

Call to Obedience #340
 PO Box 299 Kokomo, IN 46903 USA
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Bumps in the Road

By Pastor Reimar A. C. Schultze

“O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!”—Romans 11:33

There are four things the apostle mentions here that are past finding out: 1) God's wisdom; 2) God's knowledge; 3) God's judgments and 4) God's ways. This should do away with all the *whys* about God. From this Scripture we learn that we should never ask, “Why is God doing this or that?” Yet, what amazes me about Christians is that although God says they would never understand Him, people continue to try and try and try to understand God. We need to stop trying to figure God out and trust Him to take us over those baffling bumps in the road that He sends.

We have an awful time understanding that God's ways are past finding out. My friend, when God says you will not find out His ways, you will not! So why do we keep trying? Another translation uses the phrase that His ways and His judgments are past tracing out. You can't find a trace to even begin your search for the answer that you are seeking. God does what He sees fit to do, and His office is not open for inquiries. God is sovereign and He expects you to believe that what He says and does is good for you. It is not appropriate to question God.

Faith does not question; it just obeys, for *without faith it is impossible to please God* (Heb. 11:6). God wants a people of faith, of surrender and submission. The prophet Isaiah also reiterates this by saying, “*For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts*” (Is. 55:8, 9). Stop wasting your time looking for answers that are not yours to have. Knowing takes you out of trusting. Eve wanted to know. She wanted to eat of the Tree of Knowledge and by that she threw the whole human race into darkness. Oh, please begin accepting His ways and your life will be made **a lot** easier. You don't have to know everything.

So, don't question the creation story. He could have done it in five days or five hours or five years. But He settled on six days. Now you settle on it and be happy. God could have started the human race with 200 people or 2000 people but He decided to start it with two. Jesus could have healed the blind man without clay and spittle, but He did not. Don't try to figure this out, just be happy with it and read the rest of the story. “*The just shall live by faith*” (Rom. 1:17). The way **to** God is by faith. The way to remain **in** God is by faith. If you can grasp this, the Bible will open up to you. God will begin to give you “*the treasures of darkness and hidden riches of secret places*” (Is. 45:3). These marvelous things will not be revealed to the *why* persons. Too many of our Sun-

day school lessons are wasted in *why* discussions. We are trying to understand *why*. We guess, we speculate, we analyze, and we debate and argue over things that are not ours to know. By the time we are all done, nothing fruitful has been accomplished in the hearts and they will be a little harder. Too much of our seminary and Bible college education is revolving around the whys. Many a college student has lost his faith because of the many whys. Too many whys can sow the seeds of doubt. Why can't we just believe the report and follow? The joy is in the following. The power is in the following. The fellowship is in the following. The greatest thing you can do in our life is to follow. The worst thing you can do is to ask too many *whys* as Eve did. We need to know that asking *why* comes out of the carnal mind. The carnal mind never stops questioning. But the spiritual mind is in continual childlike trust. The carnal mind must be crucified, moment by moment, for it will prevent you from following Jesus. Don't be a figurer, be a follower. Only faith will keep you near to Jesus. "*Because the carnal mind is enmity against God*" (Rom. 8:7).

Now, one thing we never find out about God is why He puts bumps in our roads. We never put bumps in our roads. For example, my wife and I never planned to wreck our car the night before our wedding. Highway engineers never put bumps in our roads; they plan them to be smooth and level. We don't plan for mishaps, surprises, difficulties, disappointments, hardships, severe trials and shattered dreams. We don't put early deaths or accidents or sicknesses in the pathway towards our goal. But His ways are higher than our ways so that we do not come to depend on ourselves. The bumps are there to mold us, to teach us to trust Him, to refine us and to keep us near the cross, near to Him. So one of the things we have to accept is this: our God is not only the creator of the universe, but also the creator of many bumps for our roads. In our human nature we will always chose the easy and the least painful and least agonizing way. Let's look at a few examples that illustrate that God is the creator of bumps in the road. His ways truly are unsearchable.

We would not have sent **Abraham** to Canaan with a promise of good things to come, then put him into a famine and make him wait 20 years for his son. We would not have let Sarah go through the disgrace of barrenness most of her life. That is not the way we do things. When we say we will bless somebody, we don't put thorns in the blessings. But God does. He puts a cross into everything He plans for us. His ways are higher than our ways. We would not have caused **David** to be hunted like a criminal by his king, or suffer the disloyalty of his son. We would've planned out the life of **Job** entirely differently than God did. We wouldn't have allowed the devil to beat him up as he did. We don't plan for bumps like this; we don't shatter people's dreams. Yet God sees to it that our dreams will be shattered, unless they are His dreams to start with.

Sometimes it seems like the closer we are to Jesus, the more bumps we will encounter on our road to heaven. Just look at all the bumps relating to the Nativity of Christ. **Zacharias** and **Elizabeth** planned to have a child and grandchildren. But these dreams were shattered and they bore the reproach of childlessness all their lives. God had other plans, that's why He put in the bumps. He wanted them to have just one son, the greatest man ever born of woman. So think of it. Are shattered dreams worth it for God

to have His way with you? Are the bumps that God sends signs of His mercy or His judgment, signs of His love or His displeasure with you?

How about the plans of **Joseph** and **Mary**? Why didn't the angel Gabriel tell Joseph ahead of time that his wife-to-be would be pregnant and that it would be from God, to spare him hours of agonizing? Don't we constantly go out of our way to not hurt anyone? Is it not part of our religion or obsession not to disappoint anybody? Is it not here where we put a lot of our energy: to be loved and accepted by everybody. Was this disappointment necessary? Oh, yes, because God's ways are unsearchable. Why did God have to send a pregnant woman on a long journey to have her baby in a cave, with no family or midwife? Why didn't God make the murderous King Herod a refugee, rather than Joseph and Mary with **Jesus, the Son of God**? Why did Joseph and his family have to run to Egypt? Is this the way they planned out their life? Tell me whether Jesus' road to Calvary was a smooth road or a bumpy one. What about the apostles? Did **Peter** plan as a young man to be crucified upside down? Was it **Paul's** plan to be beheaded when he started out with Christ?

Dear saint of God, God does not shatter your dreams, nor put bumps in your road, because He has something against you. No, rather he does it to get His very best for you in this life, and one of the finest seats for you at the table of the great marriage feast of the Lamb. His ways are past finding out. You had better believe it. Stop trying to figure God out. Stop being a *why person*, become a *follower*.

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