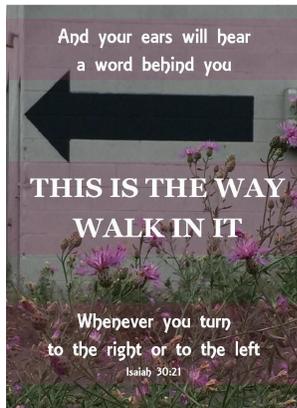


Walk This Way



*"And your ears will hear a word behind you,
'This is the way, walk in it'
whenever you turn to the right or to the left."*

These are the words found in Isaiah 30:21. I confess, as I read them my thoughts were, if only it were that easy! Over the years, there have been SO MANY times that I wished He would verbally tell me to turn here, or to turn there, then I would know which way to go. Life can be frustrating to us when we hear nothing, or when we are waiting for a flashing neon sign to point the direction we should go and nothing appears. It would be wonderful to have a big flashing 'YES' or 'NO' up in the sky, or an arrow pointing the way. But as I read scripture, I'm reminded that the Israelites had a pillar of cloud by day and fire by night, and they still didn't know which way to go.

I've come to realize that the problem is not with Him not pointing the way, nor speaking to us, but that the problem comes when we are inattentive to His word, and do not allow His Spirit to do His job of leading and directing us. We're too busy trying to go our own direction. When we are not in abiding fellowship with Him we don't hear Him very well.

If you look at verse one of this same chapter you will see the words, *"Woe to the rebellious children, declares the Lord, 'who execute a plan, but not mine. And make an alliance, but not of My Spirit, in order to add sin to sin.'"* The chapter is full of rebuke for them doing their own thing, living their own way, seeking their own desires. Making their own plans. Joining themselves to people that led them away from God. They were not seeking to hear His voice, nor gain His direction. Are we?

Our gracious God has given us a book consisting of 66 smaller books and letters. That's a whole lot of speaking and directing. In that book is everything that He deemed necessary for us to know. Principles that He set up to govern the world by. Precepts revealed that are to guide our decision making, to give us direction. And yet, we spend more time doing just about everything else than being in His word (and I'm speaking of myself here as well, guilty as charged.) Like the Israelites, we execute plans without consulting the One who has the only good plan for us, we follow our own desires, living our own way, making alliances with those in the world that would lead us away from Him. And then we complain about not hearing His voice?

We have the ability to change our hearing. Verse 15 says, *"In repentance and rest you shall be saved, in quietness and trust is your strength, but you were not willing."* Willing. All it takes is a willingness to follow after God, a willingness to repent, and to trust. If we want to know which way to go we only need to follow Him. If we are walking in fellowship with the Holy Spirit we can't help but be going the right direction.

Verse 18 of Isaiah 30 says this, *"Therefore, the Lord longs to be gracious to you, and therefore He waits on high to have compassion on you. For the Lord is a God of justice; How blessed are all*

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those who long for Him." If we want to hear His voice today, we must be willing to listen. Open His Word, seek His will in our choices, and listen. He is faithful to lead, His Spirit will direct. Our God is compassionate and just.

Father, Forgive me the times I have complained about not hearing Your voice, when in fact I wasn't seeking to hear You since I already had made my own plans. Forgive me the times I have complained about not having a YES or a NO shouted from the heavens but was instead was called upon to trust, to rest, to wait on Your Spirit for direction. Help each one of us to be repentant and be willing to listen to You, whether by studying Your word, or submitting to Your Spirit. Thank You for Your great compassion, and help us to remember You are also just, requiring a just reply to any rebelliousness on our part. Thank You for Jesus Christ who has taken our condemnation for us. I pray in His Holy name. Amen.