**BE WITH ME LORD**

Thomas Obadiah Chisholm lived from 1866 to 1960 and wrote some of our most touching hymns that I grew up singing. For instance he penned “Great Is Thy Faithfulness,” and “O To Be Like Thee,” and “Living For Jesus,” and “Only In Thee,” and “Bring Christ Your Broken Life.” But my very favorite is the hymn “Be With Me Lord.”

In these days of uncertainty and fear from so many it is good to be reminded of the certainty and security that only God can provide. This hymn touches the very heart of how Christian’s should be thinking and living today. Listen to the words, then, if you remember the melody, sing it today… over and over again (I can’t seem to get it out of my mind).

1. Be with me Lord, I cannot live without Thee.
 I dare not try to take one step alone.
 I cannot bear the loads of life unaided.
 I need Thy strength to lean myself upon.

Jeremiah said “*It is not in man who walks to direct his steps*” (Jerem. 10:23). Solomon said, “*There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death*.” (Prov. 14:12). History is filled with the graveyard of people who tried walking solo without God. Just read Ecclesiastes. Walking in our own way is “*vanity and vexation of spirit, it is like trying to catch the wind*” (Eccl. 1:14). Without God we are taking a walk… right over the cliff. I dare not take one step alone, indeed. Instead, today and tomorrow and for the rest of our tomorrows let us “walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Cor. 5:7).

I cannot bear the loads of life unaided. Neither can you. Neither can Bill Gates (Microsoft), Sam Walton (WalMart), Warren Buffett (Berkshire Hathaway), Jeff Bezos (Amazon), Tim Cook (Apple), Mark Zuckerberg (Facebook), Elon Musk (Tesla, SpaceX), and all the other billionaires of the world. The breath they just took a second ago was a gift from God (James 1:17-18). The sun’s warmth they enjoyed this morning is also His providential gift (Matt. 5:45). Life’s loads are heavy. Too heavy. I can’t bear them alone. But with His help, and yours (Galatians 6:1-2), I can. Thank you God. Thank you brothers and sisters. I need you, now more than ever.

2. Be with me Lord, and then if dangers threaten,
 If storms of trial burst above my head,
 If lashing seas leap everywhere about me,
 They cannot harm, or make my heart afraid.

Dangers and trials are a fact of life in this broken world of sin and sorrow. Fiery trials are the lot of every adult human being (I Peter 4:12). This pandemic called Covid-19 is but one of literally thousands of “pestilences” God has allowed on the human race in its history. Look up in your Bible software or concordance the word “pestilence.” It is found over and over again throughout the Old Testament. Included is this verse from Habbakuk 3:5. *5 Before Him went pestilence, And fever followed at His feet.”*

One thing I noticed is that God was the sender of the pestilence in order to bring wicked nations to their knees to humbly seek God’s mercy and help. I cannot say God is doing this to the world today, but I am saying He has many, many times in the history of earth.

But, when “dangers threaten, and trials burst above my head” – I sing out “they cannot harm or make my heart afraid.” Why? Read the conclusion of Habakkuk’s message in 3:17-19. THAT is why my heart is not afraid:

17 Though the fig tree may not blossom,
Nor fruit be on the vines;
Though the labor of the olive may fail,
And the fields yield no food;
Though the flock may be cut off from the fold,
And there be no herd in the stalls—
18 Yet I will rejoice in the LORD,
I will joy in the God of my salvation.
19 The LORD God is my strength;
He will make my feet like deer’s feet,
And He will make me walk on my high hills.

Now, how is your heart and mind today? Are you afraid? Then sing this song with me today. Then close your eyes and pray this scripture with me:

“Dear Father in heaven, be with me Lord, I cannot live without you. In fact, dear Lord, I will take these words from the imprisoned Paul in Philippians 4 and make them my own today. I will this day:

“Rejoice in the Lord always. I will let my gentleness be known to all men, for I know You are at my right hand. I will be anxious for nothing, but in everything by my prayers and supplications, with a thankful heart, let my requests be known to You. And Lord, knowing this to be true, I know your peace, which surpasses all understanding, will guard my heart and mind in Christ Jesus my Savior.”

Amen. Amen.