

Bible Study Guide
for
HINDS' FEET ON HIGH PLACES

BY HANNAH HURNARD

BY *Carole Wildes*
MoreThanThisMess.com

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Introduction

Welcome to the ***Hinds' Feet on High Places*** Bible Study! I hope this lovely book (and studying through the Scripture it points to) will be a blessing to you as it has been to me, many times over. A little background information before you begin:

You may already be asking, "What even *is* a 'hind,' anyway?" Granted, it's a rather old-fashioned word. "Hind" is a somewhat archaic (or maybe 'vintage' sounds more appealing?) term for a female deer. A "hart," which is also mentioned in the book, is a male deer. The full title refers to Habakkuk 3:19: "The Lord God is my strength, and He will make my feet like hinds' feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places." (KJV)

Please don't let the vintage wording or the King James Version turn you away! Even though it isn't what we might call 'modern,' the story is really very readable! And for your study of the Scriptures, you are of course welcome to use any Bible version you prefer. Where I've referenced a particular version, that's only to show the connection to what was quoted or referred to in the book.

Hinds' Feet on High Places was written by Hannah Hurnard in 1955. It's an allegory, much like Pilgrim's Progress. The characters are named for their most pronounced character quality; the main character is Much-Afraid, and some of her family members are Craven Fear, Gloomy, Spiteful, Bitterness, Pride, etc. We also meet the Chief Shepherd (who represents Jesus) and Mrs. Valiant, among others. Places are named in the same way: Much-Afraid lives in the Valley of Humiliation, but she longs to go to the High Places in the Kingdom of Love. She travels along the shores of the Sea of Loneliness, through the Forests of Danger and Tribulation, etc.

As an allegory, this is a general representation of one person's spiritual journey. It describes many things that most people have experienced (or will likely experience) at some point in their lives, but it's not meant to be a perfect parallel for anyone.

The author refers frequently to Song of Solomon (also known as the Song of Songs), which is interpreted here as a representation of God's love for us and our desire to be united fully with Him in 'perfect and unbroken union.' Most of the songs in the book are based on verses from Song of Solomon. When you see "Cant. 1:7-8," for example, on page 20, that song is based on Song of Solomon 1:7-8. ("Cant." stands for "canticle," which is a liturgical song.)

If you haven't read the Preface, please do. It will help explain the allegory. Also, Habakkuk 3:17-19 and Psalm 18:33 would be good reading before you begin the story.

And remember: there is only one perfect Book. This book is not the Bible, and so, as with all other lowercase-b books, it is likely to have imperfections and concepts we disagree with. That's okay. Keep going back to God's Word, judging what you see in the book against His Truth. Take the good, and leave what's flawed. Ask the Lord to show you Truth as you read and study.

About This Study Guide

For each chapter, I have included Scripture references and reflection questions. You may choose to read the Scriptures before the chapter, or to enjoy the story and then read the Scripture selections. Also, I have included page numbers to indicate the part of the chapter each question refers to. The edition used for this is ISBN 978-0-8423-1429-9 ([available on Amazon](#) at the time of this writing).

The reflection questions are meant to help you process this allegory in a way that applies directly to your life. If you are using this study guide in a group setting, the questions may inform and/or help guide the group discussion, but my intention is that you will not be asked to share anything you don't volunteer to share – these questions and answers are meant to stay between you and God, unless you choose to share with the group.

With that in mind, try to be as open as you can with your answers, to bare your heart and soul before the Lord as much as possible, knowing that our kind God already knows all your experiences and struggles and sins and fears and joys, and He will do only good things with what you bring before Him.

May the Lord shine the light of His goodness and truth on every page, every verse, every question!

PART ONE: "WEEPING MAY ENDURE FOR A NIGHT..." (Ps 30:5)

CHAPTER 1: INVITATION TO THE HIGH PLACES

Scripture Reading: Psalm 30
Psalm 103, esp vs. 1-14
James 3:2
I John 4:18a *"There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment..." (KJV) (see p8)*

Reflection Questions:

(Remember to talk with God about these as you answer them.)

1. (p4) Are you conscious of things about yourself that hinder your work and cause you secret distress and shame, like Much-Afraid's crooked feet and mouth? If so, what are they? (These might be spiritual, physical, emotional, etc.)

2. (p4-5) Are there "Fears" that try to hold you back from full service to Jesus? And/or other things besides fear that try to hold you back? What are they? What might your name be if you were in this allegory, if not 'Much-Afraid'?

3. (p7-8) How might we ask the Lord to take us to the "High Places," in words that fit our understanding and vocabulary? Have you done that? Are you willing to be changed completely (p9)? Or have you considered that type of life simply impossible? If you have thought it impossible, why? What Scripture can you find that supports your thoughts on that?

(Chapter 1 continued)

4. (p10-11) Ask the Lord to show you your heart as He sees it. What type(s) of love grow(s) there? How might we tell the difference between the types of love in our hearts?

5. (p11) The Shepherd tells Much-Afraid, "It is happy to love even if you are not loved in return. There is pain, too, certainly, but love does not think that very significant." Would you agree with this? In what way(s) does this fit with what we know of Jesus? What examples can you find in Scripture? In your own life?

6. (p11-12) Is Much-Afraid already loved? How can you tell? If so, does she know it? Can we be loved without realizing it, without living like it?

7. (p19) Do you ever get overwhelmed and make poor choices, react badly, fail to do what you ought to do in the moment? Have you made assumptions – perhaps without realizing it – about how God reacted/responded to you when you needed His help, when you hadn't done things right, when you were ashamed, etc? Give examples. Does God regard you with judgment or compassion when you come to Him for help? Read Psalm 103, especially vs 1-14, and any other applicable Scriptures you think of, and let them inform your answer.

8. Did anything else in this chapter stand out to you? In what way? How might it apply to your own life?

CHAPTER 2: FEARING INVASION

Scripture Reading:

Joshua 1:9

Jeremiah 17:9

Philippians 2:3-4

James 5:16

Psalms 19:12-14

Ephesians 6:18

Hebrews 3:12-13

1 Peter 5:5b

Reflection Questions:

(Remember to talk with God about these as you answer them.)

1. (p23-25) Do your fears, or whatever is your main struggle, ever come to you convincingly, with a voice that sounds gentle and caring and sensible? Trying to “reason” with you about why you are not suitable to keep trying, keep following and serving Jesus, or why you are right to stay afraid or to [fill in the blank]? ‘Explaining’ why you are wrong to try to leave them behind and separate yourself from them? If so, give some examples.

2. (p27-29) Have you ever felt unable to respond when you heard/felt the Lord speak to you in the midst of an internal struggle? Are we ever really alone, is it ever really too late to respond or to ask for help, as Much-Afraid thought it was? Can you find Scripture that supports your answer?

3. (p29-31) Have you ever had a friend help you in a similar way to how Mrs. Valiant helped Much-Afraid? Have you helped someone else this way? If so, describe briefly. Is there Scripture to support this kind of helping?

(Chapter 2 continued)

4. (p30-31) Have you, like Mrs. Valiant, found yourself tempted to scoff at someone else's weakness that's different from your own weaknesses? What is a better way to think about the weaknesses of others?

5. What else in this chapter stood out to you, if anything, and why? How does it apply to your own life?

CHAPTER 3: FLIGHT IN THE NIGHT

Scripture Reading:

Psalm 103:13-14

Lamentations 3:22-23

1 Corinthians 10:13

Psalm 139:2

Matthew 9:36

Reflection Questions:

(Remember to talk with God about these as you answer them.)

1. (p34) Do you ever expect or worry that God will not understand why you [whatever you did or failed to do], or feel that He will have “gone on” without you and you are left behind on your own? (We can feel or think these things without realizing it; we can behave as if we think it even if we know it’s not rational.) If so, describe. Try to find Scripture that supports what you know to be true, even if you don’t always behave as if you know it.

2. What else in this chapter stood out to you, and why? How does it apply to your own life?

CHAPTER 4: START FOR THE HIGH PLACES

Scripture Reading:	Psalm 18:19, 22:8	Psalm 34 (esp vs 4-9)
	Psalm 147:11, 149:4	Isaiah 45:17, 50:7, 54:4
	Zephaniah 3:17	Matthew 6:1-4
	John 14:27; ch17, esp v13	Romans 5:3-5, 10:11
	2 Corinthians 7:9-10	James 1:2-4
	1 Peter 2:6	Jude 1:24-25

Reflection Questions:

(Remember to talk with God about these as you answer them.)

1. (p42-43) Think about the wildflowers – how “They offer themselves sweetly and confidently and willingly, even if it seems that there is no one to appreciate them.” How might this apply to your life? Does it change how you think about any particular areas of your life? (see **Matthew 6:1-4**. Any other Scriptures come to mind?)

2. (p48-49) Much-Afraid wanted the Shepherd to simply take her up to the High Places. Summarize his answer to her, and explain how it applies to your life.

3. (p51-54) The Shepherd chose Sorrow and Suffering to be Much-Afraid’s companions. What do you think about sorrow and suffering as ‘companions and helpers,’ ‘good teachers,’ ‘two of the very best and strongest guides’? Consider **2 Corinthians 7:9-10, Romans 5:3-5**.

(Chapter 4 continued)

4. (p53) Have you ever felt like the Lord was asking the impossible of you? Consider Much-Afraid's answer to the Shepherd at the bottom of page 53. If it resonates with you, take this opportunity to talk with the Lord about it. Notice: is Much-Afraid offering anything to the Shepherd? Promising anything?

5. (p54) The Shepherd says, "...I promise that you shall not be put to shame." Have you ever worried, perhaps without realizing it, that you might be put to shame in following the Lord? What causes that worry? How can we fight it? Read **Isaiah 45:17, 50:7 and 54:4, Romans 10:11, 1 Peter 2:6**.

6. (p55) If Jesus delights in saving and delivering us from our fears and flaws, and He uses sorrow and suffering to accomplish this, how should we think about the sorrow and suffering we experience? Try to give specific examples from your own life. Read **Jude 1:24; Psalm 18:19, 22:8, 147:11, 149:4; Psalm 34 (esp vs 4-9); Zephaniah 3:17; James 1:2-4**.

(Chapter 4 continued)

7. (p55) The Shepherd leaves Much-Afraid with his peace and joy. Read **John 14:27** and **John 17, esp v13**. This did not change the fact that Sorrow and Suffering were her guides and companions and helpers. How does this apply to our lives?

8. (p56) What do you think the author means when she says, "...the development of hinds' feet is a secret process, demanding that there should be no onlookers"? Do you agree? Why or why not?

9. Did anything else in this chapter stand out to you, and if so, why? How does it apply to your own life?

CHAPTER 5: ENCOUNTER WITH PRIDE

Scripture Reading:

Obadiah 1:3a

Ephesians 4:22

2 Timothy 2:21-22

Hebrews 12:1

1 Peter 5:5b-10

Reflection Questions:

(Remember to talk with God about these as you answer them.)

1. (p58-59) We, like Much-Afraid, have enemies who work to keep us from serving and following our King. Read **1 Peter 5:5b-10**, **Hebrews 12:1**, **2 Timothy 2:21-22**, **Ephesians 4:22**. Who are our enemies? Are they internal or external, or both? List all you can think of, and any other supporting Scriptures that may come to mind.

2. (p61) The first part of **Obadiah 1:3** (a prophecy against the descendants of Esau) says, "The pride of your heart has deceived you..." Has pride ever snuck up on you, ambushed you with a 'kindly and friendly manner,' appealing and convincing words? Have you ever felt some pride after a long time of having no chance to be prideful, and rather welcomed the feeling? Explain.

3. (p62) Pride plays on Much-Afraid's fears – fear of abandonment, fear of being put to shame. Does pride always play on our fear? List some examples, preferably from your own life.

(Chapter 5 continued)

4. (p62) The author says, "She had to learn that once Pride is listened to, struggle as one may, it is the hardest thing in the world to throw him off." Do you agree that pride is a difficult enemy to fight once we've let him have a hold? Why or why not?

5. (p64) Do you remember to call to the Lord for help as soon as you find yourself struggling with pride and fears? If not, why do you think you delay? Try to think of some examples.

6. (p65) The Shepherd tells Much-Afraid, "If you had been holding the hands of your two helpers this could never have happened." See also p54: "...put your hands in theirs confidently and they will take you exactly where I want you to go." What do you think it means to "hold the hands" of sorrow and suffering?

9. Did anything else in this chapter stand out to you? If so, why? How does it apply to your own life?

A Closer Look at Sorrow and Suffering

A side study, if you are so inclined. Here are some Scriptures that speak of sorrow and suffering. (Some we have already looked at.) I'm sure there are more. (The whole book of Job might apply!) Do these, or any other Scriptures you find, help inform your thinking about the role of sorrow and suffering in our lives, as prescribed by God? Do they help change the way you think about sorrow and suffering in your own life? If so, in what ways?

Sorrow

2 Corinthians 7:9-10

Psalm 107:39-42

Psalm 13

Psalm 116

Esther 9:20-22

Suffering

Romans 5:3-5

James 1:2-4

James 5:10-11

Philippians 3:8-15

(A Closer Look at Sorrow and Suffering, continued)

2 Timothy 1:8-12

2 Timothy 2:3

2 Timothy 4:5, 18

1 Peter 1:6-7

1 Peter 2:19-25

1 Peter 3:13-17

1 Peter 4:1-2, 12-19

1 Peter 5:5b-10

Hebrews 10:32-39

2 Corinthians 1:3-11

2 Corinthians 4:16-18

CHAPTER 6: DETOUR THROUGH THE DESERT

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 28:27-29
Jeremiah 18

Isaiah 54:11-12

Reflection Questions:

(Remember to talk with God about these as you answer them.)

1. (p67) How do you think it translates to real life that Much-Afraid had to hobble more painfully after her encounter with Pride? Have you ever experienced something similar?

2. (p68) Have you ever felt like you had to figure out your own way to get to what God promised you? If so, describe.

3. (p68-70) Have you ever felt like God was leading you away from your heart's desire? Away from something He promised you? If so, explain.

(Chapter 6 continued)

4. (p70) Think back over times you have surrendered your own will to do God's will. Note them here.

5. (p74-77) Explain, in your own words, the three lessons Much-Afraid learned in the rooms of the pyramid. Have there been times in your life that were perhaps designed to teach you these lessons? If so, make note of them.

6. (p78) Explain, in your own words, the lesson of the little flower Acceptance-with-Joy. How can you apply this to your own response to difficult situations?

7. Did anything else in this chapter make an impact on you? In what way can you apply it to your life?

CHAPTER 7: ON THE SHORES OF LONELINESS

Scripture Reading:

Job 23:10

Proverbs 16:9, 29:25

Psalm 30:5

John 10:27

Reflection Questions:

(Remember to talk with God about these as you answer them.)

1. (p80) The Shepherd tells Much-Afraid, "...Remember also that it is always safe to obey my voice, even if it seems to call you to paths which look impossible or even crazy." Have you ever wondered whether it was safe to obey what God was telling you to do? How do you define "safe"? How does God define "safe"?

2. (p81) Do you have any more thoughts on what it might mean to hold on to sorrow and suffering? And/or what that might look like in your own life?

3. (p82) Can you look back over your past and see that you are a different person now than you used to be? In what ways?

(Chapter 7 continued)

4. (p82-84) Can you relate to Much-Afraid's journey along the Sea of Loneliness? If so, explain. What were/are your circumstances? What did you learn (or what are you learning)?

5. (p85-90) Can (and do) you identify the voices of Pride, Bitterness, Resentment, and Self-Pity in your own experiences? How have you dealt with them in the past? How might you deal with them differently in the future?

6. (p90-91) Do you find that some or all of these voices plague you more when your circumstances are pleasant, as they did for Much-Afraid? How might you be on guard against them?

7. What else, if anything, stood out to you in this chapter, and how does it apply to your life?

CHAPTER 8: ON THE OLD SEA WALL

Scripture Reading:

Genesis 15:12

Psalms 23

Proverbs 13:12

I Corinthians 15:57

Exodus 6:1

Psalms 56:8

John 11:4

Philippians 2:12-13

Reflection Questions:

(Remember to talk with God about these as you answer them.)

1. (p94-95) Have you experienced the threat (or success) of bitterness when you saw that God wasn't giving you what you wanted/expected/thought? If so, describe.

2. (p94-95) When bitterness threatens to overcome you, what do you do? What should you do? If those are not the same (what you do and what you should do), how will you work to begin doing what you should?

3. (p95) Can we delight to do God's will, even when we are in sorrow over it? Explain.

(Chapter 8 continued)

4. (p94-96) Do you find that you must repeatedly surrender your will to God? Do you think this is something we will ever be done repeating?

5. (p98) "...she picked up another stone as the Shepherd had taught her, this time as a memorial of his victory in making her triumph over her enemies..." How do you see your successes, your triumphs, your victories over self and sin? Are these your own victories, or are they God's victories in making you triumph, as Much-Afraid saw them? Are the two separate? Can you find any Scripture that addresses this?

6. (p100-101) Much-Afraid is reminded of the lesson of Acceptance-with-Joy when she sees that the little flower is growing in her heart, and she surrenders/offers her will again. Do you find that you need to be reminded of your own growth and the lessons you've learned, and to purposely accept and apply them over and over? If so, try to give examples.

7. What else, if anything, stood out for you in this chapter? How does it apply to your life?

CHAPTER 9: GREAT PRECIPICE INJURY

Scripture Reading:

Psalm 103:8-13

Isaiah 61:3

Matthew 8:26

Acts 27:9-44

1 Corinthians 2:9-10

2 Thessalonians 2:16-17

Reflection Questions:

(Remember to talk with God about these as you answer them.)

1. (p103-106) When things seem comfortable and easy, I, like Much-Afraid, seem to think that because things seem easy now, they should always be easy from now on. Perhaps I think I have 'arrived'? I continue to expect to no longer need – to finally be rid of – sorrow and suffering. I know this about myself because, when things get difficult (over and over again), I am surprised and distressed (over and over again). Do you find yourself following the same pattern? If so, what do you think is at the root of this? How can we break out of this pattern?

2. (p109) Have you ever hesitated to go to God because you feared what He would tell you to do? Because you feared you could not surrender your will to His? If so, what happened when you finally did go to Him? Does He scold and reproach us when we come to Him humbly, even after we've messed up? Consider **Psalm 103:8-13**.

3. (p113-114) Are you willing to be put to shame, if it would accomplish God's will? What might it look like to be put to shame to accomplish God's will? Can you think of any examples of this from the Bible? What does it take to be willing to go through shame?

(Chapter 9 continued)

4. (p115) Injury, Reviling, Hate, Persecution...what other 'mountains' might be ones that lead to the "High Places"? Can you think of Biblical examples of people facing these 'mountains'?

5. What else was meaningful to you in this chapter? How might it apply to your life?

CHAPTER 10: ASCENT OF THE PRECIPICE OF INJURY

Scripture Reading:

Psalm 73:25
Acts 9:31

Psalm 131:2
2 Thessalonians 2:16-17

Reflection Questions:

(Remember to talk with God about these as you answer them.)

1. (p119) Have you ever feared something intensely, but then found it to be less terrible than you imagined when you faced it? If so, describe.

2. (p121) "Much-Afraid was very careful to close her imagination altogether to the picture which Craven Fear had painted." Do you find this to be necessary at times? Is it difficult for you? What are some practical ways to help us 'close' our imaginations to things our fears 'paint' in our minds?

3. (p123-125) Put into your own words what the little flower told Much-Afraid. What does it mean to "bear the cost"? Why is this also called "forgiveness"? Is 'bearing the cost' *always* forgiveness? Is forgiveness always 'bearing the cost'? In what ways/circumstances can you see that you have done this and/or need to do this? Ask the Lord to help you.

(Chapter 10 continued)

4. (p126-127) How do you interpret the allegory of the 'cordial of the Spirit of Grace and Comfort'? What does that mean in our own lives? How can we purposely partake of the Spirit of Grace and Comfort?

5. (p125-128) Sometimes things happen to us that have a lasting negative effect on us, but no one is at fault, as when Much-Afraid's knees were cut on the rocks. We still must bear the cost of these events. Think about some examples from your own life. How do we bear such things? What is the example shown to us here? What other practical ways can you think of, or find in Scripture?

6. (p127) Sorrow and Suffering helped remind Much-Afraid of the lesson she had begun to learn, and helped her to practice it. Do you find that sorrow and suffering serve this way in your own life? If so, give examples.

7. Did anything else stand out to you in this chapter? If so, how does it apply to your own life?

CHAPTER II: IN THE FORESTS OF DANGER AND TRIBULATION

Scripture Reading:

Numbers 23:19

Psalm 23

Psalm 118:17

2 Timothy 4:18

Deuteronomy 31:6

Psalm 91:4, 7

Isaiah 35:4

Reflection Questions:

(Remember to talk with God about these as you answer them.)

1. (p130) The Shepherd tells Much-Afraid, "...Nothing can do you any real harm while you are following the path of my will." What qualifies as "real harm"? Does our definition of harm match God's? Does this mean no bad things will happen? No pain, no injury, no attack, no sorrow, no suffering? What is God's definition of 'real harm'?

2. (p130-131) Do you ever feel, as Much-Afraid did, that perhaps God ought to just give up on you (even while you know He won't)? Do you ever wonder whether He can really change you? If so, talk with Him about that. Can you find examples in Scripture of others who perhaps felt this way?

3. (p132) When Much-Afraid builds her altar to surrender her will yet again, she quotes Scripture to the Shepherd, and repeats back to him what he just told her. It can be deeply helpful to us to quote Scripture, to pray God's words back to Him, to remind ourselves of what is true even when we don't *feel* like it's true. God's Word helps us choose to believe and choose not to *act* in fear, even when we feel doubt and fear. Take some time to reflect on this, and to pray through a passage of Scripture (suggestions if you don't have one in mind: **Psalm 23, 42, 91, or 139; Colossians 1:9-14, Ephesians 3:14-21**).

(Chapter 11 continued)

4. (p132; see also p121) The Shepherd tells Much-Afraid, "...if you ever let Craven Fear begin painting a picture on the screen of your imagination, you will walk with fear and trembling and agony, where no fear is." Do you find that trying to predict how things will be (or might be) has a negative effect on you? Do you still do it anyway? What would be a better option?

6. (p134-135, 137) What might be some ways we can "plug our ears" against the voices of our enemies? How might we "throw stones" at our fears when they try to accost us?

9. (p136, 138) Have you ever walked through a terrible 'storm' in your life with "a strange and wonderful peace," or felt "peacefully and cheerfully sheltered" during a particularly difficult circumstance? If so, praise God for His protection, and take a moment to describe that time in your life.

10. (p139-140) Accepting the companionship of Sorrow and Suffering helped Much-Afraid to see and appreciate more of the beauty around her. Can the same be true for us? What examples can you think of from your own life?

11. What else, if anything, stood out to you in this chapter, and how does it apply to your life?

CHAPTER 12: IN THE MIST

Scripture Reading: **2 Samuel 22:36** **Psalms 18:35**
 Romans 3:21-24 **2 Corinthians 5:21**
 Philippians 3:8-9, 15-16

Reflection Questions:

(Remember to talk with God about these as you answer them.)

1. (p144) Much-Afraid found that she responded with a surge of excitement to the more fearsome tests and difficulties, and preferred those to the tests of easier and duller circumstances; the dull, dreary trudging, day after day. Can you relate? Explain, and give examples.

2. (p145-146) Do you ever question whether you've 'missed' the right path [perhaps because you aren't enjoying the path you're on]? Would the Shepherd have let her accidentally get on the wrong path? Can we trust God with our paths, trust Him to let us know if we go the wrong way? (See **Philippians 3:15-16.**)

3. (p147) Do you sometimes find yourself 'slipping and stumbling' more often than usual? What does that look like in your life? Do you think you will find, if you do some self-assessment, that you are listening to resentment and bitterness and self-pity during these times?

(Chapter 12 continued)

4. (p147) Does singing help you to block out those voices? Why, do you think? What else helps?

5. (p151) Is it hard for you to believe/accept that God sees you with the righteousness of Christ? Describe that in your own words. See **Philippians 3:8-9, Romans 3:21-24, 2 Corinthians 5:21**.

6. (p155-156) We know, of course, that God will not deceive us. But what if it truly seemed like He had? Have you ever felt like He did, or might be? What would your answer to the Shepherd's question be, do you think?

7. Did anything else stand out to you in this chapter? How does it apply to your life?

CHAPTER 13: IN THE VALLEY OF LOSS

Scripture Reading:

Ruth 1:16-17

Proverbs 3:11-12

Philippians 3:7-16

Psalms 119:67, 71, 75

Isaiah 30:21, 38:17, 48:10

Hebrews 12:5-11

See Also: The Pursuit of God, A.W. Tozer: Ch 1, ¶24; Ch 2, ¶21-24

Reflection Questions:

(Remember to talk with God about these as you answer them.)

1. (p158-159) Have you ever come to a place where you considered not following Jesus any longer? If so, describe. What was your response, and why?

2. (p160) Consider **Ruth 1:16** as Much-Afraid's request to the Shepherd: "Entreat me not to leave thee." She goes on to say, "...don't let me leave you. Don't let anything turn me back." Consider also the lyrics to a hymn we often sing, "Come Thou Fount:" "Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it; prone to leave the God I love. Here's my heart, now take and seal it; seal it for Thy courts above." This seems to be a common thread for many. Have you felt the need to pray this way? If so, describe.

3a. (p161) The Shepherd asks Much-Afraid to go down "this path of forgiveness into the Valley of Loss". Why do you think it is called a "path of forgiveness"? Can you relate to this situation? If so, explain.

(Chapter 13 continued)

3b. Merriam-Webster defines forgiveness as “to give up resentment of or claim to requital.” Who or what is Much-Afraid needing to forgive? If forgiveness is equated with “bearing the cost,” does it require that a wrong has been done? Could it refer to ‘bearing the cost’ of circumstances, life events that weren’t what we wanted, even difficult paths the Lord leads us to?

4. (p163) “...it had opened her eyes to the fact that right down in the depths of her own heart she really had but one passionate desire, not for the things which the Shepherd had promised, but for himself. All she wanted was to be allowed to follow him forever. Other desires might clamor strongly and fiercely near the surface of her nature, but she knew now that down in the core of her own being she was so shaped that nothing could fit, fill, or satisfy her heart but he himself.” Take some time to reflect on this, and see what desires are deep in your own heart. Ask God to show you what is there, and talk with Him about all the desires you find. Make note of anything that seems important.

5. (p166) Much-Afraid saw in the Shepherd’s expression “a look of wonderful compassion together with unflinching determination.” She remembered that he had said, “Love is beautiful, but it is also terrible – terrible in its determination to allow nothing blemished or unworthy to remain in the beloved.” What are your thoughts about this? Can you think of or find any Scripture that supports this idea?

6. What else was meaningful for you in this chapter? How does it apply to your life?

CHAPTER 14: THE PLACE OF ANOINTING

Scripture Reading: **Psalm 45:2 (esp HCSB version)** **Psalm 45:8**
 Romans 6:13 **Philippians 2:17**
 Hebrews 12:1 **1 Peter 1:8**

Reflection Questions:

(Remember to talk with God about these as you answer them.)

1. (p169-170) Have you ever felt like the Lord was giving you a glimpse of what He intends for you, of the “High Places”? If so, what was it like?

2. (p171) The Shepherd equates the waterfall to “abandonment of self-giving.” Much-Afraid’s view of self-giving was frightening to her, before the Shepherd pointed out the water’s joy. Can you explain why? Can you relate?

3. (p171-173) What do you think of the water’s poem, and its path of “abandonment of self-giving”? Do you think we can achieve this mindset, where “to cast oneself down is to abandon oneself to ecstasy and joy indescribable,” where “every obstacle...was looked upon as another object to be overcome and another lovely opportunity to find a way around or over it” and “the obstacles which look so terrifying are perfectly harmless, indeed only add to the joy and glory of the movement”? How can this apply to your life, specifically?

4. What else was significant to you in this chapter? How does it apply to your life?

CHAPTER 15: THE FLOODS

Scripture Reading: **Genesis 22:1-14** **Exodus 15:22-26**

Reflection Questions:

(Remember to talk with God about these as you answer them.)

1. (p185) The Shepherd asks Much-Afraid to offer up, as a burnt offering, the promise he gave her at the beginning of her journey. Perhaps God's promises are what motivate us sometimes, and His promises are always true, of course. But ultimately our desire should be for God Himself, and not for the things He promises, as discussed in Chapter 13, #4. Perhaps sometimes He brings us to the point of deciding that we are willing to trust and obey Him even when it seems like He is asking us to let go of those promises and give them up, so we can follow Him more truly (like He did with Abraham and Isaac). What are your thoughts about this? Have you experienced this in your life?

2. God never tricks us or leads us to believe anything untrue. Do we sometimes believe untrue things anyway, and blame God when we are disappointed? List any examples you can think of.

3. (p187) Perhaps the storm in this chapter represents times when God has asked us to do something very difficult and very important, and things happen that seem to make it even harder. Can you relate to this? If so, explain.

(Chapter 15 continued)

4. (p188-191) Much-Afraid goes through another period of doubt and mourning, perhaps deeper than ever before. She revisits all the promises the Shepherd gave her, all the times she surrendered her own will and followed him, and wonders if the memorials are worth keeping. Is this wrong of her? How does she get through it? Have you been through something similar? If so, how did you get through it?

5. (p192) How might sorrow and suffering support us, or 'almost carry' us, when we are weak and stumbling?

6. (p193) The spring of Marah refers to **Exodus 15:22-26**. Much-Afraid tries to do what the Voice tells her to do – drink the bitter water – but she can't...until part of the thorn tree (which grows in the shape of a cross) is applied to it. After this, it refreshes and strengthens her. How might this relate to our lives?

7. Was anything else in this chapter particularly meaningful to you? How does it apply to your life?

CHAPTER 16: GRAVE ON THE MOUNTAINS

Scripture Reading:

Genesis 22:1-14, esp v11-13	Matthew 16:24-25
Romans 6:1-11	2 Corinthians 5:14-17
Colossians 3:1-5	1 Peter 2:24

Relevant Quote: “Can we give up all for the love of God? When the surrender of ourselves seems too much to ask, it is first of all because our thoughts about God Himself are paltry. We have not really seen Him, we have hardly tested Him at all and learned how good He is. In our blindness we approach Him with suspicious reserve. We ask how much of our fun He intends to spoil, how much He will demand from us, how high is the price we must pay before He is placated.

If we had the least notion of His loving-kindness and tender mercy, His fatherly care for His poor children, His generosity, His beautiful plans for us; if we knew how patiently He waits for our turning to Him, how gently He means to lead us to green pastures and still waters, how carefully He is preparing a place for us, how ceaselessly He is ordering and ordaining and engineering His Master Plan for our good – if we had any inkling of all this, could we be reluctant to let go of our smashed dandelions or whatever we clutch so fiercely in our sweaty little hands?

If with courage and joy we pour ourselves out for Him and for others for His sake, it is not possible to lose, in any final sense, anything worth keeping. We will lose ourselves and our selfishness. We will gain everything worth having.”
— *Elisabeth Elliot, The Path of Loneliness: Finding Your Way Through the Wilderness to God*

Reflection Questions:

(Remember to talk with God about these as you answer them.)

1. (p197-198) Much-Afraid remembers the words Bitterness had spoken to her, about the Shepherd putting her on some sort of cross and leaving her there – but she is able to process this in light of her new understanding: “...that in all the world only one thing mattered, to do the will of the one she followed and loved, no matter what it involved or cost.” Take some time to think and pray. Can you say the same thing? Why or why not?

2. (p199) Much-Afraid could not pull the plant of natural human love and desire from her own heart. This would seem to indicate that we cannot root out our own ‘old self,’ or our desire for human love, or our self-love, though we must try. Perhaps this is another instance where the mystery of ‘[working] out [our] own salvation with fear and trembling’ meets ‘God [working] in us both to will and to work for His good pleasure.’ (**Philippians 2:12-13**) What do you think? What Scriptures can you find to support your thoughts?

(Chapter 16 continued)

3. (p199) Much-Afraid asks the priest to bind her to the altar, saying, "I would not like to be found struggling while the will of my Lord is done." Do you have the same desire? Does that idea challenge or change your perspective in any way?

4. (p200) The author tells us Much-Afraid was "in the grave of her own hopes..." Which hopes were being sacrificed? Does God intend us to have no hope? Do any of your hopes need to be sacrificed, offered to the Lord, released from your heart? If so, which ones, and why? What hopes can you hold on to?

5. (p201) The priest said the plant of human love in Much-Afraid's heart was "ripe for removal, the time had come. There is not a rootlet torn or missing." Do you think there is a "right time" for this (or other works God has planned for us) to happen in our own lives? If so, is it the same for each of us? Who determines the "right" time? What should we be doing in the meantime? What Scripture supports your thoughts?

6. Did anything else in this chapter stand out to you? How might it apply to your life?

PART TWO: "JOY COMETH IN THE MORNING" (Ps 30:5)

CHAPTER 17: HEALING STREAMS

Scripture Reading:

John 7:38-39, 14:27, 19:38-42

Romans 6:2 & 11; 12:1-2

1 Corinthians 12:4-11

Ephesians 4:22-24

Colossians 2:20, 3:3, 5a

Revelation 22:1-3

Acts 27-28

Romans 7:15-25, 8:2

2 Corinthians 5:17, 12:7-10

Philippians 3:7-16, 4:11-13

James 5:15-16

Relevant Quotes: "Jesus asks us to take up the cross – to take it up daily. What does this mean? Surely it is the quiet acceptance of disappointments; the willing performance of some hard task we'd prefer to avoid, or of some small duty that is distasteful to us. It is forgiveness to that one who has deeply wronged us and has not apologized...The cross is offered to us every day in some form." — *Elisabeth Elliot, Secure in the Everlasting Arms: Trusting the God Who Never Leaves Your Side*

"I say that I found peace. I do not say that I was not lonely. I was – terribly. I do not say that I did not grieve. I did – most sorely. But peace of that sort the world cannot give comes, not by the removal of suffering, but in another way – through acceptance." — *Elisabeth Elliot, The Path of Loneliness: Finding Your Way Through the Wilderness to God*

Reflection Questions:

(Remember to talk with God about these as you answer them.)

1. (p205-206) We see many references to burial, specifically similarities to the burial of Jesus – a cave, perfumes, wrappings; yet Much-Afraid is alive. What do you think this is referring to?

2. God tells us through His Word that if we are followers of Christ, our old self has died with Christ (**Colossians 2:20, 3:3, 5a**), and we are a new creation (**2 Corinthians 5:17**); we are told to "put off" our old self and "put on" the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness (**Ephesians 4:22-24**). Is this typically a one-time event for us, as it was for Much-Afraid? Consider **Philippians 3:7-16** (especially verses 12-14), **Romans 6:2, 11 and 12:1-2**, any other Scriptures you find that might pertain, the first quote above, etc.

(Chapter 17 continued)

3. (p208-209) Much-Afraid is healed of her shortcomings (her crooked feet and mouth, see also p4) by the waters. Is complete healing possible on this side of heaven, whether physical or from our shortcomings? Are we promised complete healing on this side of heaven? Consider **2 Corinthians 12:7-10**, **James 5:15-16**, **Romans 7:15-25**, **1 Corinthians 12:4-11**, and any other Scriptures you can find that might apply.

4. (p209) "She felt completely encompassed by peace, and a great inner quietness and contentment drowned every feeling of curiosity, loneliness and anticipation." Do you think it's possible for us to have such peace and contentment? Does this kind of peace and contentment depend on circumstances or situations? Consider **Philippians 4:11-13**, **Acts 27-28**, **John 14:27**, any other Scriptures you find that might apply, the second quote above, etc.

5. What else in this chapter stood out to you, and how might it apply to your life?

CHAPTER 18: HINDS' FEET

Scripture Reading:

Psalm 30:5

Isaiah 40:31

Jeremiah 31:3

Jude 1:24-25

Psalm 84:11

Isaiah 54:11

Hebrews 3:1-2, 5:5, 5:9-10

Revelation 3:11

Reflection Questions:

(Remember to talk with God about these as you answer them.)

1. (p212-213) Much-Afraid finds that she is able to follow the hind and the hart, to leap and spring with her new 'hinds' feet.' How do you think this translates to real life? What does it represent? What would it mean for you, in particular, to have these figurative 'hinds' feet'?

2. (p213) "Then his face had been stern in its majesty and gravity, now it was alight with glory of joy which excelled anything which she had ever imagined." **Jude 1:24** says, "Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of His glory with great joy..." Give some thought to this, and make it personal: Jesus rejoicing over you, having made you blameless and having kept you from stumbling, presenting you before the presence of His glory. Talk with Him about it. Write down anything you'd like to remember.

3. (p214) Imagine this is your story. What would your 'old name' have been, and what do you think your 'new name' might be? (It can be the same as Much-Afraid's, or different.)

(Chapter 18 continued)

4. (p214-215) Much-Afraid had confused the flower of human love in her heart – that of 'Longing-to-be-loved' – with the flower of Love that the Shepherd had planted there. She believed that giving up the flower of 'Longing-to-be-loved' meant she was giving up all possibility of being loved. Do we sometimes do the same – confuse our own selfish love, or our longing for love, with God's love? Can you think of any real-life examples, or possible examples?

5. (p215) Both types of love were growing in Much-Afraid's heart during her journey. What in your life do you think stems from 'Longing-to-be-loved,' and what stems from God's Love? Try to be specific.

6. (p216) "...had torn out that love which had been the cause of all her pain..." If 'Longing-to-be-loved' was indeed the cause of all Much-Afraid's pain, what else might we call it? Self-love? Self-concern? Selfishness? Does that fit? If so, does it change how you see some of what you noted in #5?

7. (p216) The quote from #6 may seem to imply there will be no pain when we are rid of our self-love, but we can know that is not true, because Jesus suffered pain of many kinds. And we know that in our story the Shepherd, on p11, says, "It is happy to love even if you are not loved in return. There is pain, too, certainly, but love does not think that very significant." What difference might there be in the types or causes of the pain we might have when we are rid of our self-love?

(Chapter 18 continued)

8. (p215-216) In chapter 15, p197, Much-Afraid called to the Shepherd, but he did not answer or come to her. We find out in this chapter that he was already there with her; he was the High Priest of the altar, but she did not recognize him then. Have you ever felt forsaken, only to later realize God was with you all the time? If so, explain.

9. (p216) The Shepherd quotes **Jeremiah 31:3**: "...I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." We have many Scriptures telling us that God's love is steadfast and everlasting (**Psalms 103:17** is another). In light of this, revisit p11-12. Much-Afraid could not dare to love, or to take her journey to the High Places, unless she was sure she would be loved in return. Was she ever NOT loved? Do you think she was simply not receiving love properly, not *believing* she was loved? Has that ever applied to you?

10. (p217) Much-Afraid, now Grace and Glory, remembers the cave where she considered throwing away her remembrance stones, discarding her trust in the Shepherd's promises, going back on her surrenders to his will. She hadn't known, at the time, what those stones would become, or whether the promises would be fulfilled – in fact, she'd thought they wouldn't be fulfilled. Are there times in our lives when we think we know things that aren't actually true? Times when we must decide whether to make decisions based on our interpretations of things, or on our trust in God? If you can think of examples from your life, note them here. Choose now what you will do the next time you find yourself in a similar situation, and put it into words.

(Chapter 18 continued)

11. (p217) Note that the jewels for Grace and Glory's crown were to the Shepherd's glory, not her own. How might this translate in your own life and understanding?

12. (p217) "She marveled at the grace and love and tenderness and patience which had led and trained and guarded and kept poor faltering Much-Afraid, which had not allowed her to turn back, and which now changed all her trials into glory." All her trials were changed into glory for the King. Take some time to think specifically over trials you have come through. If you have already seen some of the glory they were changed into, write down how. If not, think about the possibilities, and ask the Lord to help you see them as helpful and useful, bringing glory to Him.

13. (p220) Sorrow and Suffering were renamed and transformed as well; they are now Joy and Peace. Look back at pages 52-53 to see which companions Much-Afraid would have chosen for herself instead of Sorrow and Suffering. Think about this in terms of your own sorrow and suffering, and the Scriptures we've looked at regarding their purpose in your life. Note any new perspective or understanding.

14. Did anything else from this chapter stand out to you? How might it apply to your life?

CHAPTER 19: HIGH PLACES

Scripture Reading:

Isaiah 59:2

Ezekiel 14:5

Romans 8:38-39, 12:21

Galatians 5:4

Ephesians 4:17-18

Philippians 2:3-4

2 Corinthians 5:16

Reflection Questions:

(Remember to talk with God about these as you answer them.)

1. (p223) “He explained to them as much as they were able to understand at that time.” There will always be things we don’t understand, even if we begin to live on the ‘high places.’ If that’s uncomfortable for you, talk to the Lord about it. How can you overcome being uncomfortable with not understanding everything?

2. (p224) Grace and Glory, along with Joy and Peace, gained a new perspective: they realized how much more they had to learn, and saw how much they had misinterpreted and misunderstood before. Do you understand and perceive more now than you did when you were younger? Were there things you thought you understood, that you later realized were different from what you thought – perhaps even things in God’s Word? If so, list some examples.

3. (p227) What does all their leaping around so easily translate to in our real lives, do you think? Try to think of specific situations.

(Chapter 19 continued)

4. (p228-231) Grace and Glory thinks back and tells the Shepherd all the lessons she learned on her journey. Take some time to do the same – think back over your journey so far, and tell the Lord what you've learned and what you are still learning. Ask Him to reveal new understanding to you. Some of your lessons may correspond to those in this story; some may not. (This would be a good exercise to do periodically, perhaps once a year?)

5. (p230) Grace and Glory had learned that the Shepherd did not regard her as she was, but as she would be, even as he was providing for her to become what she would be. How does the Lord regard you? Give Scripture to back up your answer.

6. (p230) Does God want us to regard others in the same way He regards us? Consider **Philippians 2:3-4, 2 Corinthians 5:16**. What other Scripture can you apply? How would your own actions and feelings and responses toward others be different if you regarded others as the Lord regards you? Be specific.

(Chapter 19 continued)

7. (p230-231) The fourth thing Grace and Glory lists is this: "Every circumstance in life, no matter how crooked and distorted and ugly it appears to be, if it is reacted to in love and forgiveness and obedience to your will can be transformed. Therefore I begin to think, my Lord, you purposely allow us to be brought into contact with the bad and evil things that you want changed...that is the only really satisfactory way of dealing with evil, not simply binding it so that it cannot work harm, but whenever possible overcoming it with good." Do you agree? Can you find Scripture to back this up? Take some time to consider some of the difficult things in your own life in light of this idea.

8. (p231) The Shepherd says, "...Now you are able to run, leaping on the mountains and able to follow me where I go, so that we need never be parted again." What does it mean to be 'parted' from God, and what might cause us to be parted from God? Of course we know God is everywhere, so in one way we are never apart from Him. In our relationship, though, what might 'separate' us from Him for a time? Consider **Ephesians 4:17-18**, **Isaiah 59:2**, **Ezekiel 14:5**, **Galatians 5:4**.

9. On the other hand, read **Romans 8:38-39**. Do you ever *feel* separated from God, even if you aren't? Do you sometimes live, in some moments, as if He is not with you, as if you are not with Him? Are you sometimes unaware of His presence? If so, talk to Him about why, and how to be more often aware of His presence with you.

(Chapter 19 continued)

10. (p231) "So remember this; as long as you are willing to be Acceptance-with-Joy and Bearing-in-Love, you can never again become crippled, and you will be able to go wherever I lead you." Can we begin now to live in these attitudes? Have you ever known, or known of, someone who did? (I think of Paul & Stephen of the Bible, Corrie ten Boom, Elizabeth Elliot, and a few people I have known in real life.) What does it look like to live this way?

11. Have you seen growth and change in your life? List what you can think of. Is more growth and change in your future? List things in yourself you would like to see changed.

12. Did anything else from this chapter have an impact on you? How does it apply to your life?

CHAPTER 20: RETURN TO THE VALLEY

Scripture Reading: **Psalm 118:18** **Ephesians 2:1-10**
 Revelation 7:9

Reflection Questions:

(Remember to talk with God about these as you answer them.)

1. (p236-241) Grace and Glory now sees her relatives from a different perspective, and desires to help them. She sees that they are miserable, tormented by their natures as she was, slaves to their sin. (See **Ephesians 2:1-10**.) Do you see those who don't know the Lord in this way, even if/when they make your life difficult? If it's easy for you to lose this perspective at times, ask the Lord to help you.

2. (p236) As Much-Afraid, "she had not only feared but also condemned them, had actually "disdained their misery," telling herself it was their own fault." Have you found yourself seeing people in this way? It is common in our culture, even among Christians. If you struggle with this, talk with God about it, and ask Him to help you see them through His perspective and fight against the sway of our culture.

3. (p240-241) What do you think of the picture of evangelism we see here? Does it inform, or challenge, or change your understanding of and approach to those who do not know the Lord?

(Chapter 20 continued)

4. (p242) Grace and Glory gets new understanding as she watches the waterfall. Put it into your own words. How does this impact you?

5. What else in this chapter is meaningful to you? How does it apply to your life?

6. Close your study of this allegory in prayer. Talk with the Lord about how it has impacted your life and understanding. Ask Him what He would have you learn, where He would have you focus, what He would have you surrender to Him. Make note of these things, and the Scriptures that support them, here.