

THE BIBLE VIEW

In This Issue:

[His Ways Are Not Our Ways](#)

[Wild Vines](#)

[Tighten the Reins](#)

[Learned Sympathy](#)

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Theme: God's Way

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His Ways Are Not Our Ways

Bill Brinkworth

Sometimes, as Christians, we get confused and distraught by how circumstances in our lives seem out of God's control. We get perplexed over situations that appear to be severely altering what we thought was a good life. Our desired path gets changed to one we never dreamed we would travel, and we certainly do not understand why.

A doctor may have given a disastrous diagnosis, or a house may appear to be soon lost because of our inability to meet payments. Children, who have been raised the best way we knew, seemingly are not turning out how we desired. All that we saved and planned for is lost because of our inability to obtain employment. Our lives and plans are in turmoil, and we wonder, "Where is God in all this chaos?"

Those feelings are not unique. Other faithful believers have also found themselves going down a pathway they never dreamed they would travel. Millions previously have also pondered, "Why is this happening to me? What have I done to deserve this?"

However, remember the trials of:

- Joshua: Six times, Joshua and the Israelite army silently marched around the city of Jericho. God promised Israel would get the victory over the fortress, yet they were not to say or do anything but walk around the city. On the seventh day, they were told to shout and blow trumpets. A seemingly illogical action resulted in something unexpected; the city walls supernaturally tumbled down so the enemy could easily be conquered.
- Ezekiel. God told him to do some very bizarre things. The prophet did all he was told to do. Some of the tasks were humiliating to him, but he still did as he was instructed.
- Paul. That man of God was told to reach the lost with the saving message of the Gospel. He did as God bid him, yet he faced beatings, attempts on his life, imprisonment, shipwrecks, and many other perils (II Cor. 11:23-27).

- Jesus. God's only Son was the long-awaited fulfillment of many Old Testament prophecies. However, when Jesus came, He was not welcomed by many. He suffered humiliation, ridicule, cruelty, and eventually death so that all who trusted on His sacrifices for them could go to Heaven. It was the Creator's plan, and His Son obeyed His Father.

There are many other examples throughout the Bible of how God used unusual circumstances and events to accomplish His will. His plan was not the way a person would have solved the situation. In many cases, the person was not even aware that there was a "situation."

The events may not have made sense to the believers at the time, but they did as they were shown by God to do. After being obedient, sometimes they saw why they were to do as they were told. Sometimes, the reason was never realized.

After the fact and recorded in God's Word, we now see why God told people to do what they were told. Some of those reasons were because:

- Man's ways do not usually work. Man often does not see the real problem and, therefore, cannot fix a situation.
"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." Prov. 14:12 Also Prov. 16:25, Romans 3:16.
- Man often does not know God's way.
*"... They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways." Heb. 3:10
"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD." Isa. 55:8*
- God knows what the real need is in the situation. Man does not. God sees the hearts of men that require alteration and knows how to change them. Man only sees the temporal needs and cannot see the spiritual needs.
- God wants it done His way so that He will get the credit and not man!
"... and they shall know that I am the Lord." Ezekiel 24:27

All, even Christians, will face trials and tribulations in this world. For non-Christians, the experience may be meant to turn them to have a relationship with the Lord. For the believer, the situation may be God's way of getting it done and teaching the child of God how to discern His will and way.

Christian, the next time you are in a situation you do not understand and are convinced you are doing what the Lord has directed you to do, there may be another reason you do not see. You may not know the reason, but in faith, remember that God is in control.

Trust! Be in much prayer over the troubling situation, continue in faith, and do what you have been shown to be biblically correct. Most of all, wait patiently for Him to accomplish His will and way in His timing!

"As men trim the feathers of fowls so they do not fly too high or too far, even so doth God diminish our riches, so that we should not pass our bounds, and glory too much of the things of this world." — Wermullerus, 1551

Wild Vines

Downname, 1644

We, who were wild branches barren of all good fruit of holiness, are through God's infinite mercy in-grafted into the true Vine, Jesus Christ, from whom we receive all our grace and sap. Once born into the family of God, we are enabled to bring forth the pleasant grapes of new obedience. Yet, if we were left alone and allowed to run out with uncontrolled liberty, we would, like the wild vine that is never pruned, return to our old natural wildness and bring forth no other fruit than those sour grapes of iniquity and sin.

Our heavenly Vintager, for His glory and our good, cuts away the superfluities of our licentious liberty and prunes us with His knife of affliction; that being kept from our carnal desires, we may become more fruitful in all holy duties.

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." John 15:1-2

"Some ships behave best in a gale. In light winds, they can rock themselves to pieces. To a Christian, adversity is not the most dangerous condition; fine weather tries him more. When we are least visibly strained, we are often most sharply tested." — *Birreli*

Tighten the Reins

Wermullerus, 1551

When a horse-breaker gives a wild, young horse too much leeway on his bridle, the horse is wild, out-of-control, and may slip, fall, or hurt himself. A horseman often jerks his horse's reins or urges the animal's sides with a firm boot to go forward. He does this not out of meanness but that he may enjoy the horse, and that the animal may perform all he can.

In the same way, if our Creator should give us too much liberty, we too may wax wild and may harm ourselves physically and spiritually. This is often why the Lord frequently gives us a sharp "bit" in our mouths and "bridles" our flesh so that our precious souls do not suffer.

"The difference between stumbling blocks and stepping stones is how you use them." — *Author Unknown*

Learned Sympathy

W. M. Taylor

Harry the Eighth, wandering one night in the streets of London in disguise, was met at a bridge by some of his castle's guards. Unable to convince them of who he was, he was carried off to the jail and shut up for the night without food, a heating fire, or a candle to light the dungeon. On his liberation, he made a grant of thirty caldrons of coal, a large quantity of bread, and candles for the night prisoners in the prison. His experience taught him sympathy.

Those who have felt sharp afflictions, terrible tragedies, and forceful temptations can be zealous in consoling those in a similar condition. Our “hard times” can be when our character is improved, and our new found compassion can be used to encourage others.

“Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.” II Cor. 1:4

“A great number of God’s best servants have trodden the depths of the valley of many shadows, and this may be so that they one day may comfort you. The good steps of the holy are often in the Valley of Weeping.” — *Author Unknown*