

THE BIBLE VIEW

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Theme: Watching over Us

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Thank You for Slowing Me Down

Bill Brinkworth

After several days of rain, water dripped off leaves, trees, and rocks. Soon, small ribbons of water trickled down the mountainside. Meandering dribblets eventually joined others, and quickly rivulets grew in size and sped down the mountain.

A closer observation revealed that the speeding waters did not head toward the valley in a straight line. Natural obstacles detoured the flow in unnatural directions. The rushing waters wandered left, right, down into a washout the waters created, blocked by a rock, over the natural dam, left and again to the right. Seemingly haphazardly, the flow wandered down to the lower ground.

Because of God's design, even the water flow and how it was diverted caused little washout. If the gushing waters

had their way, they would have eroded much of the hillside, uprooted trees, caused mudslides, and ravished havoc on the area. Thank you, Lord, for even watching over the water flow.

The difficult hazards we face may also preserve us more than we realize. Left to follow our lusts and desires, without stopping or deterring us from wrong behavior and decisions, we would race to destruction, ruining our lives and those of others.

A grade failure, car breakdown, lost job, illness, or a broken relationship may be more of a help than a hindrance, especially if a person affected is God-controlled. Only He knows what could have happened to us if obstacles did not change our self-destroying directions.

We may not like the “roadblocks” or deterrents keeping us from the way we thought was best. However, it may be a God-directed obstacle diverting us to His better direction rather than our destructive one.

The obstacles we encounter may not be as bad as we believe. They may keep us from a more tumultuous life and an early grave.

We certainly should not want our lives to be a “washout.” Thank you, Lord, for loving and protecting us. You keep us safe even when we do not have the sense to know that our will and way may not be the right and best direction for us.

“O keep my soul, and deliver me: let me not be ashamed; for I put my trust in thee.” Psalm 25:20

Ouch! It’s Prickly!

Bill Brinkworth

Many natural things are “prickly.” Thorns are the natural defense of many roses, orange trees, and weeds. Grabbing hold of a prickly stem results in one letting it go and coming up with another plan.

God uses the “pricks” of uncomfortable moments to change our direction. He did this in Saul’s life as the unsaved but religious man traveled on the road to Damascus.

“And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.” Acts 9:5

Saul had spent much of his life trying to serve God his way. Unfortunately, he did not detect nor heed the “pricks” God sent in His life to put him in the right direction.

Pricks that Saul, later renamed Paul, ignored:

Pricked ears – When Saul heard the preachers of the Gospel, he did all he could to stifle their preaching. Instead of pricking his conscience so he could change his wrong path, it angered him and encouraged him to do more to silence Christians.

Young Saul (Paul) even held the coats of those that

stoned the preacher, Stephen. While Saul stood there, he probably heard the Word of God as at other times when he was around Christians. Still, he held to his religion, even when the people of God preached and warned against it.

Pricked eyes – Undoubtedly, he saw Christianity in action. He saw families split, people die, and heartache inflicted. In all the trouble he instigated against Christians, he saw they had a peace that he surely did not have or understand. He was like his name-sake, King Saul, who persecuted righteous David.

Pricks that others ignore:

Pricked by circumstances: Hard times, sickness, failures, testings, aggravating situations, disasters, etc., are often meant to draw us closer to God and make us trust Him more. Instead, folks often grow farther from the source of strength they need.

Pricked ears: Perhaps, God sent a godly mother, grandmother, neighbor, friend, Sunday school teacher, or let us hear a preacher on TV, but still, His invitation was ignored.

Pricked eyes: Many have seen bits of the Word of God in tracts and good Christian testimonies, yet their example has been ignored.

Too often, God’s “pricks” to our hearts and lives are ignored. What does God have to do to you to get your attention and obedience?

“The greater thing in this world is not so much where we stand, as in what direction we are going.”

— Oliver Wendell Holmes

Follow the Detour

Bill Brinkworth

“In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.” Proverbs 3:6

No one likes the aggravation of being slowed down to going to his destination by a road detour. One has to change direction another way. We are not in control and must follow someone else’s plan to get us to where we want to go.

“Who do those construction people think they are? Making me go this long way. I just want to go a little way down the road.” However, we obey the signs and the flagman and get there safely. We may not have been able to say that if we did not heed those diverting our direction.

Too many ignore the “flagman” God has put in our path to move them in another direction — His way. Maybe that test you failed, even though you “studied your brains out,” was a “flagman” to get you to know and later witness to a tutor or to get you to study more efficiently. If you cheated

and passed, you would not have gone down the road God had planned for you.

Maybe the family split, although not God's first plan, has something you could learn. Sticking it out and praying through the problem may have helped you, so divorce never happens to you, or you can minister to others in that situation. Running away from that situation would be going through the "detour," and you would not have learned what God intended for you to get out of the experience.

Use your imagination to see how God could use the "bad" things in your life for His glory and your good. He is aware of the "roadblock" you experienced or are experiencing. God may have allowed it in your life, so you would spiritually grow or be strengthened.

A Christian should be sensitive to the leading as well as the halting of the Lord. Give Him credit for all that happens in your life. Let him direct you!

"Life with God is not immunity from difficulties, but peace in the difficulties." — C. S. Lewis