

1. Psalm 15:1 and Psalm 24:3:

- Who can ascend the mountain of God?

2. Preview:

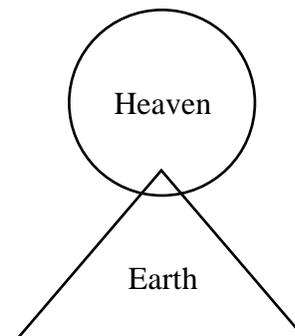
- Introduction to the cosmic mountain or the Mountain of God¹
- The importance of character development for our spiritual growth transformation²

3. Cosmic Mountain:

- In the Ancient Near East (ANE), mountains were considered holy and the place where the heavens and earth met.
- A dwelling place for God (the gods).

Cosmic Mountains in the Bible

- Tower of Babel (babel means ‘the gate of gods’)
- Mount Sinai
- Mount Gerizim (Samaritan center of worship)
- Mount Zion
- the Transfiguration



"The mountain is sacred, the dwelling place of the gods, the intersection between heaven and earth, the central and highest place of the world (*axis mundi*) and the foundation and navel of creation (*omphalos*). Morales, (p. 2)

4. N.T. Wright – *After You Believe* –

And these steps are, quite literally, **character-transforming**. The **aim of the Christian life** in the present time—the goal you are meant to be aiming at once you have come to faith, the goal which is within reach even in the present life, anticipating the final life to come—is **the life of fully formed, fully flourishing Christian character**.

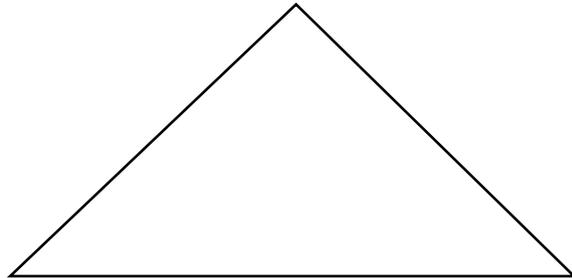
Wright, N. T.. *After You Believe* (p. 32). HarperOne. Kindle Edition.

¹ L. Michael Morales, 2012. *The Tabernacle Pre-Figured: Cosmic Mountain Ideology in Genesis and Exodus*. Biblical Tools and Studies 15.

² N.T. Wright, 2010. *After You Believe: Why Christian Character Matters*. New York: HarperOne.

5. **Ascent of the Mountain of God:**

- In touch with the deepest reality
- Break free of delusion and self-deception
- Transcend Suffering
- focus on alleviating suffering of others; restore order

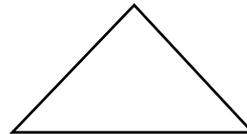


“The heart is deceitful above all things”
 Jeremiah 17:9

- delusion, self-deception, out of touch with reality.
- Suffering – both external and internal
- goal is power, material wealth

6. **Religious Language:**

- God is ultimate reality
- see ourselves/world as God sees

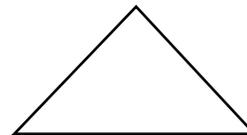


- Humanity in Fallen State
- Eyes blind / Ears can't hear

6. **Biblical Language:**

Wisdom

- Wisdom **begins** with the fear of the Lord
 Prov. 9:10-12
- A fool says there is no God – Ps. 14:1



Foolishness

7. **Growth Process:**

1. Proper Goal – Jesus is our Banner (*nes*) who also serves as our goal (*telos*).
2. Spiritual Attunement – spiritual practices to bring us closer to the Holy Spirit.
3. Cultivate a Christian Character – strength and habit to follow through during testing times.