

Like the Cedars of Lebanon

by Charles E. Cowman

The sermon emphasizes trusting God's mysterious plan through trials, likening believers to cedars of Lebanon destined for greater glory in His Kingdom.

Scripture: Psalm 48:12, Isaiah 62:3, Haggai 2:9, John 13:7

Topics: "Gods Sovereignty", "Faithful Trust"

Description

Charles E. Cowman preaches about the mystery of God's plan in our lives, using the analogy of the cedar tree from Lebanon being cut down to be placed in the Temple of God. Just like the cedar tree, God's dealings in our lives may seem dark and mysterious, but He has a noble purpose to make us pillars in His Heavenly Zion. Despite not understanding the trials we face, we are called to trust in God's guidance and follow Him faithfully, knowing that He has a greater glory in store for us.

Transcript

"What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter" (John 13:7).

We have only a partial view here of God's dealings, His half-completed, half-developed plan; but all will stand out in fair and graceful proportions in the great finished Temple of Eternity! Go, in the reign of Israel's greatest king, to the heights of Lebanon. See that noble cedar, the pride of its compeers, an old wrestler with northern blasts! Summer loves to smile upon it, night spangles its feathery foliage with dewdrops, the birds nestle on its branches, the weary pilgrim or wandering shepherd reposes under its shadows from the midday heat or from the furious storm; but all at once it is marked out to fall; The aged denizen of the forest is doomed to succumb to the woodman's stroke!

As we see the axe making its first gash on its gnarled trunk, then the noble limbs stripped of their branches, and at last the "Tree of God," as was its distinctive epithet, coming with a crash to the ground, we exclaim against the wanton destruction, the demolition of this proud pillar in the temple of nature. We are tempted to cry with the prophet, as if inviting the sympathy of every lowlier stem--invoking inanimate things to resent the affront--"Howl, fir tree; for the cedar has fallen!"

But wait a little. Follow that gigantic trunk as the workmen of Hiram launch it down the mountain side; thence conveyed in rafts along the blue waters of the Mediterranean; and last of all, behold it set a glorious polished beam in the Temple of God. As you see its destination, placed in the very Holy of Holies, in the diadem of the Great King--say, can you grudge that "the crown of Lebanon" was despoiled, in order

that this jewel might have so noble a setting?

That cedar stood as a stately prop in Nature's sanctuary, but "the glory of the latter house was greater than the glory of the former!"

How many of our souls are like these cedars of old! God's axes of trial have stripped and bared them. We see no reason for dealings so dark and mysterious, but He has a noble end and object in view; to set them as everlasting pillars and rafters in His Heavenly Zion; to make them a "crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of our God." --Macduff

"I do not ask my cross to understand,

My way to see--

Better in darkness just to feel Thy hand,

And follow Thee."

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