

# **“God’s Footprints”**

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We promised to talk to you again this week about the clouds and the rain, so perhaps you are wondering what these can have to do with the footsteps of the Lord. If you listen carefully, I think you will soon find out.

In Psalm 104 we read that God “maketh the clouds His chariot, and walketh upon the wings of the wind.” [verse 3] Remember what we learned last week,—how the clouds full of water are carried “upon the wings of the wind.” Then you will see what this water that the clouds hold really is, and what it is that the wind carries.

It is the outpouring of God’s own life; for He is in the clouds, as He is in all things, giving out His life in blessing to the world. Think, then, what really comes to us in the rain. Since the clouds are God’s chariot, it is God Himself who visits the earth in the waters which the clouds carry, and this is just what we are told in Psalm 65:—

“Thou visitest the earth and waterest it,  
Thou greatly enrichest it;  
The river of God is full of water; . . .  
Thou makest it soft with showers.” [verses 9, 10]

Think of these texts next time you see the rain falling, that “He maketh the clouds His chariot,” and through them visits the earth, and pours out His own life upon it. Will you not, then, be always glad to see the rain, when you know that it is a visit from the Lord Himself?

And now let us see how we can trace His footsteps, how we can know the places that He has visited in this way. “The clouds are the dust of His feet,” [Nahum 1:3] His Word tells us, and “His paths drop fatness.” [Psalm 66:11] We have just read also that God “greatly enriches” the earth when He visits it in the rain. So by the riches that God leaves in the places that He visits we can trace His footsteps in the earth.

Think of the condition the world would be in if no rain were to fall. Nothing could grow, nothing could live. But the little raindrops carry life, God’s life, for there is no other life, down to this earth.

The earth drinks in the raindrops, and the roots of the plants suck them up, and they are turned into beautiful flowers and sweet fragrance. This is the way that the life that is in the water shows itself in the plants. The beauty and sweet odours of the rose, the lily, and the violet,—what are these but the marks of God’s visits to them in the water, His footprints showing that He has visited the earth?

Then there are other plants, the vines, and the fruit trees. These too drink in God’s life that the water carries to them and in them this wonderful life shows itself in

fruit. The sweet, refreshing and nourishing juices of the grape, the orange, and all other fruits, is simply the rainwater which has been drawn up into plants by the roots, and changed fruit to make food for God's creatures. In all the fruits of the earth we can see footprints of the Lord, for these too, are the results of His "visiting the earth and watering it."

And what would the birds do without the rain? There would be none, for there would be no fruit, nor anything for them to feed on, and nothing to drink. But they drink the fresh water, and eat the fruit, and give out again in beautiful songs the life which they have received.

"The bird drinks up the dewdrop, and turns it into music." All the sweet sounds with which the air is filled are also the results of God's visit in the rain. So even these are the footprints of the Lord, for they show that He has visited the earth.

Then, too, without the rain there would be no grass for the sheep and cattle, and no corn nor grain for our food. But

"He watereth the hills from His chambers: . . .  
He causeth grass to grow for the cattle,  
And herb for the service of man,  
That he may bring forth food out of the earth." [Psalm 104:13, 14]

What blessing and joy His visits bring, when He visits and waters it. For, thinking of this, David sang:—

"Thou crownest the year with Thy goodness  
And Thy paths drop fatness;  
They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness:  
And the hills are girded with joy.  
The pastures are clothed with flocks:  
The valleys also are covered over with corn.  
They shout for joy, they also sing." [Psalm 65:11-13]

Yes, everything that God blesses by His visits, rejoices, and becomes a blessing:— gives out that blessing to others. The healing that the water brings is life, so wherever there is life we can trace the footsteps of the Lord.

When the prophet Ezekiel saw the river of life flowing out from the house of the Lord, he was told, "Everything shall live whithersoever the river cometh." [Ezek. 47:9] Do not forget what we have learned about the whole world being "the house of the Lord," because He "fills heaven and earth." Then you will see that all the water in the world is the out-pouring of His life, of "the river of God which is full of water." [Psalm 65:9]

"From Thy river in the skies  
Streams through airy channels flow,  
Bid the springing corn arise,

And cheer the world below.”

And now, dear children, is not God visiting you continually? In the water that you drink you are taking in His life; and in all the food that you eat, for all the corn and fruit and food of every kind that comes from the earth we have found to be the springing forth of His life which He sends down upon it in the rain.

In the air that you breathe, and in the bright sunshine, in all these things God is visiting and blessing you with His life. What traces of His visits are to be found in you, and how are you giving out the life that He gives to you?

The flowers in beauty and sweetness, the birds in happy songs, the vine in fruit, all these things show the Lord's footprints. And so may you in all these ways show that He has visited you, and that you too have received the blessing of His life.

Let Him show forth that life in you just as the flowers, the birds, and the vine do, in just the way that He wants to; and His promise is that you "shall grow as the lily," [Hosea 14:4] that He will put "a new song" of praise in your mouth, and cause you to bring forth all the precious fruits of His Spirit (read Gal. 5:22, 23).

We must leave our promised talk about the rainbow for some other time.