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Higher Ways #1

2012-07-21, John Fenn, www.supernaturalhousechurch.org

Hi all,

I'm rearranging the scheduled topic of asking 'Does heaven initiates experiences or does earth?' to the topic of 'Higher Ways' because of some recent events in our family's life.

Isaiah 55:7-9: "Let the wicked forsake his way, And the unrighteous man (forsake) his thoughts, and let him return to the Lord...and He will have mercy on him...and abundantly pardon...For my thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways, says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My **ways higher than your ways**, and **My thoughts (are higher) than your thoughts**."

This passage has been used from the pulpit to proclaim how much higher and loftier the Lord's ways and thoughts are than ours, leaving congregants with the sting of hopelessness in their efforts to see their prayers answered and destiny's fulfilled. He is SO high and I am SO low, how can I ever attain? How can I ever get victory?

Invitation

That is not the point of these verses. Note in verse 7 the wicked/unrighteous man **forsakes his ways and thoughts**, and returns to the Lord (and His ways and thoughts).

The word 'forsake' means 'to abandon and renounce'. The wicked and unrighteous man is abandoning and renouncing his ways and thoughts, and RETURNING to the Lord and His ways and thoughts. This is an invitation to leave our ways and thoughts and come up to the higher ways and thoughts of the Lord. This is what renewing the mind and walking daily with the Lord is all about - forsaking our way and learning to think in line with the Father as we walk with Him.

Example from my own life: Weather change?

Barb and I recently returned from a 2 week trip that included a 5 day mini-reunion with 2 of our sons and daughters in law and our 6 grandchildren over the 4th of July holiday in the Seattle area (it would have been impossible for us to take Chris, our oldest son, the handicapped one, though we would have loved to have had all 3 boys together).

Barb and I continued on to ministry time on Vancouver Island then eastward and down into Bozeman and Billings, Montana. (A 7-10 day strictly ministry trip for the Portland-Seattle-Vancouver-Vancouver Island area is planned in the future)

Before our trip I asked the Father for the sake of our kids and grandkids, that He would make sure we had clear skies and temperatures in the 70-75F (21-24C) range. If you know that area of the world you know that can be a tall order, but I had peace that it would be so.

As the trip approached the area was having the usual cold, cloudy, and wet weather it is known for, and the weather forecast for that week was for more of the same - but I had peace so I followed the peace and didn't change plans.

That whole week was exactly as requested; the rain and low temperatures moved out the evening we flew in, replaced by sun and warm temperatures the whole 2 weeks as I had asked!

Question

Am I to believe that the Father God changed a whole region's weather pattern for little old us, providing millions of people (finally) their summer weather just because some guy in Oklahoma wanting to have a nice holiday and ministry time while visiting the area made request?

That would be the height of arrogance, and totally incorrect. The truth is that I do my best to walk in the higher ways and thoughts of the Lord, having forsaken my ways and thoughts many years ago (though I remain a work in progress as you'll see below). When it came into my heart to have the family reunion and ministry time, I consulted with the Father and got an immediate peace about the trip.

Once I had that peace, which is the word from heaven that He was in agreement with the trip, or to say it another way, He was thinking I should do the trip too, my requests for weather and temperatures were naturally in accordance with His higher thoughts and ways concerning the trip.

In fact, He knew before the laying the foundation of the earth that I would at this time have the idea to put the trip together, and He coordinated even my desire for good and warm weather precisely with His thoughts from way back then. (Ephesians 2:10, II Timothy 1:9)

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Missed it this time

We flew out Tuesday, July 2, leaving our house early in the morning. Monday the 1st, the day before this trip, was constantly busy from sun up to way past sun down. Neighbors to instruct in the watering of the garden, laundry, ministry work, emails, phone calls - you know what the day before a big trip is like!

That's when my lap top broke. Beyond repair (for now at least). I had work to do and needed a lap top on the trip, so off to Walmart I went, buying a basic bargain lap top (which still has far more power, memory and capability than my 2 year old now broken one).

On set up I entered my password as instructed, completed the set up, then spent the day getting ready for the trip on other things. About 8pm (20:00) I flipped up the lid, entered my password and saw the message 'incorrect password'. I re-entered - same message. What was wrong with this stupid computer!??!

Secret code?

I called the help line. A patient man explained there is no secret code to get past that blue screen and little box where one enters his or her password. I pressed him for some secret industry code - no such thing. His suggestion was to go back to Walmart and exchange it for a new one.

Having spent an hour or more in set up and phone call, and it being now 9:15pm (21:15) and knowing I would have to be up by sunrise thirty (about 5:30am), I wasn't a happy camper.

I asked "Father why don't you just tell me what I did wrong" and was vaguely aware of my angel's presence in the living room, but I was too agitated to pay attention as I huffed to my truck and in the near dark explained to Barb I had to drive the 25 minutes to Walmart to start the process all over again.

60's music take me away

The drive into town winds around the lake we live on, and once the sun goes down deer seem to think the middle of the road is their special place to meet and talk about the day, so I put my mellow 60's music on my iPhone, put the ear buds in, started praying and singing in the Spirit and worshipping the Father, and slowly drove on through the gathering darkness.

(I realize me worshipping the Lord and singing in the Spirit to the melody of mellow 60's music may offend some, but maybe its my 54 years old or meeting the Lord in 1974, but much of modern music labeled 'worship' simply isn't. I love Hillsongs and Michael W. Smith's worship songs, but give me The 2nd Chapter of Acts, Keith Green, Honeytree, or mellow 60's songs and I'm making melody in my heart to the Lord just fine)

Somewhere on the other side of the bridge into town and the Vogues singing "You're the One" (or was it 'Ferry Cross the Mersey' by Gerry and the Pacemakers?) my mind drifted off the song and into that spiritually neutral wavelength as I worshipped in tongues where I was once again aware of my angel, this time crouching in the bed of my pickup just to my right and behind me on the other side of the (rear) window.

He said: "You accidentally touched 'caps lock' when you entered the letters, and accidentally touched it again to release it when you entered the numbers." I was only going 35 mph at the time (56 kph) but I pulled over into a parking lot and slammed the brakes on so fast a by-stander would have thought I'd lost control.

I took the carefully re-wrapped computer out of the box, turned it on, made sure I didn't touch the caps lock key, and the computer said 'Welcome John'....ARGH!!!! Suddenly my angel said: "You could have received this immediately at home if you'd just been more calm about it." ARGH again.

(I mumbled a 'I'm sorry Father' as I slowly drove home, no music on, feeling the mix of relief and embarrassment one might feel if they'd had a bursting bladder so had to pee their pants - you can't help feeling relieved but you also can't help feeling embarrassed and just hope no one notices.)

Low ways

That my friends, is an example of taking the low way - I stuck to my ways and thoughts until almost the last minute. There awaits for us the invitation to come up to higher ways and thoughts, accompanied by a Guide, the Holy Spirit, to help us stay in those higher ways and thoughts.

Paul said in Philippians 3:15 that if, as we press toward the mark of the high call in Christ we are otherwise minded, the Lord will reveal this to us. That's what happened when I finally calmed down enough to hear that word of knowledge on what I did wrong on the computer password.

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And that's the process I want to take apart for you in this series. How to leave old ways and thoughts and start walking in the Father's higher ways and thoughts. Next week I'll share how our son, Chris, the handicapped one, nearly died while we were on this trip and how the Father saved his life. When it counted, we moved in His higher ways and thoughts and saved Chris' life.

Next week then, blessings,
John Fenn / www.supernaturalhousechurch.org

Higher Ways # 2

2012-07-28, John Fenn, www.supernaturalhousechurch.org

Hi all,

I shared last week how the Isaiah 55 passage 'my ways are higher than your ways, my thoughts than your thoughts', is actually an invitation to come up to the Father's higher ways and thoughts, for He tells the wicked and unrighteous to forsake his ways and thoughts and return to the Lord.

All things prepared

Ephesians 2:10 Amplified version: "For we are God's own handiwork (His workmanship), recreated in Christ Jesus, born anew that we may do those good works which God predestined **(planned beforehand)** for us **(taking paths which He prepared ahead of time)**, that we should walk in them (living the good life which He prearranged and made ready for us to live."

That means as I walk with Him He will reveal what has already been planned at the appropriate time.

Look at II Timothy 1:9: "He has saved us and **called us to a holy life**, not because of anything we have done, but according to His purpose and grace. This grace was **given to us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time...**" **(in the Greek: 'before times eternal')**

All His provision for our whole lives has already been given to us! These are the higher ways Isaiah 55 talks about - come up to walk in what has been prepared for you since times eternal - just walk with Him and He will reveal what He has prepared when it is needed. These are given with 'purpose and grace' - there is a purpose to your life for **grace is never separate from purpose**.

The trip and Chris

When I plan a trip I mentally walk through every element while shifting attention to my spirit to see if the Holy Spirit in my spirit witnesses of any detail not yet covered in the safety of the Lord.

I mentally walked through the nearly 2 hour drive into Tulsa, I thought of the flight to Seattle and nothing was in the Spirit about safety or any other issue related to the flights.

I thought about our son, daughter in law, and their 3 and 5 year old flying with us - kids, flying, ear pressure - nothing in the Spirit, it just feels blank, no negative feeling in my spirit so I knew all was OK.

I thought through and shifted attention to my spirit for the whole 5 days while there (things like anything about safety and fireworks with the kids, etc), then the remaining trip...and then my attention fell to our son Chris, our oldest and handicapped son who lives in a group home and wasn't going with us. There I had a sense of something wrong so I dwelt on him and that sense of heaviness, a sorrow that overwhelmed me when I thought of him and this trip.

What was prepared by God, what the devil wanted to do

The Father only prepares good things for us - James 1:16-17 says 'Do not be deceived brethren, every good and perfect gift comes down from the Father of lights in whom there is no variableness nor even a shade of turning (of His character)..."

But the devil would like to disrupt us from walking in our Father's higher ways by looking for any way to steal, kill, destroy, distract, cause us to back away from Father's provision by introducing fear, etc.

So I expect my Father to reveal both His plans that have been prepared since times eternal, AND anything the devil has planned to try to keep me from walking in Father's provision. That's why I have to know Him and know Him well.

We left July 3, a Tuesday, and we had Chris at home that weekend through Monday afternoon. I knew something was

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going to happen with Chris on the trip, and by Monday morning I knew what it was - Chris was going to be hit by a car and killed on Wednesday, July 11th, in the afternoon. I knew we were going to be driving between Vancouver and Banff when we got the call, and we'd have to fly emergency tickets out of Calgary to go home to plan a funeral.

When I dropped Chris off at the group home Monday and said goodbye I had the overwhelming sense I was seeing him for the last time this side of heaven. He didn't know what I knew of course, his simple ' Bye dad, when you come back you come get me and take me home' - he understands I have to go and tell people about Jesus - only made me reflect on the frailty of life and made me determined that this would not happen.

Of course there was no opportunity to pray that evening - remember last week's computer exchange issue - and because his death wasn't 'planned' by Satan for another 8 days, I knew I had plenty of time to pray and change things with the Father.

Monday night prayer

It didn't make sense that Chris would be hit by a car, because (in a wheelchair) he is only outside when pushed by others while transitioning to a bus or workshop...so I quizzed the Father on it, but got nothing. I told Him it didn't make sense, yet that 'knowing' that he would be hit by a car that Wednesday afternoon next week remained.

I didn't tell Barb, I kept quiet for her peace's sake. Monday morning she told me she had a grievance about something on the trip, like an accident, but I remained quiet as the Father had given me the details not her and I knew she needed to sleep well the night before we left - and if I needed her to join me in intercession I knew I could tell her as she is a far greater intercessor than me.

That (Monday) night I slept maybe 90 minutes. I knew we had a full day on Tuesday from early morning to well after midnight Tulsa time (Seattle is 2 hours earlier, meaning we'd not get to bed until about 2am Tulsa/body time) but I was going to fight for the Father's provision of safety for Chris, though the revelation of being hit by a car made no sense. I prayed in the Spirit nearly all night, wrestling with the forces of darkness for my son's life.

I cast the devil out and away from the situation right away of course, and asked the Father to send angels to protect Chris - but this was a perverse assignment from hell where the demon was persistent. The reason for the persistence became clear somewhere about 2am when I asked the Father what was taking so long - He told me there were many people involved and a chain of events involved.

If it was a simple matter of my will against the demon trying to cause an accident, it would have been an easy 'I command you to leave' - but many people were involved (each having their own will, job responsibilities, other residents to deal with) so the intensity of the prayer required persistence to undo all that spider web of people and events of that Wednesday afternoon to be...finally just before dawn the last thread of web was evidently unwound.

I could feel the momentum shifting about 4am but unlike my usual reaction of 'that's good enough', I stayed with it until every strand was undone and the Father had a clear path to make His provision for the day manifest. By dawn I got the victory and total peace - I knew Chris had been spared. Barb woke up later and commented that she suddenly had peace...then I filled in the details for her - on that side of peace.

Fast forward to Wednesday morning the 11th

We were driving through the mountains of Canada heading toward our destination for the night, Banff, in Alberta, when I made the call to Chris' group home. The Aide, Peggy, answered and I told her of what the Father showed me about that afternoon and she responded; "Hmmm. That's interesting, here is what's happening around here..."

Some 2 months earlier they had upgraded Chris' wheelchair. Due to a stroke at age 17 he only has use of his right hand, so when he pushes the rim of his wheelchair he just spins in circles. He grabs doorways to pull himself down a hall or move other than circles. But 2 months ago his wheelchair got a locking axle for the left wheel - they put a 2nd grab wheel on the right wheel, and if he grabs the original bar he spins in circles, but if he holds both bars it locks the left wheel and he can go straight. Let go of the 2nd one and he can turn or spin, grab the 2nd again and he goes straight.

Peggy continued: "Chris has just this week mastered his wheelchair. We've discovered him out in the parking lot, going over speed bumps and laughing hard, but a few times he's been to the road out front before we've caught him."

Suddenly it all made sense - that's why the 'hit by a car' burden was there. With 2 Aides for 8 people and the numerous duties that keep the Aides busy, they would have lost track of Chris, resulting in the accident. I told her I wanted him in the house that afternoon, watching TV or whatever, but NOT outside. She agreed. Later I told the other Aide, Kathy, the same story as I suspected Peggy didn't relay it - and I was right.



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Later that night I talked to Kathy again, and she said it nearly happened. She said she was in the kitchen making dinner about 4-5pm and Peggy went to do something else, and Chris used that opportunity to open the front door and roll to the busy parking lot before they realized he was gone. (The parking lot is for cars from 2 group homes and 4 buses and the headquarters for the group home (with some 300 clients total in NE Oklahoma) PLUS their garage area to work on the handicapped equipped buses for those clients.

So that is a living example of being sensitive to the Father's higher ways and thoughts, and doing what is needed (2 days of concentrating on it to zero in and 1 sleepless night and follow up phone call) to assure His ways and thoughts were what happened. All things the Father's ways and thoughts are prepared for us to walk in - will we pay the price? Next week - another perspective on coming up to higher ways and thoughts...stay tuned, blessings,
John Fenn

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Higher Ways #3

2012-08-04, John Fenn, www.supernaturalhousechurch.org

Hi all,

I've been sharing from my life about choosing God's higher way's and thoughts. Today 3 more incidents from this past week. By baring my heart and life I'm showing this is a lifestyle, walking with the Father and constantly checking for any difference between my thoughts and ways and His thoughts and ways.

Trip to California

Last week I shared how Chris' life was spared when we were in Canada, and the group home is working on fencing to keep him and other residents from wandering off. Right after getting back from that trip I had a small window of time to drive our truck (Old Reliable) to the Victorville, California area to pick up a trailer given for our use. It weighs 3 tons (6,000 pounds/2720kg) which is at the top of Old Reliable's ability to pull.

As I shared last week, I pray in tongues lightly as I mentally think about a trip - I drive along the route in my mind, sensitive to any witness in my spirit about something going wrong, which is marked by a 'heaviness' or my attention is drawn to and stays on a particular point...if so then I stop and dwell on that and seek more information. The ways of the Spirit and Father are such that usually if you dwell more on a revelation He provides more detail to the point He wants you to know, but not beyond.

I mentally scanned the course of my trip out - 1,400 miles (2250km) across I-40 from Tulsa to Flagstaff, Arizona, then across the Mojave Desert to the Victorville area in the high desert above LA. In my spirit I felt no issues on the way out, but there was a rather light 'heaviness' about the trip home - as I prayed and mentally drove along the route I knew I would have a major issue with the trailer just out of California, and then again 2 hours before arriving in Tulsa I felt a minor thing going wrong with the truck. Barb too felt something would go wrong with the trailer, so I was on the lookout. We had the Father's thoughts.

I asked the Father 'how major' by asking if it was enough that I'd still get home Friday if I left California on Wednesday? Immediately when I thought of Friday it was blank, but when I thought of Saturday I had immediate peace - so I understood His thought was arriving Saturday. Yikes, a 4 day trip back so I was a bit nervous. Immediately I imagined the truck's transmission going out, or blowing the engine, or having to sell truck and trailer in California or Arizona and flying home or calling some of our many friends in Arizona for help - all sorts of imaginations because all He was sharing was vague information.

(Get my dvd 'How the Lord Taught me to Hear the Father's Voice' or cd/mp3 'How to Be Led By the Spirit' for more information on the ways the Father speaks or reveals things to us)

Important! I put all those wild thoughts from me, and disciplined my mind to stay focused on what I had been shown - major issue early in the trip, minor issue 2 hours from home, and a 4 day not 3 day trip back.

The trip back

I left the Victorville area Wednesday afternoon, traveling a comfortable 55-58mph (88kph) for 3 hours to the town of Needles, California, right on the Arizona/California border in the Mojave Desert. The next morning I drove the hour to and through Kingman, Arizona and 52 miles beyond, almost exactly 2 hours into the day, when suddenly the left front tire on the trailer disintegrated.

I wasn't in the middle of Nowhere, but I was on the outskirts. It was 132 miles to Flagstaff, 52 back to Kingman,

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9:30am. The trailer has 4 tires on 2 axles, one tire in front of the other on each side. The left front tire exploded with such force almost immediately the rim was on the road sending up sparks and ruining it.

I pulled over, jacked up the axle, removed the remaining rim, cut away and unwound the remaining rubber and wire from the brake and axle, and got the spare - it was the wrong size, 6 holes in the wheel instead of 5. Suddenly I was down 2 tires. So this was the major thing that was going to go wrong with the trailer.

Father's ways and thoughts on the matter...

Once the rim was off I could move slowly along the shoulder of the highway to exit #103 which was 1 mile down the road, and at the end of that exit a sign announced 'pavement ends'. I parked along the side just off the road (more of a path at that point). I told you I was almost downtown 'Nowhere'.

The rule I follow is to first always do in the natural what I know to do, which meant I needed to un-hook the trailer, trust the Father it would be OK, and drive the 52 miles back to Kingman where I trusted the Father had a tire shop with 2 rims and wheels to replace the one that blew up and the incorrectly sized spare.

I did the same thing I always do just in case the Father wanted me to drive 132 miles instead - I mentally drove 132 miles to Flagstaff and it didn't make sense and sensed zero in my spirit. Mentally I drove the other way to Kingman, and didn't feel anything either, but I knew by experience that meant do what seems right in the natural - so I went back to Kingman. I called some shops and found one that said they could help.

Within an hour they had 2 new tires on 2 new rims and I was on my way back to put them on the trailer. In the Father's ordering of my steps I had gone to a tire shop where there was an **"In-n-Out"** hamburger place on the corner.

I hadn't eaten at one yet on this trip, and it is a family tradition to eat at In-n-Out when we are in California, started by our daughter in law who is from CA. It isn't that we genuflect at the famed 'In-n-Out' sign, but it is tradition to eat there- it was lunch time and I'd eaten nothing yet that day, so it seemed good to me and Him that I have lunch there. (Even to stop there for lunch I scanned while praying to see if I sensed 'go straight to the trailer', or not. I had no sense of urgency to drive that hour back to where I'd left the trailer on the side of the road, so I had lunch)

Why the blow out happened

Once the new wheel was on the trailer and spare mounted on the back I continued my journey, but as I drove I considered the remaining 3 tires. The trailer had sat in one place for 3 1/2 years in the high California desert before I started on the trip, making me think dry rot and UV damage caused that tire to disintegrate and made me wonder about the remaining ones.

As I drove I was praying in the Spirit lightly while my mind walked through the various options to see if any of the options I was thinking bore witness - looking for a sudden peace or knowing in my spirit at one of the ideas I had, indicating that was the Father's thought on the subject.

I thought I could stop and put the spare on the right side front, thinking that the left front blew because the front trailer tire gets road debris first, hits every bump first, and bears more weight of the trailer than the tire behind it. But then I thought with 3 old tires, that is a 1 in 3 chance I'd choose wrong and have a flat on another tire, making twice the work if I guessed incorrectly.

After sensing no peace or direction on anything as I prayed and thought, I finally asked, "Father, it would be helpful to know why that left front tire blew, because if I knew that I could make a wise decision on what to do with the spare and the other 3 old tires if anything, or just keep things as they are."

Immediately He said: "When you came off the exit last night and almost missed your turn to the campground, you braked hard and turned right all at once, putting most of the weight of the trailer and force of the turn on that left front tire. The turn damaged it internally, that's why it disintegrated 2 hours into your trip today."

As He spoke I saw that turn all over again. The previous night the sun was setting and I was following GPS to a campground, and after I had exited there was a road to the campground I nearly missed, braked hard and turned instinctively, only a split second later remembering I had a 3-ton trailer behind me. For a second I was scared I was going to flip - the turn was so severe - I didn't, but did hear the trailer brakes lock up as I braked and turned at the same time. Evidently I had damaged that old left front tire doing that.

If I'd been religious

The standard religious response to a tire blowing out would be to tell the devil he is bound and cast out, or something



devil-related. But the truth is, I had done it to myself by carelessly braking and turning hard rather than just going past my turn and coming around the other way, remembering I had a 3-ton trailer behind me. It wasn't the devil, I had done it to myself. **That was what the Father thought - the lesson is** that if you want to walk in His higher ways and thoughts on a subject, don't just blame the devil or someone else as a knee jerk reaction - first look in the mirror, then be willing to be honest.

The wind and steering

Once again on the road I noticed when a big semi-truck (tractor-trailer) rig would pass me, I'd first be sucked towards the passing truck and then be blown sideways as it passed. I did what I always do - I prayed in tongues while I thought on the matter, shifting my thoughts to my spirit looking for a witness or peace at a particular thought. I had a load-leveling hitch on the truck which used 2 chains to pull the trailer and truck tight together - without it the truck would look like it was popping a 'wheelie' due to the weight on the back.

With it, the truck and trailer were level. But I wondered if I needed to change the setting because if too much weight was just on the back tires the front ones would be light, making steering very light and tricky - and maybe that was why I was being pulled into and pushed away from the big rigs as they passed. I got nothing as I prayed and thought on what to do, looking for the Father's thoughts on the matter.

I pulled into a road-side rest stop to use the restroom, and while standing at the urinal a man came in to relieve himself at the urinal next to mine. So I struck up a conversation with him, commenting on the long and hot day. He agreed, saying every day for him was a long day, and I responded by asking if he drove one of the big rigs out front, to which he said yes. Then I told him about being pulled into and pushed away from those trucks as they passed, and he said that is normal and even happens with them. "When my wife drives I always tell her to watch out for the vacuum as we pass, and the wave of air pushing us away right after."

I had my Father's thoughts though this man didn't know it - what I was experiencing was normal so I didn't need to adjust anything on the hitch. As we each returned to our trucks, I asked this: "Father, thank you for this wisdom from this man. I don't know if he knows you or not, but either way I'd like his helping me to be credited to his account on the last day, because you used him to give me your thoughts on the matter."

Other incident

The rest of that day and the next were uneventful, and 7am Saturday morning found me about 2 hours from home, just east of Oklahoma City but not quite to Shawnee, on I-40, and I was wondering about the 'minor' thing I had felt would happen about 2 hours from home. Just then the 'check engine' light came on the dashboard, and a quick scan of the gauges showed something wrong with the electrical system. Instead of the needle on the gauge being pegged at '14', it was near the 10 or 12 mark.

That meant either the alternator wasn't putting electricity back into the battery, or the battery was no longer holding a charge. When I prayed in tongues and thought of those 2 options, I felt nothing at the alternator, but when I thought of the battery I suddenly remembered I had been prompted to replace this 4 year old battery before the trip, but ignored the prompting - an urge, a persistent suggestion - to replace it. But I reasoned it away at the time, saying it was a good strong battery. But I think in the early morning, when I had the headlights on and all the trailer lights on, it had pushed the battery over the edge and it was no longer holding a charge. The way the needle was moving I figured I had 30 minutes before the engine quit.

I said, "OK Father, all things are provided for me already (II Peter 1:3-4), so reveal your provision - I need a new battery and a parts store open at 7:15am but most of those are in cities with limited parking, so I'd prefer a Walmart where there is plenty of room to park, and I need it right next to the Interstate because I'm not driving this thing through city streets." I then entered 'Walmart' into GPS, up popped one at the Shawnee Mall 12 miles away - I drove right to it, bought a new battery, and was on my way home...whew!

I shared 2 weeks out of my life in such detail these past two 'Thoughts' to let you see the mechanics of how Barb and I live, and that it is a lifestyle not a formula - it is continual communion with the Father. I go through the same routine when Barb drives the 2 hours down to Tulsa - I do what to do in the natural by filling up the car for her, checking the oil, tire pressure, and clean the windshield - then I pray and scan her trip in my mind to see if there is any sense of anything in my spirit. Most times there is nothing.

I do the same when we have Chris home for a couple days, or I contemplate a ministry trip - or if I just run a 15 minute errand - it is lifestyle, and during that time I'm thinking on 100 different things at any one time, always praying in the Spirit while thinking through things. Right now we've found Barb's car's windshield has cracked due to age and the heat most likely, so I'm praying about \$250 and the time to run to Tulsa to have it replaced...when I get a peace and sense that money and time come together, we'll get it fixed. It is a lifestyle...did I mention that



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before? Don't be religious, just walk with the Father...

So remember - do what you know to do in the natural, and then as you pray in tongues think through your day, shifting attention to your spirit as you think to see if there is a witness that may indicate the Father has another thought on the subject, that He might reveal His higher way for you...next week we'll look at this from another angle...blessings,

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Higher Ways #4

2012-08-11, John Fenn, www.supernaturalhousechurch.org

Hi all,

The last 3 weeks I've shared a snapshot of 2 weeks of my life, mistakes I've made and decisions good and bad concerning seeking, finding, and walking in the higher ways and thoughts of the Father.

Right heart

Our text has been Isaiah 55: 6-13 which encourages us to forsake our wicked ways and thoughts and return to the Lord, which nets this result: 'He will have mercy and abundantly pardon' - in humility we forsake our ways and come up to His higher ways and thoughts. To go higher you must first go lower.

Parking space

Today Chris and I went to Walmart in Barb's car. In the US we have a blue card hung from the rearview mirror for handicapped drivers or their passengers, and I had left ours in my truck, which was in the repair shop. Integrity demanded I park in a regular parking space since I didn't have that card.

The space I chose had nobody parked on the passenger side, and since I was driving Barb's car each time we go in and out I have to remove the seat from his wheelchair, remove both wheels, fold it up and place all in the trunk - not a problem with this space and in we went. (With the truck I just place the wheelchair in the back and strap it down without having to fold it first)

We returned the items Barb asked us to return, and strolled the aisles as Chris loves all the variety, but zeroed in on the toy section for as he said: 'You can buy me a new car if you want' - which I did as he loves Lightning McQueen from the animated movie 'Cars', so he got a little car to add to his collection.

Upon rolling back to the car we saw a pick up truck had parked closely next to us on the passenger side. My first thought was 'Thanks guy I don't appreciate that' - as I pondered if it would be safe to leave Chris in the parking lot while I backed 1/2 way out of the space to give us room, or if I could squeeze him in.

That was a split second thought - just as quickly I countered that thought with 'He didn't know we needed room for Chris and the wheelchair, so he didn't sin against you, his slate is clean, keep your heart right'.

The first thought was pride

The second was the Father's higher thought. I immediately recognized my knee-jerk reaction for the ugliness it was and countered it with a higher thought, a righteous thought - the driver of that truck didn't know we needed space for the wheelchair so he was blameless so keep my heart right.

The Father didn't speak that to me, I countered my first thought purposely and immediately with the higher thought - but frankly, that was only because my heart was humble enough not to push my lower thoughts forward.

If I'd been in a grouchy mood or angry at something, maybe I would have allowed that low thought to stay and be entertained awhile - 'Great going Father, couldn't you have made everyone skip that space? Why is it I can't get a break, isn't it hard enough setting up and breaking down a wheelchair everywhere we go? Was that guy as thin as a post that he could park so close to my car? How am I supposed to get Chris in there?'

Given another day and a sour mood and any or all of those could have been my thoughts. But I didn't 'take' that first thought to dwell on it. I didn't make it mine, didn't take possession of it. Instead, because I was just walking with the Father and praying in the Spirit under my breath and worshipping Him silently all day long, I just slapped down that thought as quickly as it came up and replaced it with a higher thought.

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(It was a tight squeeze but I was able to get Chris in there)

Nobody likes me, everybody hates me, guess I'll go eat worms...

My mom used to mockingly say that to us anytime any of us kids started to have a pity party. To this day I'm not sure what her point was, but it stopped us feeling sorry for ourselves and I think her point was that we could have as big a pity party as we wanted but she wasn't going to pay attention, so just get it out of your system and get on with your day and do what you are supposed to do.

Habakkuk had just such a pity party and it is in full display in Habakkuk chapter one. He was seeing a vision of something that contradicted all he thought he knew about the Lord, and he was as angry as he was confused! He was angry at life and God and didn't know a way out!

The vision he saw in chapter 1, verses 5-11 was of God using the very ungodly Babylonians against the equally ungodly Assyrians, and using the Babylonians to discipline His own people of Judah. He couldn't understand how a righteous God could use an ungodly people to discipline His own people - whether they were walking with Him at the time or not.

This total rearrangement of his theology caused his pride of self and pride as an Israelite to rise up, as well as challenge his entrenched and most cherished beliefs about God.

He confronted the Lord in v12-13: "Are you not from everlasting O Lord my God, my holy One?...You are of purer eyes than to look on evil, and cannot look on iniquity. Why then do you tolerate the treacherous? Why are you silent while the wicked swallow up those who are more righteous than themselves?"

Haven't we all had those thoughts when it seems God is nowhere to be found when we are pressed in on all sides with no one to come to our aid? How can you, a righteous God, let this happen to me!?

The 'guess I'll go eat worms', part

Chapter two opens with such a visual picture we can imagine the prophet crossing his arms and getting up on the city wall in a quiet place and telling the Lord something like "I'm going to just sit here until either you answer or I die."

The English doesn't do it justice, but by comparing several translations we understand the stubbornness of his lowly thoughts and ways: "I will just stand here on my watch, and station myself right here on the wall, and I will see what He says to me and how He answers my complaint!" (2:1)

Remember this is a vision of the Lord and these events he is seeing - chapter 1:1 states this. Habakkuk evidently did get up on the city wall and waited to see what the Lord would say about his complaint, but He didn't get the answers he sought:

"And the Lord answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain on tablets that whoever reads it can run with it. For the vision will happen at an appointed time, and at the end it will make sense and be understood not to have been a lie. Though it is a long time coming, wait for it because it will surely come and will not be late."

The rebuke

With His next words the Lord (only then) addresses Habakkuk's pride and stubbornness: "Look, the soul that is lifted up in pride is not upright in himself nor righteous; The just must live by his faith."

Habakkuk didn't understand how a God who cannot look upon iniquity could use the evil Babylonians to chastise His own people, and the Lord offered absolutely no answers to dissolve the confusion or even offer comfort to his confused mind and raw emotions.

All He told Him was that he was in pride and stubbornness and his soul wasn't right in him, for he was going to have to live by his faith. That line; Thus just shall live by (his) faith, is repeated verbatim in Romans 1:17, Galatians 3:11, and stated in so many words in James chapters 1-4, so we know the lesson is as good for us as it was for Habakkuk.

The lesson for us all

We all have questions for the Lord, some more pressing than others, yet rarely does He provide answers. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever, therefore His answer to Habakkuk is His answer to us - you are going to have to live by faith in humility in spite of not having all the answers. That walk of faith IS the higher way and thought of God on matters of confusion.

The low ways are the ways of a pity party - feeling sorry for yourself, feeling all alone, confused, angry at God and



man. Angry at the guy who took your parking space or the justice system or the insurance company or the government or your neighbor or your church or your spouse...you fill in the blank.

The higher ways are a conscious decision to be obedient and to walk on in faith. Notice that the Lord first told Habakkuk to be obedient - just write the vision as it is for others to read and benefit from - and as for you Habakkuk, you'll have to live by your faith. Your life isn't only for yourself, for your life is a vision written in the hearts of those who observe you - so you may not understand it all, but just be obedient and walk on in the higher ways and thoughts.

Rest

Habakkuk did deliver himself from his lower ways and thoughts of chapter 1, determined to walk on in faith even if he didn't understand what was going on around him. His final words are these:

"Though the fig tree doesn't blossom, neither is there fruit from the vines, and if after all that work the olives fail and the fields yield no food, and if the flock is destroyed away from the safety of the corral, and there is no herd in the stalls; Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation, The Lord God is my strength and he will make my feet like the deer and make me walk in his high places." (3:17-19)

We are raised by a church system that equates emotion with anointing, but the true presence of the Lord is found in the 'in between times' - those times your thoughts hang in the balance between low thoughts and high thoughts - there He may be met, there is where He watches and observes.

If we choose His higher ways and thoughts He is there in full presence...if not, He will let us sit on the wall having a 'hissy fit', mad at the world and ready to prove it by eating worms until we repent of our low ways and thoughts and return to the Lord, and He will then have mercy and abundantly pardon...

Next week, higher ways and thoughts in Acts...blessings,

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Higher Ways #5

2012-08-18, John Fenn, www.supernaturalhousechurch.org

Hi all,

I've been sharing from Isaiah 55:6-13 that tells us to forsake our ways and thoughts and return to the Lord; last week sharing about my attitude check in a parking lot and Habbakuk's pity party when he got an attitude about the way the Lord was handling Israel/Judah and his own life.

Today I share about a widow named Ruth.

Time of decision; higher ways or lower ways?

Each week in this series we've seen there is a point of decision where we must choose between God's higher ways and thoughts, or stick to our own lower ways and thoughts.

These moments do not announce themselves as Hollywood might portray them - with time freezing and a spotlight on the actor as they contemplate which way to go - NO! The point of decision is merely a moment in time, in the midst of very ordinary days, with ordinary circumstances - but it is a point of decision to go high or go low.

Circumstances beyond your control

You recognize the name Ruth, and you may recall she was a woman in the Old Testament who lived just after Israel settled in the Promised land under Joshua, and that she ended up marrying a man named Boaz, but do you know who Elimelech was? It was his life and death that set in motion the circumstances that led to Ruth being in the lineage of the family of Joseph, Jesus' earth-dad.

There was a famine in Israel because the people weren't following the Lord, so Elimelech took his wife, Naomi, and their 2 sons to next door Moab, the modern nation of Jordan, where there was rain - staying about 10 years. In those 10 years their sons got married to local Moabite women, and at some point all 3 men died: Elimelech and sons, leaving just Naomi and her daughters in law. What a tragic story!

After these things the rains came so Naomi decided to return to her home in Bethlehem, telling her daughters in law they were free to stay in Moab with their own families. One daughter in law, Orpah, returned to her Moabite family,

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but the other, Ruth, clung to Naomi stating these famous words:

"Ask me not to leave you, nor return from following you; for where you go, I will go, and where you live, I will live; your people will be my people, and your God will be my God. Where you die, I will die and be buried: The Lord do so to me and more also if anything but death separate you and me." (Ruth 1:1-17)

Flash forward to Boulder, Colorado

I had been an unpaid Associate Pastor at a church in which the pastor planned to sell his business interests and retire, as well as retire from being pastor in favor of the two of us establishing a Bible school and missionary training center in the nearby mountains, and promote me to being the paid pastor of the church.

One June day in 1986 the pastor and his wife came to our house and said he decided not to sell his businesses because "...after all the bills are paid, I'll only have about \$750,000, and you can't do anything for God with just \$750,000." In the Spirit I saw a giant hand slice between he and his wife and me and Barb, and I knew with that decision the pastor had chosen a lower way, and the Lord was separating us.

We were shocked, hurt, disappointed, amazed, confused, and as they left, just stared at each other for a few moments like deer caught in the headlights...what do we do now? After recovering ourselves we determined that we would do what was right no matter what, for we served God not man, and for now, God had us with that church, yet we would privately seek Him.

The next morning while Barb was in the shower crying out to the Lord about the injustice of it all and asking what next, He spoke this to her: "I tried to work through men's hearts but they wouldn't allow Me, therefore I have to work around them. But because it was through no fault of your own, you will remain in my perfect will, though it will mean a detour for you, but again, you will remain in my perfect will."

The following March we moved to become the pastors of a church and wonderful people in southeast Colorado and remained there nearly 6 years. That was a big detour! Sometimes things happen beyond our control, as in Ruth's tragic case or our own normal lives, and we must choose the higher ways.

Knowing that we would remain in the Lord's perfect will in spite of taking an unplanned detour brought us great comfort, and those words have comforted us through the years when 'plan A' has been tossed aside and 'plan B', which didn't exist before plan A was tossed, comes into view.

That decision was in June of 1986, and we became pastors of another church the end of March, 1987 - 9 months later. During that time we continued to serve the people as if nothing had happened, with smiles on our faces and a good attitude - we chose the higher ways and thoughts in this uncomfortable and difficult situation.

Back to Ruth

Naomi was a widow with only Ruth to take care of her. In that day there were no pensions, no retirement accounts put away in a bank for old age, no life insurance - nothing except Ruth to care for her. But Naomi had a young relative of her dead husband's, a 'mighty man of wealth...named Boaz she could contact. (2:1)

Boaz (Hebrew: 'strength') noticed Ruth right away and was attracted to her - telling her she could work alongside his own employees to gather all the grain she wanted. When Ruth reported that Boaz noticed her and gave her favor, Naomi played matchmaker, seeing Boaz as God's provision for Ruth. And she was right!

In 3:9 Ruth did something that is lost on the casual reader, but if you understand the culture you'll see how bold Ruth was. After a hard day of harvesting and threshing grain, all the men fell asleep at their work stations, Boaz included. Naomi told Ruth this would happen, and when it did she was to fall asleep at his feet and put his cloak over herself for covering, which she did. (3:3-9)

The proposal

I know those who are taking my Old Testament Survey Video Bible School know this point already, but stay with me for the sake of the rest - the putting of his clothing over her as a covering was a marriage proposal. Ruth proposed to Boaz that night, in an act of boldness and faith. She and Naomi were amazing women!

When Boaz woke up he was astonished to find Ruth snuggled with him, who responded: "...spread your garment over me, for you are a near kinsman." That was a marriage proposal, and to this day in Israel grooms cover their brides with their garment, showing she is now under his covering and protection in marriage.

Of course Boaz accepted her proposal and they were married, this Jewish man and this Moabite woman who adopted



the God of Israel as her own. All that was set in motion through circumstances beyond her control and she making decisions according to His high ways and thoughts in the midst of those circumstances:

Famine, the meeting of this family from Israel, the marrying into the family, the death of her father in law, the death of her husband, the decision of her mother in law to return to Israel - and that point of decision for Ruth: Stay home in Moab or follow Naomi in the higher ways and thoughts of the God of Israel.

But wait, there's more!

The point of decision which takes us into God's ways and into His thoughts are wrapped in the disguise of normal life. The end of the book of Ruth details the family line: Ruth and Boaz had a son they named Obed. Obed grew up to have a son named Jesse, King David's dad.

That means Ruth was David's great-grandmother. But let us look the other direction of the family line for a moment, asking how it was that an eligible Israelite bachelor was OK with falling in love with a foreign Moabite woman? The answer is found in the genealogy of Joseph found in Matthew 1:5.

"And Salmon's son was Boaz, which he had of Rahab, and Boaz' son was Obed..."

That's correct; Boaz's mother was Rahab the (former) harlot from the Moabite capital, Jericho.

We are told in Joshua 6:25: "And Joshua saved Rahab the harlot alive, and her father's household, and all that she had; and she lives in Israel to this day; because she hid the messengers which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho."

Boaz's mom and dad were Rahab and Salmon, so now we understand why he found a certain Moabite woman who like his mother had adopted the God and people of Israel as her own, attractive.

Not going to slap you in the face

The point of decision where you must choose higher ways and thoughts or sticking to your own lower ways and thoughts will not announce itself with great fanfare. We must see the wisdom in making a higher decision and the fruit of it down the road of life when you decide to choose higher ways and thoughts.

And of course, the story really begins with a prostitute in Jericho named Rahab who made the high decision to think God's thoughts for herself, and took the risk of protecting a couple of spies in that doomed city. The grace of the Lord is what I see:

He rewarded Rahab with a daughter in law from her own country, He provided a godly woman with strength and character and boldness like his mother for Boaz, He provided a godly husband who she knew would love her even though she was a foreigner in a godly family for Ruth, and Naomi would have then been adopted into that family as well, and all that worked together to bring us a man named David, and later a man named Joseph, who married a young woman named Mary, who brought us the Lord Jesus Christ, Messiah of Israel. Amazing Grace!

Blessings,
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