



# INSTRUCTIONS IN RIGHTEOUSNESS

Dr. Peter D. Wyns

Entry 6 - 7

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## Interrupted By God

From childhood, we have aspirations about our future. Usually our big plans fall away and we are left with much less than what we had wished for. Every once in a while, we hear of a rags to riches story, but often, folks do not see their dreams fulfilled. When they reach midlife, some people are dealing with the dregs of disappointment. There are too many detours and interruptions along the way, so people just do the best they can. Victorious Christians tell a different story; they discover that great things happen in unexpected ways. Through inconvenience, failures and even tragedies, they look back and realize that it was God who interrupted their lives. At first the interruptions seem like disasters, but afterward, they see that everything has turned into an amazing blessing.

It is rude when we are interrupted in the middle of a sentence and it is worse when we are interrupted in the middle of an important job. Then comes the interruption of our life's journey. That is when the course we are on gets blown up and we lose the ground beneath our feet. At some point, it happens to everyone, but if you walk with the Lord, it means that He is designing a time of transition for you.

Transition is not easy, but it is necessary for God to accomplish His purpose in your life. The purpose of godly transition is to move you from one level of spiritual life to a higher one. Awkward transitions are always difficult to accept, but without them we will not move forward in the purposes of God. A veteran of the faith learns to see the hand of God in the detours and interruptions of life. They hold on to faith even in the darkest times. They may not see a solution to their present situation, but they know that God will open a window for them when all the doors have closed. Today, I discovered someone whose life was interrupted by the Lord. His name is Simon.

***"A certain man from Cyrene, Simon, the father of Alexander and Rufus, was passing by on his way in from the country, and they forced him to carry the cross."** Mk. 15:21*

History reveals a lot about Simon of Cyrene. We know the date when the Roman soldiers made him carry Christ's cross; it was Passover. He was walking through the gate, on a glorious day, when the crowd was moved to the sides of the street. Then suddenly and ruthlessly, he was pulled from among them and forced to help a criminal who was on his way to be crucified. This was a huge interruption! Reluctantly, he lifted the 40 pound crossbeam off of Jesus' shoulders and struggled to get it up on his own. The soldiers would not touch it, and by now, the blood of Christ was all over him. Imagine, what it would have been like if God chose you to have the blood of Christ, that would wash away the sins of the world, to be all over you. Could you ever be the same again?

At that time, Simon did not know what was happening. All he knew was that the plans for his Passover pilgrimage were ruined; he could no longer enter the Temple Mount because he had become unclean.

Simon, was a devout Jew, who came from the city of Cyrene to participate in the Passover Feast.

The city of Cyrene was located on the northern shores of Africa, just west of Egypt, in the county of Cyrenaica, which today, is called Libya. At that time, there were no Muslims there. The nation was black African and 300 years earlier, a large number of Jews had moved there for business reasons. They established a synagogue in Cyrene, and similar to the story of Ethiopia, many of the local African people became interested in the Jewish way of life and they converted.

Later, Simon became a disciple of Jesus, for “Simon the Nger” (Niger means black) and “Lucius of Cyrene,” are listed as prophets with those who send Saul and Barnabas on their missionary journey from Antioch (see Acts 13:1, 11:19-22).

The shock that Simon experienced when he carried the cross, was an interruption planned by God. Mark told the story in his Gospel and sent it to Rome. He is careful to mention that Simon is the father of Alexander and Rufus, because, by the time Mark writes the letter, these men are leaders of the church in Rome. Paul also refers to Rufus in his letter to Rome. He says:

*“Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother, who has been a mother to me too.” Ro. 16:13*

Here is a Jewish, African, family that comes to Christ; they become powerful leaders in the church. Simon becomes a prophet, his sons became leaders of the church in Rome, and the Apostle Paul looks to Simon’s wife as a mother. All of this became possible because Simon, was interrupted by God.

Fifty days after Simon’s experience with the crucifixion of Christ, the Jews were celebrating Pentecost. Many pilgrims were Jewish businessmen and if they travelled far to be in Jerusalem for Passover, they might stay until Pentecost. No doubt, Simon was a devout man. He asked many questions after his experience and the disciples would not stop testifying about the miracles and teachings of Jesus the Messiah. He was probably still there in Jerusalem, on the day of Pentecost.

*“Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven.” “Parthians, Medes, Elamites, residents of Mesopotamia, Judea, and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome (both Jews and converts to Judaism).” Acts 2:5, 9-11*

We can only guess, but this might have been the day when, along with 3000 other Jews from around the world, Simon repented of his sins, made a public confession of Jesus as Messiah, believed and was baptized. It was not just a Roman soldier who chose a black man out of the crowd that day; it was God who chose Simon of Cyrene. God

loved him, so He interrupted his life because He had big plans for him and his family.

Do not take the following verse for granted. This verse is for you.

***“In all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” Ro. 8:28***

***The best times of our lives are when God interrupts us.*** Those interruptions are always uncomfortable and sometimes they are very painful. God directed transition is difficult, but it always leads to higher ground.

Many Christians are in a time of transition and interruption. They do not understand what is happening; their lives are upside down. Are you in a season of transition? If so, don’t lose heart, but expect great things to come from it. God has planed many important interruptions for your life. Make sure of four things so that the blessings of God may come to you.

1. Live righteously
2. Be pure in heart
3. Be full of faith
4. Follow God’s word, it says:

***“Trust in the Lord with all of your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and shun evil.” Pro. 3:5-7 AΩ***



## Christians for Messiah Ministries

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