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ON THE COMING OF SPRING AND THE CUTTING OF GRASS

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What a welcome relief after a cold winter are the sights and sounds of spring! Sunshine and gentle breezes. Birds singing and flowers blooming. Grass growing and lawnmowers buzzing! Where I live, we've been cutting the grass for some weeks, and on Saturday mornings the neighborhood reverberates with sounds like those of a sawmill! I suppose it's peer pressure that makes city dwellers, at least, keep their lawns looking neat. We collect the grass and throw it away, seldom even using it for mulch.

Not so in the land of the Bible. Grass and the flowers of the meadows which were cut with it served as an important source of fodder and fuel because of the scarcity of wood in that land. The little portable earthen ovens used by the poor for baking their bread were fueled with clippings cut from the fields. And what the people didn't cut, the long hot summer killed.

One way or another, vegetation didn't last long in Palestine.

That's why God often uses grass as a vivid reminder of the shortness of our lives. The amazing advances of medical science have lengthened life expectancy, but we still know that death is inevitable. Good health habits may slow the aging process, and cosmetics may temporarily hide it, but it goes on with every tick of the clock.

As for man--his days are like grass;

As the flower of the field, so he flourishes.

When the wind passes over it, it is gone;

And its place knows it no more.

Psalm 103:14-15

But certain as the shortness of life is, this need not be a fearful thing. Sovering, but not fearful. The same Psalm goes on to declare that God's love

never dies. It is from everlasting to everlasting, and His forgiving grace is extended to those who keep His commands. "And this is His commandment, that we should believe on the name of His Son, Jesus Christ" (1 John 3:23). Those who are born again, though they face the same inevitable death that all do, are assured of God's care, both during life now and hereafter.

One spring Jesus gazed at the hillsides clothed with golden amaryllis, crimson tulips, daises, buttercups, and anemones of all shades. He asked His disciples to notice how wonderfully God had clothed the land. Then He said, "If God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?" (Matthew 6:20). No matter what your problem or need, if you are His child through faith in Christ, God promises to care for it in His best way. We are only asked to trust His everlasting love.

But why is it that those who do follow Christ often seem to have more trouble than those who do not? Only God knows the full answer to that question, but He has told us that such is only temporary.

Fret not yourself because of evildoers,  
 Neither be envious of workers of iniquity.  
 For they will soon wither like the grass,  
 And fade like the green herb.

Psalm 37:1-2

In the meantime, continues the same psalm, "trust in the Lord and do good" all the days of your life.

So the next time you cut the grass, remember how short life is, how deep God's concern for His children, and how everlasting His mercy through Jesus Christ.