

FOR GOOD

A LITTLE OVER HALF of my three-plus acres of lawn was mowed. After the fits and starts, the agonizing string of breakdowns and repairs that had described my first year with this mower, I have spent this spring rejoicing in its flawless performance. Turn the key and away we go—first time, every time.

Blessed relief.

Thank you, God.

Before heading into the next section of lawn, I used the mower to quickly blow the detritus of the last storm off the paved portion of the drive. And just then it made a sound not unlike a Buick sedan passing through the propellers of a B-17 Flying Fortress. At first I thought the blades were just chewing up a fallen tree branch, but soon realized something more dire was taking place. I switched off the blades and killed the engine, but grating sounds continued.

Alighting the beast, I saw hot oil gushing from beneath the engine, spreading a nasty pool across the drive. At the sight, visions of a major expense passed before my eyes: thrown rod, blown gasket, et al.

Forgetting its perfect performance of the last two months and seeing in its place only dollar signs and panoramas of overgrown grass, I cried out, "What now?"

The echoes of my thanksgiving to God were still ringing in my brain when the unpleasant disruption had occurred. And if gratitude is due Him for His influence on the mower's improved performance of late, then it follows that His hand was, as well, in its cataclysmic breakdown.

For that the praise does not come so easily.

The believer never knows what the Lord—not fate, not karma, not happenstance or accident, but *the Lord*—will throw at him. The events of our tomorrow

are not written down in any language we can read, but only in the language of heaven. Neither is the *logic* of our tomorrow of this earth; it has been formulated by Minds far superior to our own.

Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit." Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are *just* a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. Instead, you *ought* to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that."

James 4:13-15

We cannot know what tomorrow will bring. Neither can we judge whether what does occur is good or bad. It certainly *can* be inconvenient; it was unequivocally inconvenient to spend several days *under* my mower repairing it, than spending one hour sitting atop it to finish mowing the lawn. But just as I didn't know that the breakdown would occur, I cannot say that the breakdown was a bad thing.

And since I am not equipped to answer that, how dare I complain to God about it when He may ultimately be due my praise and gratitude?

Then his brothers also came and fell down before him and said, "Behold, we are your servants." But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid, for am I in God's place? As for you, you meant evil against me, *but* God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive."

Genesis 50:18-20

Who knows God's reason for the ill-timed behavior of my mower. It would be a waste of time to guess. A better response would be to develop the habit of thanking Him for *everything*. For surely He is its author.

And just as surely He means it for good.

