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A table of contents for *The Bible Student* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_bible-student\\_01.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_bible-student_01.php)

did not receive the assurance that his sins were forgiven (contrast Mark 2:5); a reason for this may be suggested by verse 14. The 'bed' (Gk. *krabattos*) was a mat or straw pallet, easily rolled up and carried on the shoulder.

v. 9—*And straightway the man was made whole, and took up his bed and walked*—Here, as in the previous verse, the verb 'walk' means literally 'walk about' (Gk. *peripateo*). The sequence of the verbs is significant; of course the man had to be 'made whole' before he could get up, shoulder his mat, and begin to walk. What then made him whole? The obedience of his will, surely, in response to the enabling command of Christ. And immediately he received the power to do what previously he was unable to do.

(*To be continued*)

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## GUIDANCE

W. GRAHAM SCROGGIE, D.D.

In 1 Thess. 3:11-13, we find one of the many prayers of the Apostle Paul; so short, and yet so long. He makes request first, on his own behalf, for guidance; and then, on the Church's behalf, for perfection. Let me call your attention to the personal request:

**'Now may our God and Father Himself, and our Lord Jesus, direct our way unto you.'**

### I. The Guidance

In this brief text it is implied that

#### 1. *Guidance is needed*

Were this not so, it would not be sought. But a moment's reflection will serve to convince us of this necessity. Think, for instance, of the (*a*) limits and defects of our foresight. The Apostle himself said, 'I go bound in the Spirit to Jerusalem, *not knowing* the things that shall befall me there.' Who among

us can foresee or foretell the course of the next twelve hours? Our vision is not only limited, but within those limits it is defective; the most of us are squint-eyed. But then again, think of the (*b*) circumstances over which we have no control. Things, which we do foresee, we cannot always regulate. Oftentimes we are forced into the midst of most difficult circumstances, and are left in utter perplexity as to how best to escape from them, and it is only as our Lord points the way of escape that we shall see it. But the sense of our need of guidance will be strongest and keenest when we think of the (*c*) forces that are everywhere and always active against the Kingdom of God and all who belong to it. Paul says: 'We would fain have come unto you, I Paul, once and again, and Satan hath *hindered us*'. Satan cut across his path, intercepted his progress, waylaid him as marauders waylay to rob an innocent pilgrim. In the paths of life, especially through its mountain regions, the dangers are many, and our enemies thick and fierce. What need then for guidance. What need to be taken by the hand by One Who knows all the path, all the pits, all the lurking places; by One Who sees all the traps and nets laid in the way, and Who has been over all the ground before us. If we have any sense of the perils of life's path, we may well pray

'Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah!  
 Pilgrim through this barren land;  
 I am weak, but Thou art mighty;  
 Hold me by Thy powerful hand.  
 While I tread the vale of sorrow,  
 May I in Thy love abide;  
 Keep me, O my gracious Saviour!  
 Cleaving closely to Thy side,  
 Still relying  
 On my Father's changeless love.'

But further, in this text, it is inferred that

## 2. *Guidance will be given*

Such an inference is both reasonable and right, as we shall see (*a*) if we think of the revelation of God as Providence. All history subscribes to the illustration of this, but from the Apostle's point of view, particularly Old Testament history, and that of the

great Empires whose course was predicted so plainly by Daniel. No one can read and believe the Book of Daniel without its being a fundamental plank in his creed that God is aback of and above all things, eternally sovereign. He guides men and nations and all things, and over the entire cosmic system there is a superintending Providence.

‘Oh yet we trust  
That not a worm is cloven in vain;  
That not a moth with vain desire  
Is shrivell’d in fruitless fire,  
Or but subserves another gain.’

Nothing is unforeseen by God, nothing takes Him by surprise, but He does not sit aside, merely an interested observer; His will and hand are in all things. He has made of one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed seasons, and the bounds of their habitation. Because of all this, we reasonably expect to be guided. But there are grounds of belief, less abstract, as for instance (*b*) the Covenant relationship between God and His people. What He has pledged Himself to be to us implies and involves guidance. There is also (*c*) the fact that the Divine Will is the standard and strength of the lives of the saints. That too, is a fundamental tenet of our Christian faith. If the Will of God is not the sphere of the believer’s life, its guiding principle and power, then his own or the devil’s will must be. But we are not in doubt about it. His Will is our compass at sea, our cloudy and fiery pillar on land, our safeguard all along our pilgrim path, and our assurance and comfort in death.

Therefore the guidance needed, should be sought with the conviction that it shall be given to each and all of us.

Yet once more, in this passage it is assumed that:

### 3. *Guidance is Particular*

One should distinguish between the Providence that is general, over all men and nations, and that which is particular, especially for the redeemed. This latter is

(a) Particular as to the *Person*.

To realise how true this is, we have only to study carefully the life of any one of the great characters of the Bible. Peter could never have done Paul's work, neither could Paul have done Peter's. Each man, by temperament and training was exactly suited to the task which each was given to perform. Paul, for instance, was destined in the Divine Providence to be the world-evangelist, and so far as we know, there was no man living at that time who had Paul's qualifications for such a work. He was a Hebrew by birth, a Greek by training, and a Roman by franchise, and so, had in himself all those elements which, in these three great peoples, he set out to conquer for Christ. Beloved, let us believe that God has His work to do through each of us, as assuredly as He has a work to do in us, and He Who has endowed us foreknew what our task was to be. Let us not say, therefore, that because we have not the qualifications of some one else, we are, in consequence, of no use. We are all of use, and no one can do your piece of work, and no one can do mine. Guidance is particular as to the Person. But, further, it is

(b) Particular as to the *Purpose*.

How wonderful and rich is that story in Acts 10, which alternates between Peter and Cornelius, revealing a Divine purpose.

Peter is sent for to go to Joppa,  
 Cornelius is visited by an Angel.  
 Peter falls asleep, and has a vision,  
 Cornelius sends a deputation to Joppa.  
 Peter goes to Caesarea.  
 Cornelius meets Peter.

The Jew and the Roman are found in the same house, and are in common blessed with a precious outpouring of the Spirit. See how the incidents and details of this story harmonize into the plan of God for each of these men, and all conduce to, and converge into the Divine purpose. So in your life and mine.

'When, in 1864, at a crisis in the Telugu Mission, John E. Clough offered to go to the "Lone Star" field, and persisted in going, against every discouragement, one of the great objections raised by Dr Baron Stow and others was that he was not educated

as a minister, but as a civil engineer: and what did the American Baptist Union want of a civil engineer in Southern India? Still, he felt a strange destiny calling him. He was born the same year that the mission was, and had been unconsciously preparing for work there, and now the call of God was so loud that he told Dr Stow he must find some other way to go, if the Board would not send him. They sent him out, not without misgivings. Thirteen years later it appeared why this very man had been called of God.

During this troublous time, in the great famine of 1876-1877, it was his certificate of civil engineer that won for him the appointment to take the contract for digging the four miles of the unfinished Buckingham Canal, which enabled him to employ thousands of starving natives, and so secure them wages and means to buy food. It was that famine and that civil engineering that brought Mr Clough into such sympathetic contact with the Telugus, and enabled him, when not at work, to read to them the Bible and teach them the saving Gospel. Out of this came that marvellous revival which stands unique in all Christian history.

Who was it that foresaw that a civil engineer could do most efficient work just at that crisis, and, years before, sent John E. Clough to India? The providence of God uses means, strangely coincident in time, yet different in kind, to bring about His purposes.'

What is true of Clough and thousands of others, is true of you and of me: but for it to be effectual, we must believe it. Yet again, guidance is

(c) Particular as to the *Path*.

'The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way.'

'As thou goest step by step, the way shall open up before thee.'

'This is the way, walk ye in it.'

In Acts 16: 6, 7, we read that Paul on his second missionary journey assayed to go into Bithynia, 'but the Spirit suffered him not.' Why? Read 1 Peter 1:1, 'Peter—to the strangers scattered throughout. . . . Bithynia.' In some way that we know not, Bithynia was Peter's province and not Paul's, and the Spirit

of restraint acted upon His messenger, so as to keep the ground clear for a later purpose. Carey wished to go to the South Sea Islands, but he was sent to India. George McGregor wished to go abroad as a missionary, but he was kept at home. Thousands of men and women have proved that God had a path for their feet, and that all they had to do was to walk in it. Have we realised this? Oh how blessed and sure is the Divine guidance, going into minutest details, and including every separate believer! We may not always be conscious of that guidance, neither always be able to trace it, but in the will of God, we shall never be outside of it.

Having briefly considered the subject of the Guidance, we may now turn our attention, for a little, to that of

## II. The Guide

Our text says, 'Our God and Father Himself, and our Lord Jesus.' What a marvellously full statement this is of Who it is to Whom we must look for direction in all our ways!

### (1) *God*

#### 1. It is God the Father

This is the title that tells of His infinite Power and Wisdom. He who guides all men guides, of course, those who believe. We who are Christians are included in the scope of the Divine Providence.

### (2) *Father*

But He who guides us who believe, is God in a special aspect and relation. The Father, in a special and peculiar way, guides every member of His redeemed family. And here it is not alone His Power and Wisdom that are in evidence, but His Love.

But further,

#### 2. It is the Lord Jesus

who guides us.

Over and over again in the New Testament, and always in connexions which give significance to the fact, these two titles, belonging to Christ, are united; the one reminding us of His Humanity, and the other of His Deity.

(1) *Jesus*

He who guides us is One like unto ourselves, a Man who has been among us, who has known life's tortuous paths, and who Himself was guided of God. It is Jesus who guides us who believe; Jesus, who was tempted on all planes of His Being like as we are, and who knows our infirmities. But Jesus, who knows also all the road; every winding way, every dangerous declivity, every mountain path, every forest track, and every dark and lonesome gorge. Who then is better able to lead us than Jesus? But He is also

(2) *Lord*

He is more than perfect Man, He is the Lord of Glory: He who has trodden, not only earth's paths, but has gone down into Hades and sounded its depths and who has come out therefrom the Mighty Victor. 'I am He who liveth. I became dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of death and of Hades.' He has also ascended up into Heaven, and is now upon the Father's throne. There's not a path in the universe He has not trodden, and *He is our Guide*. Blessed be God and our Lord!

We have seen that we are guided by, 1. God the Father; and by, 2. The Lord Jesus: but there remains in this marvellous verse yet another thought. Our Guide is

3. **The Father and Son**

(1) The verb 'direct' is in the singular, although two subjects are named. This implies, nay, more, it affirms the perfect oneness of the Son with the Father, His co-eternity, and co-equality: and also, it implies the perfect accordance of wills among the Persons of the Godhead. Jesus had said, 'I and My Father are one'; and here, quite incidentally, as we would say, the doctrine is declared, its value as evidence being all the greater by reason of its being a subordinate thought in the passage. Yes, the Father and the Son are not two guides, but one; and their wills and plans for us are not two, but one, so that spiritual direction and leading is never conflicting and contradictory, but always simple and harmonious.



(2) Shall we not thank God for such an assurance that our life's path is His concern, and that He is engaged for our good always with all the days, and all the ways, of all of us!

I have spoken of the Guidance, and of the Guide. Just a word must be said about

### III. The Guided

In order to come to a realization of the divine guidance, personally, and in detail, certain conditions are indispensable.

#### 1. There must be personal relationship to the Persons of the Guide

The text says '*our* God', and, '*our* Lord.' This is the language of relationship and appropriation. Spiritual guidance, and, it would seem, a particular providence, are not given to those who are not of Christ, who are in the world and of the evil one. These are the privileges of the children of God. Hence the necessity for being able to say with assurance '*my* Lord and *my* God.'

#### 2. There must be practical faith in the power and wisdom of the Guide

Such faith expresses itself in prayer, as in the case before us. Prayer is not necessary to God in order that He might guide us, but it is necessary to us, in order that we may know His power and wisdom. If we do not pray, the door is shut, hindering divine access: if we do not pray, the blinds are down, destroying spiritual vision. The prayerless soul can never be sensible of the divine guidance, for such an one is in his own, and not in God's will and way.

#### 3. There must be perfect submission to the purpose of the Guide

If we follow Christ only so far as we can understand whither He is leading us, we shall not get far. We are not capable of understanding all the wonder of His purposes for us, and we can know this *only as we go*. Were this not so, what would become of faith? We may rest assured that His purposes for us are only good, and always best, and so, follow Him fully and trustfully.

He leadeſt me, O bleſſed thought !  
 Oh words with heavenly comfort fraught.  
 What'er I do, wher'er I be,  
 Still 'tis God's hand, He leadeth me.

Sometimes 'mid ſcenes of deepeſt gloom,  
 Sometimes where Eden's bowers bloom,  
 By waters ſtill o'er troubled ſea,  
 Still 'tis His hand that leadeth me.

Lord, I would place my hand in Thine,  
 And never murmur or repine—  
 Content, whatever lot I ſee,  
 Since, 'tis my God that leadeth me,

## THE PROPHECIES OF DANIEL

A. NAISMITH, M.A.

### I. The Great Image of Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

Having conſidered the Book of Daniel and its writer, we proceed to an examination of the great prophecies that this remarkable volume unfolds. Already we have obſerved that they deal chiefly with 'the times of the Gentiles' referred to by our Lord in Luke 21:24, which were inaugurated by the withdrawal of the viſible token of the Divine preſence, the Shechinah, from the temple and the city of Jeruſalem, and the deſtruction of the temple and the city by the Babylonian deſpot, Nebuchadnezzar. The majority of the prophecies of the book include this period and predict alſo its termination in the perſonal advent of Chriſt to the earth and His judgment of the Gentile nations. The kingdoms of the world will then become 'the kingdom of our God and His Chriſt.' The kingdom of God is ſeen in Scripture in a three-fold aſpect: in Miniature, during Iſrael's Theocracy antecedent to the nation's choice of a king from among themſelves, in Mystery during the preſent diſpenſation of grace between the firſt and ſecond advents of the 'Lord from Heaven', and in Maniſtation during Chriſt's Millennial reign on earth and ſubſequentlly in the eternal ſtate. The parables of the Kingdom, recounted in Matt. 13, preſent the kingdom in Mystery, that is, in its preſent ſtate during the times of the Gentiles.