

They also faced Trials & Tribulations



Words to Find:
 Abraham
 Adam
 Amos
 Balaam
 Barnabas
 Caleb
 Daniel
 Elisha
 Gideon
 Jacob
 James
 Jesus
 Job
 Joseph
 Lazarus
 Nathan
 Noah
 Paul
 Samuel
 Sarah
 Saul
 Stephen
 Uriah

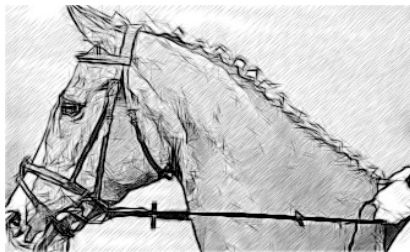
Tighten the Reins

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 horsemen 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 that he may enjoy the horse, and that the animal may perform all he is capable of doing.

In the same way, if our Crea-



tor should give us too much liberty, we too may wax wild and may harm ourselves, physically and spiritually. This is often why the Lord gives us a sharp "bit" in our mouths, "bridles" our flesh, so that our precious soul suffers not.



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His Ways Are Not Our Ways

Bill Brinkworth

Sometimes, as a Christian, we get confused and distraught by the way circumstances in our life seem to be out of God's control. We get perplexed over situations in our life 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 certainly do not understand.

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

These 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?" 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

Continued on Page 2

Wild Vines

Downme, 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

Continued on Page 3

His Ways Are Not Our ...

Continued from Page 1

they were told to shout and blow trumpets. A seemingly illogical action resulted in something unexpected happening: the walls of the city came supernaturally tumbling down, so the enemy could easily be conquered.

☞ **Ezekiel.** He was told by God 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.** This 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 Son was the long-awaited fulfillment to many Old Testament prophecies. However, when Jesus did come He was not welcomed by many. He suffered humiliation, ridicule, cruelty, and eventually death; so that all that believed on Jesus' efforts would have the means to get to heaven. It was the Creator's plan, and His Son obeyed His Father.

All throughout the Bible there are many other examples of how God used unusual circumstances and events to accomplish His will.

His will was not the way man would have solved the situation. In many cases, man 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 they never saw the reason. After the fact, and recorded in God's Word, we see some of the reasons why God told them to do what they were told to do. 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. 16:25 Also: Rom. 3:16

☞ Man often does not know God's way.

"... They do always 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

"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

of men that needed to be changed, 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 the 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 you believe 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 situation, continue in faith and in doing

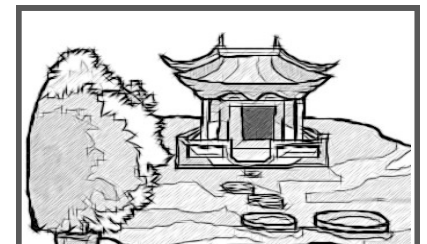
what you have been shown to be biblically right — and wait on Him to accomplish His will and way in His timing!

Wild Vines

Continued from Page 1

alone, and suffered to run out with uncontrolled liberty, we would, like the wild vine which 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 own 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



"The difference between stumbling blocks and stepping stones is how you use them."

"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