

Encounter: U: = Undergoing and understanding utterly uncertain times

We all know the words of the old hymn *Trust and obey, for there is no other way to be happy in Jesus than to trust and obey* – but how do we cope when it feels as though all happiness has gone out of the window? I have expressed a partial answer to this in the following prayer poem.

When the ability to sense God's presence fades –
continue to act as if things were still the same,
for deep down they truly are.

It's just as though a shutter has been pulled down
over our roof, blocking out the sun,
and we can no longer see or hear or feel
in the way we love to do.

Where Satan has brought this shutter down
and piled the pressure on your head,
resist the devil and he will flee far from you.

Place your hands on the shutter edges,
and pull this obstacle asunder
by the prayer of faith.

Where the darkness stems from swarms of obstacles
that daunt and block our path,
then may the Lord give strength to ride the millrace,
until the waters calm again –
and grace to trudge the sandy expanse
until the sand line ends and the welcome green returns.

But where the darkness is of the Lord's own doing,

remember that no matter how dark it be beneath His wing,
it is also completely safe.

He will not allow this darkness to last one moment longer
than is really necessary.

A tunnel is still His best and surest way
To carve a path through some obstacles,
and it is bound to be dark in a tunnel.

It takes time for flower beds to be restocked
when major shrubs have been uprooted,
but the new will come and you will live to tell the tale.

I have shared in detail about various different kinds of wilderness that we go through in *Intimacy and Eternity*. Each wilderness is entirely different. For example, it is really important to get the diagnosis right: whether we are going through a wilderness caused by circumstances (such as illness or loss), of satanic interruption, which needs first identifying and then breaking; one that is caused primarily by our own fault – in which case we need to get back on track – or whether God Himself is preparing us for something and using the darkness to prepare the way for something new. This, of course, is when we need to yield ourselves completely to the Lord, and cooperate with His purposes.

For a readable/ downloadable version of this to explore the themes relating to these different types of wildernesses and “The dark night of the soul”, go to www.ruachministries.org/intimacyandeternity.htm and go to chapters seven and eight.

107 Court Road, Malvern, Worcs, WR14 3EF

www.ruachministries.org