***Step 3-  Decide to return your will and your life to God the Eternal Father and His Son, Jesus Christ.***

The Children of Israel faced a difficult dilemma. In response to their repeated complaints against Moses, the Lord had sent “flying fiery serpents”, which poisoned most of the people. Many had already died as a result. The rest, pleading to Moses for relief, were told that they needed only to look to a brass serpent, erected on a pole. Look and they would live. Refuse and they would die.

Incredibly, even with deadly venom coursing through their veins, many refused to do even this very simple act. The reason, Alma explains, was that “they did not believe that it would heal them.” He then goes on to ask: “O my brethren, if ye could be healed by merely casting about your eyes that ye might be healed, would ye not behold quickly?” (Alma 33: 20,21).

Nephi, recalling the same incident, concludes, “…the labor which they had to perform was to look; and *because of the simpleness of the way*, or the easiness of it, there were many who perished.” (1 Nephi 17:41)

In truth, most of us believe that our Heavenly Father is more knowledgable than us, more loving than we are, and sees our future with perfect clarity. We will also confess that following His plan results in more happiness than ours do. And yet, despite all this, we still persist in trying to eliminate our hurts and habits our way. The result is that our lives become unmanageable.

In Mere Christianity, C.S. Lewis taught,

*Submit to death, death of your ambitions and favorite wishes every day and death of your whole body in the end: submit with every fiber of your being, and you will find eternal life. Keep back nothing. Nothing that you have not given away will be really yours. Nothing in you that has not died will ever be raised from the dead. . . look to Christ and you will find Him, and with Him everything else thrown in. (p. 225)*

This complete submission of our will can be painful and challenging. Looking to God and allowing Him to heal ‘all our ills’ requires that we be “stripped of pride” (Alma 5:28). It requires that we surrender cherished ideas of what it is we think we need. It also causes us to abandon past behaviors we thought would make us happy. What we begin to understand is that any other path, especially our own, delays our healing and growth.

As we submit and begin to trust Him, we will begin to find ourselves empowered by his loving care. We will feel an increasing desire, as Elder Enzio Busche once described, for the Lord to become “the doer of all our deeds and…the speaker of all our words." (Oct. Conf. 1993).

This desire will then produce a change in the way we pray. The primary goal of our prayers will be the “education of our desires.” (Joseph F. Smith, Gospel Principles, p. 297) Like a child, we will be more anxious to discover His divine perspective of our weaknesses along with His inspired direction for our healing. In our prayers, we will speak less and listen more.

We will then be more attuned to watch for “tender mercies” when they occur, recognizing them as a sought for answer to our prayers. Seeking His guidance and counsel, we will “…pour out [our] souls in [our] closets, and…secret places, and in [our] wilderness.” (Alma 34:26)

When we are submissive in our prayers, seeking God’s solutions rather than ours, needed guidance will be given. Describing just such an experience, President Henry B. Eyring relates:

I prayed, but for hours there seemed to be no answer. Just before dawn, a feeling came over me. *More than at any time since I had been a child, I felt like one*. My heart and my mind seemed to grow very quiet. There was a peace in that inner stillness.

Somewhat to my surprise, I found myself praying, "Heavenly Father, it doesn't matter what I want. *I don't care anymore what I want*. I only want that Thy will be done. That is all that I want. Please tell me what to do." (As A Child, April 2006 General Conference)

When are ready, becoming “submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things…” (Mosiah 3:19) then our Heavenly Father responds with an outpouring of love and support.

But we must decide.

Many hurts, habits and hang-ups come from trying exercise our control over the painful parts of the life—without success. For today, we must make a conscious decision to let go of that need to be in control and to let Him guide us where we need to be. Tomorrow we will need to make the same decision.

Like the Children of Israel, experiences with various ‘serpents’ in our lives have left us with fatal poisons in our veins. If we do nothing, these poisons will kill us spiritually. In order to be healed, He asks only that we look to Him and live.

But we must decide.

**Read and Ponder**

**Consider a 30 Day EMD Prayer Challenge (Educate My Desires)**

1. **Primarily express gratitude, asking for very little.**
2. **Explain that “all I want is what you want.”**
3. **Ask, “what is it you want me to do?”**
4. **Listen for the guidance.**
* ***If you have tried the challenge, what did you learn?***

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* ***When you visualize submitting to the Lord, what do you picture?***

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In the Old Testament, Naaman is described as “a great man…and honourable…[and] he was also a mighty man in valour…” (2 Kings 5:1). Yet he was also afflicted with leprosy, a disease he could not cure on his own. The Lord was willing to heal him, but only after giving him some simple, specific task, outlined by a Prophet. Similarly, as we wrestle with our own incurable weaknesses, have also been given specific directions, by a prophet.

* ***As you read the story of Naaman, what do you feel the Lord is directing you to do?***

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Elder Neal A. Maxwell stated: “The submission of one’s will is really the only uniquely personal thing we have to place on God’s alter. *It is a hard doctrine, but it is true*.” (Insights from My Life, Ensign, Aug. 2000, 9)

* ***Is the submission of your will a ‘hard doctrine’? If so, what is there about this process that is so difficult?***

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**Notes**

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