

## THE UPWARD CALL

*Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet;  
but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead,  
I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God*

**IN KING JESUS.**

(Philippians 3:13-14)

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### ***Daffodils Blow the Trumpets***

*Earth laughs in flowers.* Ralph Waldo Emerson

For ever since the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky. Through everything God made, they can clearly see His invisible qualities—His eternal power and divine nature. So, they have no excuse for not knowing God. (Romans 1:20 NLT)

I am discovering more and more that our heavenly Father expresses Himself to us in His creation; all we need to do is open the eyes of our spiritual sight as we look out upon His glorious creation with the eyes of our natural sight. I call these moments *reflections of God in creation!*

A few weeks ago, I was wandering through a local garden center and pots of daffodils had just arrived and were being put out for purchase. Caught by the simplicity of their beauty I bought a pot, brought it home, and planted its contents outside a window in a room that faces mostly in a northeast direction. I wanted to position them so that we could see them from our kitchen table as we eat breakfast. Looking at God's beauty in His flowers is a good way to start the day; they bring happiness and joy to the heart or, as Emerson saw it, laughter. It's rather interesting that we see flowers at both weddings and funerals and everything in between, for that matter.

Well, the spot I selected might not be the best since it only gets a few hours of indirect sun but probably enough to satisfy the flowers. So, we began monitoring the progress of our new friends.

There were only buds on the tall green stalks that came from the bulbs below, so I had no idea what type of daffodil bloom would form. Actually, I had no idea that there are many varieties of them. Good thing, for it makes the story more interesting and one I could not have contrived.

At first all the buds were sort of sticking up straight in the air, meaning they had no particular direction in mind. However, all this changed as the blooms began forming and full-blown flowers appeared. They were beautiful bright yellow with centerpieces of bright orange that stretched out from the center. We dubbed our new friends of joy the "daffys", named after that daffy duck we grew up with. Besides, they have the colors of little rubber duckies that groups throw into streams to see which one arrives at the finish line first or children play with in their bathtub.

Now, here is the interesting part, at least the first part of the interesting part. Over the next few days, most of the blooms began turning together facing in one direction, the eastern sky where the sun rises each morning. They were looking for the sun. Keep this in mind; just a hint, starting thinking sun = Son!

The second part of the interesting part is that we realized we have what are called *trumpet daffodils*. The bright orange centers are the *trumpets*; also called the *cup* or *corona*. Keep this part in mind; just a hint, start thinking of blowing the trumpets for the arrival of the Son.

The third part of the interesting part is that, of the nineteen buds that flowered, there were seventeen flowers pointing toward the east, one pointing toward our window, and the last bloomer was overshadowed by all the other stalks so it sat low to the ground and drooped, as if sulking. Keep this part in mind; just a hint, start thinking the number seventeen signifies *victory* and the number nineteen signifies *faith*. Here is your final clue: The Son is the Victor and the author of the faith by which we live.

I trust that, at this point, the clues are coming together and you sort of get the picture.

Seventeen of the daffys—representing the victory that King Jesus won through His death on the cross and resurrection from among the dead and ascension to the right hand of the throne of glory—faced the east toward the rising of the Son and blew their trumpets announcing the coming of the Son of God who is the light of the world. He has given us His faith to believe and to be those who are waiting for His glorious light-blinding return. The daffys are harbingers of the second manifestation of our beloved Lord Jesus. Who says there is no creator God? As Paul reminds us in the opening verse, there is no excuse for not knowing God.

What are we to do until the arrival of our king? We are to hold to the faith as we wait with patient endurance for the Son to come from heaven to meet us in clouds (meaning we are to be His witness on earth) in air (an earthly event) to usher Him back to this earth to manifestly (openly) rule and reign over all the nations, spreading the glory of God throughout the earth. The clouds that meet Him in air are the ones who will be resurrected and transfigured into the image of the Son of God, our Lord Jesus.

We are citizens of heaven, you see, and we're eagerly waiting for the savior, the Lord, King Jesus, who is going to come from there. Our present body is a shabby old thing, but he's going to transform it so that it's just like his glorious body. And he's going to do this by the power which makes him able to bring everything into line under his authority. (Philippians 3:20-21 Kingdom NT)

Like the nineteenth flower that was overshadowed by the others, not all of us have the same level of faith to hold onto the expectation of the coming of our king. What are we to do? *Therefore encourage one another and build up one another* (1 Thessalonians 5:11) *as long as it is still called "today"* (Hebrews 3:13). *We, the "strong" ones, should bear with the frailty of the "weak"* (Romans 15:1). Let us not please ourselves, but let us build up one another in love. That drooping daffy is just as important to God as the strong ones blowing the trumpets.

Did you know that the number sixteen signifies *love*? God is love, and Paul tells us that love never fails. What number follows sixteen (not a trick question, just simple math)? It is seventeen, which is the number of victory. How do we get the ultimate victory? Only through love. Love leads to victory! Did you also know that if you add all the numbers up to seventeen you arrive at the number 153? Does this number bring a scripture to mind? It is the number of fish the disciples caught after Jesus' resurrection right before His final ascension (John 21:11). But there is more: The numeric value of *ben h'elohim*, the sons of God, is seventeen. The blowing of the trumpet not only proclaims the arrival of the King of kings, but also announces the transformation and display of the sons of God to all the earth, the glorious day for which all of creation eagerly longs (Romans 8:20-25).

One final question: Why was there one daffy pointing toward our kitchen window? Simply, because God wants us to know that it won't be long until the trump sounds. Until then, be a harbinger trumpet, telling the world King Jesus is coming! Be a daffy! Who would ever imagine that the daffys could bring out such glorious truth? Well, open your eyes; there is plenty more encouragement in God's creation.