

Who Turned Out the Lights?

by Chaplain Frank Wm. Nagy

Even God's prophetic people are still often left in the dark. As far as God is concerned, that's more than okay, because that means they have to walk by faith, rather than sight (2 Cor 5:7). But, once in the dark, we often stop moving ahead. Instead of keeping going, trusting God, we prematurely take it into our own hands to light the way by some form of fleshly cleverness. We get out our matches and burn ourselves in the process (Isaiah 50:10-11).

Who Turned Out the Lights?

If in an instant it was to become pitch black in this room, a smoke bomb had gone off, and you could not see your hand in front of your face, could you make your way to one of the exits? Sure you could. Unless you were knocked down and completely disoriented, you would remember where you are in the room and where the doors and windows are situated. You would know what to do next. You could find your means of escape.

Who Turned Out the Lights? God did!

Now this is something God does periodically in the Christian's life. He gives us some great revelations. Sets us on the path toward getting them done, then all of a sudden we lose sight of him. He hasn't left us, but we don't feel his presence. We are stumped and left scratching our heads. The honeymoon we have felt with Jesus and his sweet Spirit is over. The Father seems stern and angry in this darkness. Trouble seems to loom over the path God had directed us to walk. He just told us, "This is the way walk in it," yet suddenly God is no longer lighting our idyllic Eden. We find ourselves swallowed whole by the valley of the shadow of death.

The word of God comes to comfort us. Isaiah 50:10:

Is 50:10 "Who is among you that fears the LORD, that obeys the voice of his servant, that walks in darkness, and has no light? let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God. 11 Behold, all you that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that you have kindled. This shall you have of my hand: you shall lie down in sorrow [torment]."

When we are in this situation, we are actually in a good place. This is the place where faith can grow. (When one can see, one hardly needs faith does one?) We learn to trust God to keep going in the direction He set for us before He turned out the lights.

Yet, Isaiah 50 also reveals the machinations most go through when they don't have the Spirit's leading. Make sure you don't light your own light when you find yourself in this situation, because God makes it clear here that is not the way of the Lord. On the other hand, He clearly warns you will find yourself in a heap of trouble for your trying to play Holy Spirit!

Lot had trouble making it up that hill, as he and his daughters escaped from Sodom. Lot asked if he would be permitted to stay in this certain town. Even with the angels of the Lord's help, Lot still lacked the light of God's great plan for his life. In a bleak moment, after the angels left, Lot succumbed to exhaustion. Rather than trusting God to protect him in his planned place of refuge, he opted for the dim candle of another, even more soulish solution. Stopping short of getting to town, he felt safer hiding out in a cave. Most of us know what trouble that brought with his daughters bearing him the heads of two warring factions, who have been a pain to Abraham's line ever since.

Even Abram fell into the same error. He tried to make his own light when it seemed there was no way possible for God to do as He promised. Abe and his wife couldn't see what was next. So, they made it up as they went along. He and Sara got out their little fire sticks and lit them with what they figured was a good plan to help poor old God out. At this point, they must have felt the Ancient of Days was "too far-gone senile" to know she was far beyond the natural time He as Creator had set for childbearing. They put in their own two-cents-worth to God's equation and ended up with Ishmael, who has caused their later Isaac and his descendants no end of trouble.

Jacob needed to wrestle with God until he was tried of doing things the Jacobean way. God pulled his hip out of joint and declared him "Israel." who would now rely on the Lord to walk by faith, even though walking that way is with a limp.

We need to get on God's full program to change us to the extent He has in mind. We need to get tired of doing it the Abramic and Jacobean ways. If we are still acting in the human energy as Abrams and Jacobs, we need to have God breathe that extra syllable into our names, or let God pull our hip out of joint to make us Abrahams and Israels, who will rely on him to help us past the darkness God has allowed. Remember, God has only done this to give us the opportunity to trust Him and grow in our exercise of faith.

Abraham and Israel escaped themselves to become full of God's spirit, but other Bible examples show the unfortunate result of staying the course in the flesh. King Saul shows us a prime example for trying to fill in when God doesn't seem to be showing up and the fruit that remains if one does not finally veer from his own wrong path. King Saul went so far in developing his own flesh-ridden answers to his needs that he so grieved the Lord that the Spirit of God left him.

Is 50:11 Behold, all you that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that you have kindled. This shall you have of my hand: you shall lie down in sorrow [torment]."

Dan 2:22 God *reveals* the deep and secret things. He knows what is in the darkness, and the light dwells with him.

He can still guide us in the dark and, in fact, may find it easier to do so than when it appears we have a lighted way ahead. We are less ready to argue with him, than when we have sight of what we can do that may or may not be in line with what He has in mind.