

# SHOWERS UPON THE GRASS

*A companion volume to As the Small Rain*

by

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## CHAPTER SEVEN

### “HE SHALL DIRECT THY PATHS”

#### MARCHING ORDERS

How much tragedy can be crowded into one sentence, and how frequently the Bible thus records a wasted opportunity or a life of failure. Such a sentence is that with which the eleventh chapter of Genesis closes: “**Terah died in Haran**” (Genesis 11:32).

To understand the failure in the life of Terah, one must look at the preceding verse where we are told that Terah went forth with Abraham and Lot and Sarai “**from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there.**” God had a place of blessing and of promise for Terah in the land of Canaan. He left Ur to set out for the place where God wanted him, but he never got there. They left Ur “**to go into . . . Canaan,**” but they stopped on the way. Terah’s grave was not in the Land of Promise, but on the way there. He is the man who started and never arrived—the man who was satisfied to stop part way.

Every age has seen its Terahs, men who started out in the purpose of God to do His will, who followed Him for a while and then were content to stop and rest. There have been in every generation men called of God to a place of great blessing and service who never reached it because they were unwilling to go all the way with God. Such a life is always a fruitless, useless one; and such a destiny is always tragic. There is nothing sadder than a grave in Haran, when God had planned a Land of Promise and a place of wide blessing instead.

But in one sense, Terah’s death was a blessing; for after Terah had died in Haran, Abraham followed God into the land of Canaan. The tragedy of Terah is not only that he missed the place of blessing himself, but also that he held Abraham back for so many years. The man who fails to go along with God often not only deprives himself of blessing, but also keeps others from the Land of Promise, too. Sometimes a death in Haran is necessary, if another man whom God has chosen is not himself to be turned aside and stopped part way.

Leave God to order all thy ways,  
And hope in Him whate’er betide;  
Thou’ it find Him, in the evil days,  
Thine all-sufficient Strength and Guide.

Who trusts in God's unchanging love  
Builds on the Rock that naught can move!

Only thy restless heart keep still,  
And wait in cheerful hope, content  
To take whate'er His gracious will,  
His all-discerning love hath sent,  
Nor doubt our inmost wants are known  
To Him who chose us for His own.

He knows when joyful hours are best,  
He sends them as He sees it meet,  
When thou hast borne the fiery test,  
And now art freed from all deceit,  
He comes to thee all unaware,  
And makes thee own His loving care.

Sing, pray and swerve not from His ways;  
But do thine own part faithfully.  
Trust His rich promises of grace,  
So shall they be fulfilled in thee.  
God never yet forsook at need  
The soul that trusted Him indeed.

— George Neumark  
(Translated by Catherine Winkworth)

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### **HIS BEST**

God has a personal and individual plan for each life. God's plan for one life is different from His plan for another. So often we make the mistake of attempting to judge God's dealings with us on the basis of His dealings with somebody else and we feel disappointed because God has not dealt with us in spiritual things just as He dealt with someone we know or with some character in the Bible.

The Apostle Paul had a strange and dramatic conversion. Many men and women as they come into a saving knowledge of Christ have a very quiet experience. They are not for that reason any less born again than was Paul.

It is a good thing that God does not deal with everybody in exactly the same fashion for we all have different temperaments and different dispositions and God deals with each individual on the basis of what is best for him. God certainly does not expect us to be all alike. Why should we expect Him to deal with us all in the same fashion?

Just before Elijah was taken up in the chariot of fire he asked Elisha: “**Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee**” (II Kings 2:9), and Elisha answered: “**I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me.**” That was a good prayer. He did not ask for Elijah’s style of preaching. He did not ask for Elijah’s disposition and temperament. He did not even ask for Elijah’s power. He asked for a double portion of the Spirit.

God gives to each of us the gifts which we shall need in the place of service God has for us.

Elijah was dominated by the Spirit of God and that Spirit took Elijah’s gifts and used them powerfully. That same Spirit took Elisha’s gifts, different as they were, and used them no less powerfully.

As Christians we should seek to be rich in divine grace and humbly obedient to God. We should not seek to imitate someone else in personality or in temperament, however godly he may be. We should seek the guidance and the power of God’s Spirit for our own lives and trust Him to deal with each of us in the way that is best for us.

My God, my Father, while I stray  
Far from my home, on life’s rough way,  
O teach me from my heart to say,  
“Thy will be done!”

Though dark my path, and sad my lot,  
Let me be still and murmur not,  
But breathe the prayer divinely taught,  
“Thy will be done!”

Renew my will from day to day;  
Blend it with Thine, and take away  
All that now makes it hard to say,  
“Thy will be done!”

— Charlotte Elliott

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### “THE LORD LED ME”

That divine guidance is provided for those who meet God’s conditions is one of the most apparent truths in the Word of God. We are plainly told, however, that there are certain conditions which must be met if we are to receive it.

When the servant of Abraham was sent to Haran to find a wife for Isaac, he had no way of knowing which woman was God’s choice as a wife for his master’s son. He, therefore, put the matter in the Lord’s hands and was divinely led. As he himself afterward put it: “**I being in the way, the Lord led me . . .**” (Genesis 24:27).

If we are to expect divine guidance, we must put ourselves in the place where we have a right to expect it.

- No man has a claim on the guidance of God's Spirit who is not by faith a child of God. He must desire to do God's will.
- He has no right to ask God for guidance unless he expects to follow where He leads.
- He has no right to ask God for leading tomorrow unless he is willing today to do His apparent and revealed will and perform the duties now put upon him.

This, then, is the way in which we may meet God's conditions for guidance:

First, we are to ask for it. God's Word says: **"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him"** (James 1:5).

Then we are **to expect guidance**. **"Commit** thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass" (Psalm 37:5). This is a promise that He will guide if we believe. Therefore, we are to expect it.

The third qualification which we must meet is that of acceptance and obedience to His will. We mock God when we ask Him to direct us and then refuse to follow the path which He chooses and shows us.

If we are not conscious day by day of God's divine leading in our individual lives, it is our fault, not His. If we, like the prophet's servant, are in the way, we can say with him, **"The Lord led me . . .!"**

Commit thou all thy griefs  
And ways into His hands,  
To His sure trust and tender care  
Who earth and heaven commands;

Who points the clouds their course,  
Whom winds and seas obey,  
He shall direct thy wandering feet,  
He shall prepare thy way.

No profit canst thou gain  
By self-consuming care;  
To Him commend thy cause;  
His ear Attends the softest prayer.

Thy everlasting truth,  
Father, Thy ceaseless love,  
Sees all Thy children's wants, and knows  
What best for each will prove.

Thou everywhere hast sway,  
And all things serve Thy might;  
Thy every act pure blessing is,  
Thy path unsullied light.

— Paul Gerhardt  
(Translated by John Wesley)

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## FASHION OR FELLOWSHIP

It is possible, whatever the popular trends of the day may be, for a man to follow God and not the fashion. This is what Enoch did. The antediluvian world was full of sin and corruption. Society was corrupt and debased. Iniquity abounded, yet in the midst of all the rampant evil “**Enoch walked with God . . .**” (Genesis 5:22). He went the way that God was going. Therefore he had fellowship with God.

No man can fellowship with the Most High unless he goes along with Him. The secret of the Christian’s fellowship with other Christians is found here, also, for “**if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin**” (I John 1:7). Walking with God we find ourselves in good company, for the best men travel with us, for they, too, walk with Him.

God said to Abraham: “**Walk before me . . .**” (Genesis 17:1).

As fellowship is found in walking with God, so strength is found in walking before Him.

To walk before God means to live consistently; desiring to please Him and to retain in one’s mind the conscious knowledge that one is always in His presence.

The man who walks before God realizes that God’s eye is upon Him. He says, “**Thou God seest me.**” Strength abounds in this continuing consciousness. As the servant is careful of the quality of his service when the master is watching him, as the laborer is thorough under the eye of the foreman, as the student is diligent in the presence of his teacher, so is the man conscientious who walks before the Lord.

The Christian, like king Jotham of old, becomes mighty when he prepares his ways before the Lord his God (II Chronicles 27:6).

Rise, O my soul, pursue the path  
By ancient worthies trod;  
Aspiring, view those holy men  
Who lived and walked with God.

Though dead, they speak in reason's ear,  
And in example live;  
Their faith and hope and mighty deeds  
Still fresh instruction give.

'Twas through the Lamb's most precious blood  
They conquered every foe;  
And to His power and matchless grace  
Their crowns of life they owe.

Lord, may I ever keep in view  
The patterns Thou hast given,  
And ne'er forsake the blessed road  
That led them safe to heaven.

— John Needham

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### **HIS SWEET WILL**

God never asks a man to give up something without giving to him something better in return. God called upon Abraham to leave his country and his kindred and his father's house. God asked this man of prominence and of wealth to turn his back on the friends of his childhood and the home of his youth and follow Him without knowing where he was to be led, and by faith Abraham obeyed and **“went out, not knowing whither he went”** (Hebrews 11:8).

- Because he was willing to give up the fellowship of the moon worshippers of Ur, he enjoyed the companionship of God.
- Because he was willing to leave the land of his parents, God gave to him, for himself and for his children, the Land of Promise.
- Because he thought more of doing the will of God than abiding in ease in Ur, he became the father of the faithful, the one from whose seed the Messiah came.

Abraham was blessed in his obedience and became a blessing to others as he obeyed.

The man who chooses to do the will of God and who obeys the command of the Lord is always blessed himself and is always a blessing to others. He becomes the instrument through which God's blessing can be poured out and he is made joyful in being thus used.

There is more happiness in being a missionary than in being a millionaire if one is a missionary in obedience to the will of God and the other a millionaire because he failed to obey the God who wanted him to be a missionary. God's call is always to self-denial and self-restraint. God's call is sometimes to privation and suffering.

Privation and suffering in the will of God, with the blessing of His abiding presence and in the light of His face, brings a thousand times more joy and contentment and peace than can be found in the accumulation of wealth and a life of ease out of the will of God.

The child of God in the will of His Father finds joy and contentment not only here, but also hereafter. The pleasures of the world and its treasures pass away but **“He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever”** (I John 2:17). Abraham **“sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tents . . . for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God”** (Hebrews 11:9-10).

I have no cares, O blessed Will,  
For all my cares are Thine;  
I live in triumph, Lord, for Thou  
Hast made Thy triumphs mine.

He always wins who sides with God,  
To him no chance is lost;  
God’s will is sweetest to him when  
It triumphs at his cost.

Ill that He blesses is our good,  
And unblest good is ill;  
And all is right that seems most wrong,  
If it be His sweet will.

— Frederick W. Faber

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### **“THE EYES OF THE LORD”**

With the gaze of the divine eye, God sees the deeds of men, whether performed alone and in secret behind a closed door or in the presence of a great company. God sees all that is done both openly in broad daylight, or in solitude and darkness. But God sees more than the deeds of men. The secrets of the thought and the intent and purpose of the heart lie open to His gaze.

He who hid the treasures in the earth and veined the hills with gold, reads the secrets of the minds of men and **“the eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good”** (Proverbs 15:3).

Though the searching eyes of God are on both the good and evil, He does not gaze upon them both alike. His eyes see the evil that evil may be judged. God looks upon the good that He may bless. We are told that **“the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him . . .”** (II Chronicles 16:9).

God looks upon the man whose heart is perfect toward Him that He may, when He sees a special need in that man's life, meet and supply it; that when moments of weakness come He may be there to uphold and strengthen; that when sorrow comes He may be present to comfort and sustain.

To the righteous man God makes this promise: **"I will guide thee with mine eye"** (Psalm 32:8).

God's all-seeing eye, which can gaze through the darkness of midnight and which can see the end from the beginning, God's eye which pierces the unrevealed future, is the eye that guides God's child. Modern science has developed instruments which can send a ray through fog, clouds or darkness and pick up any object concealed there. So God's eye sees things hidden from our sight. As an airplane flying in the midst of heavy fog is led to the airport by the radio beam, so is the man who in faith relies upon the wisdom and power of God guided safely by a divine eye.

How gentle God's commands!  
How kind His precepts are!  
Come, cast your burdens on the Lord,  
And trust His constant care.

Beneath His watchful eye  
His saints securely dwell;  
That hand which bears all nature up  
Shall guard His children well.

Why should this anxious load  
Press down your weary mind?  
Haste to your heavenly Father's throne,  
And sweet refreshment find.

His goodness stands approved,  
Unchanged from day to day:  
I'll drop my burden at His feet,  
And bear a song away.

— Philip Doddridge

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## THE INWARD LOOK

Men form their opinions of us on the basis of what they see us do and what they hear us say. The impressions which are made by the outward appearances are the only means by which they can judge, for **"man looketh on the outward appearance."** God, on the other hand, **"Looketh on the heart"** (I Samuel 16:7).

Jesus Christ, who was God in the flesh, expressed the mind of God in regard to sin when He said: **“Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: but I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment”** (Matthew 5:21-22). He also said. **“Who soever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him”** (I John 3:15). **“Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart”** (Matthew 5:28).

What the Saviour is teaching here is this: that it is an attitude of the heart toward a thing which shapes the character of the man. There is many a man who because he hates another would like to kill him, but who is restrained from killing by fear of the consequences or by social training. In God’s sight that man is a murderer.

On the same basis of heart attitude God judges the matter of surrender to His will. God demands of every Christian absolute obedience and a heart which is perfect toward Him. God may never ask you as His child to go to the mission field, but if you are an obedient child, in your heart you would be willing to go if He would ask you. God may never ask you to turn your back on father and mother and wife and child and lands for His name’s sake, but no man can claim to be completely yielded to the will of God unless in his heart he loves Him more than all these and unless he is willing to forsake them, should God’s will for his life require it.

O Thou, to whose all searching sight  
The darkness shineth as the light,  
Search, prove my heart, it pants for Thee;  
O burst these bonds, and set it free!

Saviour, where’er Thy steps I see,  
Dauntless, untired, I follow Thee;  
O let Thy hand support me still,  
And lead me to Thy holy hill.

If rough and thorny be the way,  
My strength proportion to my day;  
Till toil and grief and pain shall cease,  
Where all is calm and joy and peace.

— Nicolaus L. von Zinzendorf  
(Translated by John Wesley)

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### HIS OWN

The voice of God came in the night to the child Samuel, calling his name. Thinking it was the voice of Eli the priest, his master, Samuel ran to the old man, saying, **“Here am I”** (I Samuel 3:5). **“I called not . . . lie down again,”** said Eli.

Three times the Lord called, and three times Samuel went to Eli. The fourth time, following the instruction of the priest who knew it was God's voice the lad was hearing, Samuel said, "**Speak; for thy servant heareth.**"

The Lord knew Samuel's name. Samuel had been given by God to a praying mother who had asked God for a son. He was God's lad, dedicated to His service. God always knows His own by name.

Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd, speaking to His disciples a parable about a shepherd, said, "**He calleth his own sheep by name . . .**" (John 10:13). No harm can reach the sheep under the protection of their shepherd; no man can pluck them from his care; but, best of all, he knows them each by name.

The grief-stricken woman beside the empty tomb, thinking Him the gardener, said, "**Tell me where thou hast laid him . . .**" (John 20:15). He calls her name, "**Mary,**" and she recognizes her Risen Lord in the sound of His voice speaking her name.

The doubting disciple refuses to believe the truth of the Resurrection until he beholds and handles the living Lord. The voice of the Saviour invites him by name, "**Thomas, Reach hither thy finger . . . and reach hither thy hand . . .**" 1 (John 20:27), and his doubts are laid at rest.

The disciple whose heart is heavy with the sin of his denial stands in the mists of early morning on the beach as the Lord questions him three times by name: "**Simon . . . lovest thou me?**" (John 21:16), and fellowship between the disciple and His Master is reestablished as Simon Peter responds with profession of his love.

He knows His own by name. He is intimately acquainted with each individual. He knows the fears and the sorrows of each. He speaks to the listening heart. He calls each one by name. "**And the sheep follow him: for they know his voice**" (John 10:4).

Jesus, let Thy pitying eye  
Call back a wandering sheep;  
False to Thee, like Peter, I  
Would fain, like Peter, weep.

Let me be by grace restored;  
On me be all long-suffering shown;  
Turn, and look upon me, Lord,  
And break my heart of stone.

Look, as when Thy languid eye  
Was closed that we might live;  
"Father," at the point to die  
My Saviour prayed, "Forgive!"

Surely, with that dying word,  
He turns, and looks, and cries, "'Tis done!"  
O my bleeding, loving Lord,  
Thou break'st my heart of stone!

— Charles Wesley

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## PEACE OF GOD

**“Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace”** (Job 22:21).

With these words Eliphaz sought to comfort and encourage Job as he sat, bowed down with grief and afflicted with boils, penniless and heavyhearted. No doubt Eliphaz thought himself very well acquainted with God, but Job knew Him a thousand times more intimately.

As far as the accuracy of his own philosophy was concerned, Eliphaz was speaking only a fine bombastic phrase, but there is a truth in his words of which he himself never dreamed, for to his way of thinking, as he told Job in the next sentence, this acquaintanceship with God meant that he should have **“plenty of silver.”** Acquaintanceship with God means more than Job's self-satisfied friend ever dreamed of, and there is a peace which comes from knowing Him which Eliphaz had not attained.

One may become acquainted with God in His fullness only through contact with the Lord Jesus Christ, for He who is the Son of God declares:

- **“I and my Father are one.”**
- **“He that hath seen me hath seen the Father,”**
- **“No man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”**

Christ is God and the Revealer of God. Since God is love, we can best come to know Him in the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the manifestation of God's love for us. The more intimately our lives become involved with Him the more intimately we come to know God.

Knowing Him we are at peace, for He said, **“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid”** (John 14:27).

We have peace with God when we have accepted Him as our Saviour who has borne our sins and who has **“broken down the middle wall of partition between us”** and God (Ephesians 2:14).

We have the peace of God which is based upon this confidence: that the God who loved us enough to send His Son to die for us will order our steps and meet our needs.

Peace, perfect peace, in this dark world of sin?  
The blood of Jesus whispers peace within.

Peace, perfect peace, by thronging duties pressed?  
To do the will of Jesus—this is rest.

Peace, perfect peace, with sorrows surging round?  
On Jesus' bosom naught but calm is found.

Peace, perfect peace, with loved ones far away?  
In Jesus' keeping we are safe, and they.

Peace, perfect peace, our future all unknown?  
Jesus we know, and He is on the throne.

Peace, perfect peace, death shadowing us and ours?  
Jesus has vanquished death and all its powers.

It is enough: earth's struggles soon shall cease,  
And Jesus calls us to heaven's perfect peace.

— Edward H. Bickersteth

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## GIANTS IN THE EARTH

The Bible has very little to say about antediluvian civilization. Of that world before the flood we actually know very little. However, there are certain evidences that there was a degree of civilization. We are told of Jabal and Jubal and Tubalcain. One was a man who dwelt in tents and kept cattle and was the father of all such as dwelt in this fashion and followed this occupation. Another was the father of skillful artisans in brass and iron (Genesis 4:20-22). Enoch built a city.

Certainly, therefore, there was developed agriculture and city life with attendant trade and business. The art of music and the art of metalworking indicate a high degree of culture. Ornaments craftily devised bespeak a development of art. The use of iron, of itself, indicates some progress in implements of peace and of war. But they were unable to build a culture which could last.

The book of Genesis tells us that “**there were giants in the earth in those days**” (Genesis 6:4).

I think perhaps this means more than merely giants in size. There were possibly also those who were giants in intellectuality and in knowledge. But God sent a flood to destroy their civilization, because hand in hand with skill and culture and wisdom went corruption and degeneracy and decay.

The highest cultures have always been the most corrupt. The most advanced periods of architecture and art and music have been the periods of the most apparent degeneracy and depravity. God has destroyed many civilizations and cultures since that in the early days of the human race for the same reason that He sent a flood to destroy all flesh upon the earth in the time of Noah—because the evil in man’s heart was great, and all the **“imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.”**

Certainly we should not disparage culture and artistic achievement, but these apart from growth in spiritual matters, fear of the Lord and reverence for the God who made heaven and earth, have little value. Certainly, we should seek in these days to develop skillful men, clever men, scholars, artists and statesmen.

This is a day when there are few giants in the earth. We need great men, but great men and great culture never solve the problem of life and put an end to human suffering and sin. Our need in this day is to learn that **“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding”** (Proverbs 9:10).

Giants in the earth, without God dwelling in their hearts by faith, can bring calamity and destruction to a world. What we must have is not only the outward culture which comes from the development of skills and from physical and mental training but also culture of the soul and civilization of the heart. These come through reverence for God, obedience to His commands, and a desire to do His will. The more complicated our civilization becomes, the more we need Jesus Christ.

But few among the carnal wise,  
But few of noble race,  
Obtain the favor of Thine eyes,  
Almighty King of grace.

He takes the men of meanest name  
For sons and heirs of God;  
And thus He pours abundant shame  
On honorable blood.

He calls the fool, and makes him know  
The mysteries of His grace,  
To bring aspiring wisdom low,  
And all its pride abase.

Nature has all its glories lost  
When brought before His throne;  
No flesh shall in His presence boast  
But in the Lord alone.

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### **“EVEN UNTO DEATH”**

Obedience to the will of God sometimes means suffering, but it is never suffering like that which the Saviour endured for us upon the Cross. No anguish can compare with His, for He suffered physical pain and at the same time bore the suffering of all lost souls in hell. The penalty of our sins was placed upon Him and He bore that along with physical torment.

Though we cannot suffer as He did, the one who follows Christ must sometimes walk a lonely and rough pathway. He who would do the will of God must bear a cross. Our Lord plainly stated this when He said **“If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me”** (Matthew 16:24).

Our physical nature revolts at the thought of suffering. A normal man will, when he can, turn aside from pain, but to do God’s will costs some men physical suffering. Christians have been fed to wild beasts, burned at the stake, beheaded. To do God’s will may not mean physical anguish for us, but there is a pain which can be even greater, that is pain of the heart and of the mind.

To do the will of God may mean turning our back on all we love and going alone to the place of God’s appointment for us. To follow Christ may mean separation from that which we cherish most, a turning away from that which is dearest to our own heart. It means turning aside from that which we would choose, to that which God chooses for us.

No man can truly claim to be obedient to God until he, like the Saviour, is willing to be obedient even unto death. Anything which stops short of that sort of obedience is not obedience. What would you think of a soldier who refused to obey a command because his obedience might result in his death? If obedience **“even unto death”** is naturally expected of a good soldier, is such obedience not necessary if one would be perfect in his obedience to God?

“Take up thy Cross,” the Saviour said,  
“If thou wouldst my disciple be;  
Deny thyself, the world forsake,  
And humbly follow after Me.”

Take up thy cross, nor heed the shame;  
Nor let thy foolish pride rebel;  
Thy Lord for thee the Cross endured,  
To save thy soul from death and hell.

Take up thy cross, and follow Christ;  
Nor think till death to lay it down;  
For only he who bears the Cross  
May hope to wear the glorious crown.

— Charles W. Everest

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## REST IN THE LORD

Ours is a tired generation. Men are physically exhausted and mentally worn out. I recently read a magazine article which offered suggestions as to how we might beat fatigue. The author suggested that to overcome physical exhaustion, we must learn to relax and to use only muscles which are needed for the job at hand. To conquer mental fatigue, the author's suggestion was that we should not dwell too long on any single problem but should shift from one mental task to another frequently, and that when we get into bed at night, we should dismiss altogether from our minds the responsibilities and worries of the day.

All that sounds like good advice, but there is one sort of fatigue which the author did not mention, spiritual fatigue—soul exhaustion. This comes from the burden of sin which men bear, from guilty consciences which prick and sting us.

God's Word offers a wise solution for all three types of exhaustion, wiser indeed than any psychologist can ever devise or recommend. Jesus Christ says: "**Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls**" (Matthew 11:28, 29). He takes away the guilt and burden of sin. Coming to Him, we find our hearts and souls cleansed; and having the guilt of sin removed, the burden of the conscience is lifted. No one else but Jesus Christ can do this for men.

He also removes mental fatigue. When every thought is brought into captivity to the Lord Jesus, we no longer feel the necessity of solving our problems alone. We cast all our cares upon Him, knowing that He cares for us and that His wisdom is as strong as His love. He says: "**If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not**" (James 1:5). Knowing that we have wisdom which comes down from above, we no longer bear the mental strain of solving problems purely in the strength of our own intellect. Knowing that He plans our tomorrows, we are no longer forced to burden ourselves with worry about tomorrow.

Physically, we find rest in Him. The man whose life is yielded to the Lord Jesus Christ finds in Him freedom from old habits of life, freedom from the bondage of old sins which take their toll of physical strength. He no longer exhausts himself in the ceaseless round of useless activity and a vain search for fleeting pleasures.

After all, the mind and soul and body are interrelated. Bearing guilt and worry, the body shows the strain of this burden of conscience or mind. Nervous tensions develop, and physically we become exhausted through the strain of a guilty heart. Sin, though a thing of the heart, can thus affect the body. Bearing mental burdens, we feel physical exhaustion. Where else can rest be found, then, save in the One who is the God of all?

Here is the secret of relaxation and refreshing: “**Rest in the Lord . . .**” (Psalm 37:7).

Obeying this command and accepting this invitation, we find, indeed, that our “**youth is renewed like the eagle’s**” (Psalm 103:5). The Gospel is good medicine, better far than any vitamin capsules, and the surrendered way of life is a path of pleasure and a road of peace and rest.

Come unto Me, when shadows darkly gather,  
When the sad heart is weary and distressed,  
Seeking for comfort from your heavenly Father,  
Come unto me, and I will give you rest.

Large are the mansions in thy Father’s dwelling,  
Glad are the homes that sorrows never dim;  
Sweet are the harps in holy music swelling,  
Soft are the tones which raise the heavenly hymn.

There, like an Eden blossoming in gladness,  
Bloom the fair flowers the earth too rudely pressed;  
Come unto Me, all ye who droop in sadness,  
Come unto Me, and I will give you rest

— Catherine H. Esling

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### “FOLLOW THOU ME”

“**What shall this man do?**” (John 21:21).

This is the question which Peter asked Jesus about John. Christ had revealed to Peter that when he became an old man he would be led out and put to death for the sake of the Gospel. Peter, turning around, saw John approaching and asked the question about the Lord’s plan for the life of the other and younger disciple. The answer which Christ gave to his question is worth our attention. “**If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?**” (John 21:23).

Peter’s responsibility was not to be concerned about John and his relationship with the Lord but about his own personal obedience. It was Peter’s duty to follow Christ and preach the Gospel wherever he might be sent. It was his obligation to live for his Lord day by day until the time came when he should die for Him.

Christ, on the other hand, had a different plan for John. He was to stay in Jerusalem to administer the affairs of the local church there and finally be sent by a Roman order to the Isle of Patmos where as an old man he was to receive the vision of the Revelation.

The Master wanted Peter to have the thrill of the experience of a missionary ministry and to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles and to go home by way of a martyr's death. The Master wanted John to catch a vision of the end times that he might set it down for countless generations yet unborn to read.

Peter's responsibility was to go out and preach and die. John's responsibility was to tarry at Jerusalem and later to set down the Revelation from his exile at Patmos.

The plan of our Lord is not the same for every life. "**Follow thou Me!**"

The only thing God asks of His children is to be willing day by day to do His will. God does not ask the Christian to be a successful man or a brilliant man. God simply asks him to do daily, joyfully and obediently the thing which he gives him to do that day.

Obedience is better than sacrifice, and the man who will be a great success in the will of God twenty years from now, is the man who today is obedient to God's will for his life in little things.

How shall I follow Him I serve?  
How shall I copy Him I love?  
Nor from those blessed footsteps swerve,  
Which lead me to His seat above?

Lord, should my path through suffering lie,  
Forbid it I should e'er repine;  
Still let me turn to Calvary,  
Nor heed my griefs, remembering Thine.

O let me think how Thou didst leave  
Untasted every pure delight,  
To fast, to faint, to watch, to grieve,  
The toilsome day, the homeless night:—

To faint, to grieve, to die for me!  
Thou camest not Thyself to please:  
And, dear as earthly comforts be,  
Shall I not love Thee more than these?

Yes! I would count them all but loss,  
To gain the notice of Thine eye:  
Flesh shrinks and trembles at the cross,  
But Thou canst give the victory.

— Joseph Cornier

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## SHORT OF SIGHT

It is not enough to know facts. A wise man must know how to use facts. Men knew of the existence of the atom long before they knew how to make use of atomic force to defeat their enemies in time of war. Thinking men must realize that the world is in pretty much of a mess. Only a man who chooses to shut his eyes in willful blindness can fail to admit the existence of the problems which face all nations, but there is a decided disagreement about what should be done to solve the problems.

King David was more fortunate than the heads of modern states, for we are told in the book of I Chronicles, the twelfth chapter and the thirty-second verse, that David's followers included two hundred men "**that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do.**"

The world is full of men who understand the times to the extent that they realize they are trying and hazardous and alarming, but how scarce are men who know what nations ought to do about the problems mankind faces!

The seed of the next war is usually planted in the peace treaty of the last. The tragedies which have their ugly birth tomorrow are conceived in the mistakes of today. To know what we ought to do, we need understanding of the times, both of ours, and of our children's. Except for the seer and the prophet, rare in every generation, men have been short of sight.

The path of God's will is the only road which leads to the solution of the world's problem, for only the Eternal God sees tomorrow's dangers today. When Christ shall come to reign, He will bring peace to the earth because He knows what must be done to insure peace, and He is able to do it.

The only measure of concord and the only approach to a permanent solution of human problems which we can discover now, comes as we seek His will to perform it.

The Lord our God is clothed with might,  
The winds obey His will;  
He speaks, and in His heavenly height,  
The rolling sun stands still.

Rebel, ye waves, and o'er the land  
With threatening aspect roar;  
The Lord uplifts His awful hand,  
And chains you to the shore.

His voice sublime is heard afar;  
In distant peals it dies;  
He yokes the whirlwind to His car,  
And sweeps the howling skies.

Ye nations, bend, in reverence bend;  
Ye monarchs, wait His nod;  
And bid the choral song ascend  
To celebrate our God.

— H. Kirke White

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### A WISE CHOICE

Of all the wonderful incidents set down in the Old Testament, none is more interesting than the account of Solomon's wise choice.

God appeared unto the young king in a dream, saying: "**Ask what I shall give thee**" (I Kings 3:5). Solomon, conscious of his own youth and inexperience and feeling deeply the heavy responsibility of kingship, replied, "**Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad**" (I Kings 3:9). The Lord, pleased that he had not asked for riches or long life or the death of his enemies, gave him "**a wise and an understanding heart.**"

It is well enough to be wise of head, to be able to think through problems and find their solutions and to make accurate decisions; but there is a wisdom deeper than the purely intellectual, that is, wisdom of the heart. The man who is wise of heart will usually find himself wise of head also, but many intellectual giants know nothing of the more important kind of wisdom. Wisdom which is purely of the intellect is cold. That which is of the heart is warm.

Those who need help with the problems of life will not be drawn to the man who is coldly clever, but rather to the warm and understanding heart. The man who possesses such a heart is able to enter into the joys and sorrows of others.

He is able to feel with them. He is able to understand their difficulties and see life from their point of view. When the heart is not only understanding but also wise, its possessor is richly endowed.

That Solomon received the gift for which he asked is very evident. Two women living in the same house had infants about the same age. One child died in the night and each woman claimed the live child. The king of the wise heart ordered the live child to be cut asunder with a sword and divided between them. One woman consented to this procedure. The other protested against the death of the child, preferring to see it given to the other claimant. The understanding heart of the king recognized in the attitude of the second woman the evidence of a mother's love and ordered the child given to her.

The world is cursed today by a lack of wise and understanding hearts.

We are attempting to solve the problems of the world without an understanding of the heart of the world and with a wisdom of the intellect alone. The decisions of the mind are based all too often on outward appearance. The understanding heart perceives the hidden truth beneath the surface.

The prayers I make will then be sweet indeed,  
If Thou the spirit give by which I pray;  
My unassisted heart is barren clay,  
Which of its native self can nothing feed;  
Of good and pious work Thou art the seed  
Which quickens where Thou say'st it may;  
Unless Thou show us when Thine own true way,  
No man can find it! Father, Thou must lead!  
Do Thou, then, breathe those thoughts into my mind  
By which such virtue may in me be bred  
That in Thy holy footsteps I may tread:  
The fetters of my tongue do Thou unbind,  
That I may have the power to sing of Thee  
And sound Thy praises everlastingly.

— Michelangelo Buonarotti  
(Translated by William Wordsworth)

~ end of chapter 7 ~

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