

General Topics :: Hinds Feet on High Places

Hinds Feet on High Places - posted by CJF (), on: 2007/3/2 9:43

When I was newly saved in 1984, the first book I was given to read (after the Bible, of course) was Hinds' Feet on High Places, by Hannah Hurnard.

It spoke volumes to me at the time, and I am thinking about re-reading it. A couple of years ago I found information on the internet that suggested that Ms. Hurnard's doctrine is rather suspect. I'm curious to hear feedback from anybody who knows anything about this book, or any of her other works.

If I find a book that I like, I tend to try to read as many other works from that particular author as I can get my hands on, but her follow-up book, Mountain of Spices, didn't strike the same chord, and I didn't go further with her writings.

Any comments? Thanx!

Carol :-)

Re: Hinds Feet on High Places - posted by Goldminer (), on: 2007/3/2 10:26

Dear Carol,

I am probably one of the biggest lovers of Hind' Feet on Hight Places you'll ever meet. I have read it more than a dozen times and given hundreds of them away. I even had an online Christian book store that I called "Grace & Glory Books", closed now.

It wouldn't matter to me what another's opinion of this book was because it has changed my life in so many ways. I have learned through it no matter what difficulties need to be surmounted or what delays cross my path I will be brought to be with Him in the end. It has also caused me to see that those little altars along the way where I laid down my will are figuratively going to be jewels in my crown. I know it is an allegory, but wow, what it has meant to me.

I also agree with you about the other books. I have read them all and still love HFOHP the best. I don't ever reread the others, although Winged Life is pretty good.

I would say to you that if you are drawn closer to God by a book hold it dear. Everybody will have his own opinion and we need to have input from other believers, however, some folks find something wrong with everything.

I love it, was changed by it and will probably read it about every year for the rest of my life. It has really encouraged me to go on in some of my darkest moments, causing me to see beyond my difficult circumstances to the reward at the end.

Thanks for asking.

Re: Hinds Feet on High Places, on: 2007/3/2 11:14

Hi Carol

I used to have both books, and read them several times. Mountains of Spices is more of a meditation than an adventure - maybe that was why you didn't get on with it so well? It can't be read like a story - each part stands by itself more.

I did find them a blessing, but felt they were sometimes a little too "mystical", or not quite "Christ-centred" - though unable to work out exactly why. Perhaps because the first book, especially, focuses more on the heroine's journey of emotional healing, "self-discovery" and relationship with the Lord rather than on the Lord Himself???

Helpful up to a point, but not in the same league as "Pilgrim's Progress"...

I later met someone who knew Hannah Hurnard, and said that she'd gone a bit "strange" in later life; and seem to remember reading somewhere that she did go a bit astray spiritually.

However, don't let that spoil your enjoyment!

Jeannette

Re: Hannah Hurnard, on: 2007/3/2 11:30

Quote:

I wrote:

I later met someone who knew Hannah Hurnard, and said that she'd gone a bit "strange" in later life; and seem to remember reading somewhere that she did go a bit astray spiritually.

Just found a couple of links on this. It seems she later went into Universalism and other things, including occult and New-Age type things. Hinds' Feet was her first book, and is pretty "orthodox". Interesting that even then there were traces of the mysticism. It didn't stop me enjoying the books but they gave me an uneasy feeling, rather like the guilt one feels after eating too much cake!

<http://www.pfo.org/high-pla.htm>

<http://www.geocities.com/asterisktom/hurnard.html>

Jeannette

Re: Hannah Hurnard, on: 2007/3/2 11:45

This thread seems to be tending from discussion of a book to an exercise in discernment! I didn't know why she was supposed to be "a bit strange" in later years until reading these.

Here's an extract from the second link:

"At first glance you wouldn't think that Hannah Hurnard belongs among those who deny the faith. How many times have we come across her books in Christian bookstores? She was the author of the semi-autobiographical allegory "Hind's Feet on High Places". Since it came out in 1955 it has been high on the best-seller list. Allegory, by very definition, is hard to assign meaning to. It is this that has kept the work in the charitable affections of many Christians, who see in the piece a devotional plea for spiritual and Christlikeness.

But which Jesus are we describing here? Over the years the identity of Hurnard's Christ has come into sharper focus. This is actually the New Age Christ and not the Son of God of Christianity. Looking at all of the books that Hurnard wrote after her first work helps us to understand much more about her Christianity and also what her intentions were from the very first book. All of her later full-blown heresies are clearer seen, though perhaps just hinted at, in her first offering.

She never believed that we are saved by grace through faith in Christ alone. Rather, her belief is that we save ourselves by suffering and affliction. It is this suffering that brings us into unity with Christ, not anything that God did. Every human passion (affections of any kind) must be killed. This is our sacrifice to God. Christ's sacrifice to the Father was apparently not sufficient. Not having faith in the completeness of the Lamb's acceptability with the Father, Hurnard believes we too must sacrifice for our own salvation. Her "Christlikeness" is the means of salvation, instead of, as true Christianity teaches, the result and outworking of it."

Not sure if I agree completely with this part of the assessment re Hinds Feet:

"Every human passion (affections of any kind) must be killed. This is our sacrifice to God. Christ's sacrifice to the Father was apparently not sufficient. Not having faith in the completeness of the Lamb's acceptability with the Father, Hurnard believes we too must sacrifice for our own salvation."

I understood the moment when she let the Lord take out of her heart the weed of "wanting to be loved" as the letting go of an idol, in order that Christ's love might fill her heart, not a denial of the sufficiency of His sacrifice.

Much Afraid's "sacrifices" were more of a necessary prelude to her healing than an offering to God. Although I would agree that there is a measure of "spiritual masochism" - the concept that suffering in itself is necessary to emotional healing.

However, there seems no doubt that she did go very far astray in the end.

That's so sad...

Jeannette

Re: Hinds Feet on High Places - posted by jordanamo, on: 2007/3/2 11:48

Be careful. With book-worship & people-worship. They can become idols.

I have the book. I have not read it, found it at a thrift store awhile back, having heard of it.

But be careful. Especially with anything near "mysticism."

Will look into the book though.

I know that Wilkerson's Zion School of Ministry has this book in their... curriculum. It's held to high esteem.

Jordan

Re: Hind's Feet on High Places - posted by CJF (), on: 2007/3/3 15:15

Wow, Jeannette --

Thanks for including the links on Hurnard. It makes me very sad to think that the very first "Christian" book that I read has its root in occultism and mysticism. It also makes me worry about the 'foundation' that was laid in me at such a crucial time.

I think I will resist the impulse to read the book again. Pity. I was rather looking forward to it, but the excitement has been worn down to utter distaste after reading about the author.

I appreciate your feedback!

God bless you!

Carol

Re: Hannah Hurnard - posted by Lor_E (), on: 2007/3/3 17:09

I wonder how many other humans have faltered in their end years.... seems to me that there are many, years ago David Wilkerson preached a message about that very thing, I believe it was called "The End of Man"? It was a long time ago...

Let every man be a liar and let God be true....

Oh, the frailty of the flesh of humanity! Praise be to God that though we can be touched by such a precious book as this we do NOT have to have the same end as its author!!!

Rather let us be those who cling fast to the Author and Finisher of our Faith.

And let my heart EVER be ready to YIELD to the LORD whatever is required that I might KNOW HIM... though it is burned upon an altar and becomes nothing but an ash.... here while we walk this earth... that there, in that GREAT HIGH PLACE

ACE, those things that are here but scrubby rocks, may they be precious to HIM in His sight! and His sight only!

Re:, on: 2007/3/3 17:21

Quote:

CJF wrote:
Wow, Jeannette --

Thanks for including the links on Hurnard. It makes me very sad to think that the very first "Christian" book that I read has it's root in occultism and mysticism. It also makes me worry about the 'foundation' that was laid in me at such a crucial time.

I think I will resist the impulse to read the book again. Pity. I was rather looking forward to it, but the excitement has been worn down to utter distaste after reading about the author.

I appreciate your feedback!

God bless you!

Carol

Dear Carol

Please don't worry that there is any wrong root in *you* just because the book blessed you! The Lord often uses even flawed things, to minister to us, and Hinds Feet was certainly a great blessing to me at first - the sense of it being a bit too mystical (or *something* not quite right) came gradually, after reading it several times.

An example of the Lord using much more plainly erroneous teaching is when the "prosperity Gospel" first began to be widely preached. It helped get me out of my naturally very negative and pessimistic outlook! Even though flawed, it provided the balance needed at the time...

I don't think Hinds Feet is harmful in itself, especially as it was written long before Hannah Hurnard began to go seriously astray. I'm sure the Lord used, and continues to use it in spite of any "error in the bud" that may have been present.

Perhaps she was like King Solomon, who began his career mightily blessed by the Lord, and in the centre of His will, yet went astray later in life.

Probably no book (except the Bible) is completely free from some form of error.

I'm so sorry if it caused you to worry, I just did some looking up because of your question, and found those links. As said in a previous post I didn't see all the errors the articles pointed out, and wonder if they were over critical in some things.

In Him

Jeannette