

## Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah

Psalm 31:3: “You are my rock and my fortress, for the sake of Your name lead and guide me.”

The need for daily guidance is one of the Christian’s greatest concerns. How easily our lives can go astray without the assurance of divine leadership. Today’s featured text is one of the great hymns on this subject. It is a product of the revival movement that swept through Wales during the 18<sup>th</sup> century. This revival was led by a man named Howell Harris, who preached and advocated congregational singing. One of the people influenced by Harris was a man named William Williams. He was the son of a wealthy Welsh farmer and was on his way to become a medical doctor. He became a preacher not long after getting to know Mr. Harris. He gained the nickname “sweet singer of Wales” by preaching to as many people as he could.

The vivid, symbolic imagery of this hymn is drawn from the Scriptures. The general setting is the march of the Israelites from Egypt to Canaan. Although the Israelites’ sin and unbelief kept them from their destination for 40 years, God provided for their physical needs with a new supply of manna each day. Twice during the Hebrews’ years of wandering, they became faint because of lack of water. At the command of God, Moses struck a large rock with his staff. Out of it flowed water that preserved their lives. God also continued to guide them with a pillar of cloud by day and the pillar by night.

Guide me, O Thou Great Jehovah, pilgrim thru this barren land; I am weak, but Thou art mighty — Hold me with Thy powerful hand: Bread of Heaven, Bread of Heaven, feed me till I want no more.

Open now the crystal fountain, whence the healing stream doth flow; Let the fire and cloudy pillar lead me all my journey through; Strong Deliverer, strong Deliverer, be Thou still my strength and shield.

When I tread the verge of Jordan, bid my anxious fears subside; Bear me thru the swelling current; land me safe on Canaan’s side: Songs of praises, songs of praises, I will ever give to Thee.

When we think about Scriptures like Psalm 16:11 (“You will make known to me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever.”), Psalm 32:8 additionally teaches, “I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you should go; I will counsel you with My eye upon you.” In Isaiah 58:11, “And the Lord will continually guide you, And satisfy your desire in scorched places, And give strength to your bones; And you will be like a watered garden, And like a spring of water whose waters do not fail.” Finally, in Romans 8:14, “For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.” If we let God guide and lead us through His Bible, and claim His promises for our life in even the small decisions, we will not go wrong. God truly is our great Creator and a great Jehovah!

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