**THE EAGLE LIFE - STUDIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT BY JOHN H. JOWETT**

**08. THE SCHOOL OF HUNGER by JOHN H. JOWET**

*"I led thee and suffered thee to hunger ... to teach thee that man shall not live by bread alone."*

*Deuteronomy 8:3*

What a strange school is this school of hunger! We are led into the discipline of deprivation in order that we may know the relative values of things. We discover the true place of a thing when it is taken from us. Once it seemed to occupy the front rank, to be one of the primaries of life; and when it was removed we found something else in the chief seat, and the missing thing was seen in a secondary place. The material slips away in order that the spiritual may be revealed. We lose a princeling in order that we may find a king. "In the year that Uzziah died I saw the Lord!" Even in the school of bereavement we come upon the Lord of life.

And this, too, is another lesson in the school of deprivation: -- "I suffered thee to be deprived of success to teach thee that man does not live by success alone." We live by disappointment as well as by attainment. Nay, in our disappointments we can gain finer attainments. The cloudless skies make a Sahara. It is the strangely mingled weather, with its dulness and cold, searching mists and rains, which makes "England's green and pleasant land.'' We cannot live by success alone. Success alone would make us hard and dry. We need the softening ministry of disappointment. We need the enlarging ministry of failure. We need the mysterious tonic of defeat.

And this, too, is a lesson taught in the school of hunger: -- "I suffered thee to be deprived of joy to teach thee that man doth not live by joy alone." We unduly exalt our feelings, and we come to think of ecstasies as the normal mood of a wholesome Christian life. We seek to live in happy feelings rather than in a righteous and steadfast will. And so the bread of joy is taken away, and we are left to travel a piece of road in dry obedience. It is a lesson of infinite value -- "to faithfully walk the King's road when we cannot hear the song of a solitary bird! Man doth not live by happiness alone; he lives in every changing moon, if only he is travelling toward the Holy City, intent on reaching its gates before the sun goes down.