



## **The Daffodil Principle**

### **Galatians 6:9**

**Galatians 6:9** – *“And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.”*

#### **I. INTRODUCTION – SOWING AND REAPING**

-This is a Scripture that I found more than ten years ago. It has brought encouragement to me, it has brought relief to me, it has brought hope to me. Those are the words that you will find under my picture in the 1992 Texas Bible College Pioneer. When they asked each senior to give them their favorite Scripture, that was my choice.

-We realize that in our walk with God that often the things of God are not accomplished over-night or even in a day or a week but rather over the course of time, dreams, visions, and desires come to fulfillment.

-Men reap what they sow. It is in the old, arduous route of work that men come to success in their lives both materially and spiritually. Along that road are many landmarks and many wrecks. It is lesson after lesson that the student finds his mind being enlarged. It is nail after nail that the builder builds the house. It is block after block that the mason completes the walls. With the farmer, it is crop after crop. With the artist, it is painting after painting. For the author, it is word after word. For the traveler, it is step and step and mile after mile.

#### **II. TWO TREES FROM THE PSALMS**

**Psalm 92:12-13** -- *“The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.” “Those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God.”*

-The word of God has particular pictures used by many of its authors.

- The eagle to be a symbol of strength and courage and ability.
- The mule is pictured as a stubborn, unyielding animal who resists the reins and bit of the rider.
- The sheep is portrayed as an animal that is quiet, yields to the call of the shepherd, requiring gentle hands to guide it, and finding the guarding of its welfare a necessity to be given by the shepherd.

-The word of God also has particular symbols used by divine inspiration.

- There is the comparison of great quality and value to the gold of Ophir.
- There is the evidence that fire is a symbol of both the power and anointing of God.
- The palm and cedar has its place also.

#### **A. The Palm Tree**

-The Palm tree is related to the lily. However, it is in a class all its own. This palm tree has a specific code of behavior. It grows only by seed alone. It cannot grow from being grafted in or from being cut.

-It is always green and bears fruit that is sweet. One of the most interesting things about the palm tree is that the wind can never blow it over. It may have to endure the blasts of the hurricane but the storm can never defeat it.

-If the tree is damaged during the storm, the top will begin to grow straight (50-100 Feet high). It grows from within and takes a long time to mature (30 years). Its roots go down over 100 feet and thrives in adversity. It produces where there is little rain.

-What do you do when things are dry? Where do you go when it seems like the heavens are shut up? Where do you go when it seems like you are the only one walking the path of righteousness?

-You worship anyway. . . . you preach anyway. . . .you believe anyway. . . .you pray anyway. . . .

-Because of that you must pray for any need:

- For lengthened life as Hezekiah did.
- For help as David did.
- For light as Bartimaeus did.
- For rain as Elijah did.
- For a son as Hannah did.
- For grace as Paul did.

-Prayer is not limited to geography, you can pray anywhere:

- In the deep like Jonah.
- On the sea or on the housetop like Peter.
- On your bed like Hezekiah.
- In the mountain like Jesus.
- In the wilderness like Hagar.
- In the street like Jarius.
- In a cave like David.
- On a cross like the dying thief.

-You can pray in different ways:

- Short like Peter on a troubled sea.
- Short like the publican in Luke 18.
- Long like Moses at the consecration of the Tabernacle.
- Long like Solomon at the dedication of the Temple.
- In silence like Hannah.
- In your secret thoughts as Nehemiah did before Darius.
- Aloud like the Syrophenician woman.
- In tears like Mary Magdalene.
- In groans or songs like David.

-You can pray anytime:

- In the morning like David.

- At noon, like Daniel.
- At midnight like Paul and Silas.
- In childhood like Samuel.
- In youth like Timothy.
- In adulthood like the centurion.
- In aged years like Simeon.
- In sickness like Job.
- In death like Jacob.

-And everyone of them were heard by the Hearer of Prayer. Prayer will give you strength to climb the mountain. Prayer will make you joyful in the waning hours of life.

*“The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree.”* We are a peculiar people. We stand apart and world should be able to tell the difference.

-The seed has been sown in good soil and because the seed remains in our heart. Never give up the seed has some life in it. Don't branch off, there is a harvest that is coming. The fruit in the palm tree grows in the very top of the tree. It is as far as possible from the earth and as close to heaven as it can get. There is no part of the fruit that is not edible.

-The palm tree can mature in any condition. We should be able to draw water deep from the Lord. The palm tree is soft on the inside but it has a tough resistant coating on the outside that protects it from parasites and from wounds.

-The older the palm tree is the more mature it becomes. The palm tree takes along time in maturing but it is interesting to understand that the palm tree that matures too quickly dies faster. The older the palm tree becomes the fruit is more abundant and richer.

-The more adversity that comes to the palm tree the deeper the roots go. The more adversity the saint meets the closer to God that we become. You must even continue to bear fruit even when there is no rain. Daniel prayed the first day, the second day, the third day, and still no answer. . . But he kept praying despite the adversity and twenty-one days later the answer broke through.

-Job had no rain in his life but he still trusted God. David had to run from Saul and still he was able to bear the fruit of the righteous. Abraham looked for a city, not Jericho, not Jerusalem but a city built by God.

-The old song, “I shall not be moved, just like a tree that's planted by the water, I shall not be moved.”

## **B. The Cedar.**

-The cedar has it's place also. Particularly, the cedars of Lebanon.

-The cedar is a divine favorite. King Hiram, leader of the nation of Tyre, contributed the cedars that went into Solomon's temple. They came from the mountains of Lebanon. These huge, strong cedars were what provided the underpinnings, framing, and rafters of the great temple.

-These strong cedars were not seen by the eyes once the Temple was completed, yet they existed just the same. They served as the inward bracings for the outward pressures. There must be that same contribution in the lives of men of God. Something on the inside that is strong enough to bear the pressure from the outside.

-The cedars are spoken of by: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Amos, Zephaniah, and Zechariah. Multiple times are cedars mentioned in the Psalms. Perhaps they are mentioned so much because it's characteristics are to be desired and esteemed by righteous men. Wide-branched, heaven-aspiring, and tempest-grappling are these huge trees.

### **1. They grow in unlikely conditions.**

-The cedars of Lebanon grew in the most unlikely of conditions. Coming from the mountains of Lebanon made them bear the most extreme of weather conditions. Tyre is a coastal city on the Mediterranean Sea. Therefore, the summer

brought it's humidity and it's storms. Not just the occasional thunderstorm but the hurricanes that have their tendencies to spin off vast destruction in the Mediterranean Sea.

-When winter began to set in, the cedar had to forge it's way through the heavy snows that came to rest on it's wide branches. In addition to the storms and the snow, it was at six thousand feet above sea level which is the highest level that vegetation can be found.

-Two-mile men grow in some of the most adverse conditions. The pits, the accusations, and the prisons that Joseph came out of seemed only to heighten his commitment and his abilities. Never once in the account in Genesis, will one find Joseph complaining about his lot in life. That was because he had an understanding and trust in his God.

**Proverbs 3:5-6** -- *"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding." "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."*

## **2. The Cedar Has Deep Roots.**

-The cedar rises to it's greatest height at 60-80 feet tall. Because of it's great height, it's roots have to probe the depths of the earth. They reach and stretch to find the rivers under the earth. Roots reaching down through the caverns of the mountains and tapping into the very foundation of the earth.

-Yet it is the difference between superficial character and one that has clutched it's roots deep around the Rock of Ages.

-One cedar had an approximated age of 3500 years old and it was still standing. There is something awe-inspiring about a man who has everlasting strength and staunch character in the face of tribulation. Some men, in their relationship with God, find that time and eternity will not demoralize nor demolish them, but time will be their opportunity.

-Daniel, a proclamation has been set forth into law. Sealed by the king's signet that no one will pray. But inside of Daniel's heart is a strong cedar that understands the importance of being a two-miler in a one-mile world. Daniel had developed a relationship with God.

-If Daniel only prayed 5 minutes each time (I believe he prayed more), three times a day, for seventy years, the approximate time spent in prayer, after seventy years would have been 6,387 2 hours. When he heard of the decree. . .  
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**Daniel 6:10** -- *"Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime."*

-As he did aforetime. Deep roots in the face of adversity. But Daniel know his God. He remembered something about what the Psalmist had declared about man in earlier times.

**Psalms 8:4-6** -- *"What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?" "For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour." "Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet:"*

-Daniel brought to his memory the fact that his existence on the earth was not some mere happen chance. He had been placed by God at this particular juncture in history and he would live up to his calling. Man was made to have dominion over the works of God. What was the threat of the lion's den, when they had been put under his feet?

-But there was something more than that in the understanding of the mind and heart of Daniel, although almost 600 hundred years before the time of Paul, not having seen Messiah but would later prophecy of Him, Daniel had this tucked away in his heart:

**Philippians 1:20-21** -- *"According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death." "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."*

-Cedars do not grow in mild climates, in soft-air, nor in well-watered gardens. Cedars grow in the adversities of life. Midnight storms, cold winters, and dry summers only cause the cedar to flourish.

-In this hour, the cry of revival is looking for palm trees, for cedars, but too many are like:

- **The Willow** -- Easily bent this way or that way.
- **The Aspen** -- Tremble under every storm of assault.
- **The Bramble** -- Sharp points only wound and sting those around.

-The roll call of the apostles, of the martyrs, of the prophets, are full of those men who were willing to pay the price.

### III. CONCLUSION – THE DAFFODIL PRINCIPLE

Several times my daughter had telephoned to say... "Mother, you must come see the daffodils before they are over." I wanted to go, but it was a two-hour drive from Laguna to Lake Arrowhead. "I will come next Tuesday," I promised, a little reluctantly, on her third call. Next Tuesday dawned cold and rainy. Still, I had promised, and so I drove there. When I finally walked into Carolyn's house and hugged and greeted my grandchildren. I said, "Forget the daffodils, Carolyn! The road is invisible in the clouds and fog, and there is nothing in the world except you and these children that I want to see bad enough to drive another inch!" My daughter smiled calmly, "We drive in this all the time, Mother." "Well, you won't get me back on the road until it clears--and then I'm heading for home!" I assured her. "I was hoping you'd take me over to the garage to pick up my car. "How far will we have to drive?" "Just a few blocks," Carolyn said, "I'll drive. "I'm used to this." After several minutes I had to ask, "Where are we going? This isn't the way to the garage!" "We're going to my garage the long way," Carolyn smiled, "by way of the daffodils."

"Carolyn," I said sternly, "please turn around." "It's all right, Mother, I promise, you will never forgive yourself if you miss this experience."

After about twenty minutes we turned onto a small gravel road and I saw a small church. On the far side of the church I saw a hand-lettered sign "Daffodil Garden." We got out of the car and each took a child's hand, and I followed Carolyn down the path. Then we turned a corner of the path, and I looked up and gasped.

Before me lay the most glorious sight. It looked as though someone had taken a great vat of gold and poured it down over the mountain peak and slopes. The flowers were planted in majestic, swirling patterns, great ribbons and swaths of deep orange, white, lemon yellow, salmon pink, saffron, and butter yellow. Each different-colored variety was planted as a group so that it swirled and flowed like its own river with its own unique hue. Five acres of flowers.

"But who has done this?" I asked Carolyn. "It's just one woman," Carolyn answered. "She lives on the property. That's her home." Carolyn pointed to a well-kept A-frame house that looked small and modest in the midst of all that glory. We walked up to the house. On the patio we saw a poster. "Answers to the questions I Know You Are Asking" was the headline. The first answer was a simple one.

"50,000 bulbs," it read. The second answer was, "one at a time, by one woman. Two hands, two feet, and very little brain." The third answer was, "Began in 1958."

There it was. The Daffodil Principle. For me that moment was a life-changing experience. I thought of this woman whom I had never met, who, more than thirty-five years before, had begun -- one bulb at a time -- to bring her vision of beauty and joy to an obscure mountaintop. Still, just planting one bulb at a time, year after year, had changed the world. This unknown woman had forever changed the world in which she lived. She had created something of ineffable magnificence, beauty, and inspiration.

The principle her daffodil garden taught is one of the greatest principles of celebration: learning to move toward our goals and desires one step at a time -- often just one baby-step at a time -- learning to love the doing, learning to use the accumulation of time. When we multiply tiny pieces of time with small increments of daily effort, we too will find we can accomplish magnificent things. We can change the world. "It makes me sad in a way," I admitted to Carolyn. "What might I have accomplished if I had thought of a wonderful goal thirty-five years ago and had worked away at it 'one bulb at a time through all those years. Just think what I might have been able to achieve!" My daughter summed up the message of the day in her direct way. "Start tomorrow," she said. It's so pointless to think of the lost hours of yesterdays. The way to make learning a lesson a celebration instead of a cause for regret is to only ask, "How can I put this to use today?"