

Passing Through

"How blessed is the man whose strength is in Thee, in whose heart are the highways to Zion! Passing through the valley of Baca, they make it a spring; the early rain also covers it with blessings. They go from strength to strength; every one of them appears before God in Zion" (Psa. 84:5-7).

It has been made clear in the scriptures that believers are foreigners in this world in search of a heavenly city whose maker is God. Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac and Jacob "all died in the faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth" (Heb. 11:13). They were "passing through" this world in search of the heavenly city. We cannot STOP! We are travelers! The valley of Baca is not our home.

The scriptures declare, "For He (God) delivered us from the domain (authority) of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son" (Col. 1:13). The kingdom of God is not of this world. Our citizenship is in heaven (Eph. 3:20) even though we are in the world. The prayer of Jesus was, "I do not ask Thee to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one" (St. Jn. 17:15). The point being made is: while living in the world we are not under the authority of darkness to do the deeds of darkness, because we walk through the world having put on the armor of light (Ro. 13:12). We are passing through this world wearing the armor of light and refuse to stop and make this world our home. The world is place of weeping! The kingdom of God is place of rejoicing!

"How blessed is the man whose strength is in Thee..."

The person that relies on the strength of the Lord is indeed happy. Our strength will always come short, leaving us disappointed and defeated. The lesson of Romans seven concludes with, "Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?" Using our natural strength to keep the law of God only brings to us frustration and mental futility. We walk through this world in the strength of the Holy Spirit not in the power of the soul!

Consider this song of David, "The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge; my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold and my refuge; my savior, Thou dost save me from violence. I call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised; and I am saved from my enemies" (2 Sa. 22:2-4). David was blessed! He passed through his enemies because of the strength and capabilities of His God. You will be blessed if your strength is based in God and not on your own abilities!

"In whose heart are the highways to Zion?"

When others observe our victorious behavior while passing through this life, they will see, not the outward appearance, but the roadmap of our heart. Our heart a MAP TO ZION? Yes it can be. The way we react in a trial, the giving of ourselves to others, coming through the fire with rejoicing standing for the truth and resisting evil, etches our heart with directions for others to follow. Also storing the word of God in our hearts makes it an information center for other travelers.

"Passing through the valley of Baca.",

The meaning of Baca is weeping. We are passing through the valley of Baca, which means: NO STOPPING! One must keep moving on avoiding the temptation to stop and have "pity-parties" or establishing an address for sympathy cards. Consider this lesson in Elijah's life: He had outran the chariot of Ahab for 25 miles, then upon hearing the intention of Jezebel to kill him in the next 24 hours, HE RAN FOR HIS LIFE (1 Kings 19:3). Ridiculous, but true. Elijah ended up in a cave distressed, depressed and deflated on the mountain of Horeb. In response to the question asked by God, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" he said, "I have been very zealous for the Lord, the God of hosts; for the sons of Israel have forsaken Thy covenant, torn down Thine altars and killed Thy prophets with the sword. AND I ALONE AM LEFT; AND THEY SEEK MY LIFE, TO TAKE IT AWAY" (1 Kings 17:13, 14).

It is so easy to feel sorry for yourself and STOP. In our spiritual walk, sometimes we STOP, LOOK AND LISTEN, which is good when crossing a railroad track, but in our spiritual walk it, can lead to devastation. Usually, when we stop and listen, as in the context above, it is the wrong voice being heard. Suddenly, our thoughts will go wild with imaginations, probabilities, fears, possibilities and supposing this or that. Our posture in this life is to keep on walking and let God keep on talking. God patiently reassured Elijah that 7,000 others in Israel had not bowed down to Baal and every mouth had not kissed him (1 Kings 19:18).

"They make it a spring.."

Those that are passing through the valley of weeping are making it a refreshing spring of water. There are two options on the road through the valley of weeping: one is to stop and drown in the flowing tears or to pass on through allowing the tears to be miraculously changed into rejuvenating springs for others that are following.

"The early rain also covers it with blessings."

The phrase, "early rain," embraces the idea of the autumn rains that sprouted the seeds during the planting season in Israel, just before the winter frosts. The tears of those that are passing through the valley of Baca are being symbolized as seeds that will spring up as blessings to others that will later pass through valley.

"They go from strength to strength."

The strength of God is supplied according to the need. With each situation there is an adequate supply of strength to overcome. It is not that we receive the totality of God's strength at one time and never need to ask again. There is a constant flow of strength from God into our lives to keep us moving on, passing through the valley of Baca.

On the day of Pentecost they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. "They were filled" is not questioned. But did they need other refreshing Holy Spirit experiences after that day? Yes, they did! "Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 4:8) or being filled with the Spirit, he began to speak to the people. The same thing happened to Paul when addressing Elymas the magician (Acts 13:9). This ongoing experience is confirmed in Ephesians 5:18, "And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit," or as the Greek verb expresses, "Be constantly being filled with the Spirit."

The total supply of resources needed for the believer to be saved and to be an overcomer is in the reservoir in heaven, yet sometimes we do not understand God's dispensing policy. Every day is a faith step. God dispenses what is needed for that day according to our faith. Note the translation given by Kenneth Wuest of Phil. 4:13, "I am strong for all things in the One who constantly infuses strength in me." Daily, every believer needs to stay in vital communication with God to receive the required supply of provisions.

"Every one of them appears before God in Zion."

They made it! They passed through the valley of Baca, making it only a good testimony for those that follow, and now they appear before God. "Every one of them" is a glorious triumph of faith. Among the believers, there were no casualties along the way.

Keep on walking, keep on believing and pass through the valleys, gaining strength with each stride, building faith with each tear, smiling in spite of parched lips, allowing others to see the roadmap of your heart that directs them to Zion.

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