly to reward the investigator” (“The Pioneering Snowflake Photos of Wilson Bentley” FOXNews.com). We could say such an examination points to a grand Designer, a master Artist. Now, when we see snow, may we be led to praise the God of all creation.

Secondly, the whiteness of snow is a powerful image of God’s forgiving grace that covers our sins of the past. God spoke through the prophet Isaiah saying: “Come now, let us reason together . . . Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow” (Isaiah 1:18). When King David was confronted with the reality of his sin with Bathsheba and having her husband killed, he repented in great anguish. In his prayer of repentance, he cried out, “Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow” (Psalm 51:7). Just as the gently falling snow transforms even a garbage heap by the beauty of its white covering, the

gently falling mercy of God's love covers a multitude of sins in the lives of those who turn to him in faith and repentance.

Complaining about winter's cold and snowy days only drags down our spirits, and it changes nothing. However, seeing the new fallen snow as a symbol of God's presence and forgiveness can fill us with hope and joy through faith in Jesus Christ. Now, what do you see when you look at the snow?

I must confess that I was in sunny Florida at the time I prepared this article. But I was certainly thinking of my readers in Murray during the snowstorm.

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