

## The CloudBlazer

And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so as to go by day and night. He did not take away the pillar of cloud by day or the pillar of fire by night from before the people. (Exodus 13:21-22 NIV)

Though a small thing to most, this trip was a behemoth to me. "God, please lead the way," I prayed while I downloaded directions from Google Maps. My daughter Aurelia wanted to attend a weekend camp in Shawnee while my husband needed to be 80 miles away at a ministry event in the Arbuckle Mountains. The interstate was the shortest distance between home and camp, but I don't do four-lane highways. So Aurelia and I were taking the back roads.

This was roll-down-your-window territory, with its country counterpoint of baled hay and red-winged blackbirds. I was grateful for the fresh air after passing through NE 36<sup>th</sup> and its towering East Oak Landfill, gilded Buddhist statuary, and dead end at Triple X Road. My daughter sat beside me, content to read and push the buttons on the cassette deck in our Dodge pickup.

The long stretches of smooth asphalt meandering through cattle country soothed my nerves until a road sign announced an upcoming intersection. Where was that turn? Would that semi-truck behind me please give me some space?

Then the white TrailBlazer ahead of me slowed and eased into the Highway 62 turn lane. I followed, grateful for my own personal CloudBlazer.

In referring to the literal presence of God going before the children of Israel in the wilderness, Matthew Henry wrote: "The wind could not scatter this cloud."<sup>1</sup> Were the storms stifled during all those 40 years of traveling so that the cloud would move unperturbed ahead of the throng? Or was this cloud unfazed by the gusts blowing through the camp? My focus is often blurred by doubts swirling through my head, but they don't alter the One who goes before me.

Even though I didn't envision a tangible presence leading me when I prayed for guidance, God didn't downsize His provision for me. In fact, at another tricky transition, a different vehicle led the way. That happened in Shawnee, but I had already come safely through Forest Park, Harrah, and Choctaw – plus that other spot on the map I'll never forget: the city of McLoud.

<sup>1</sup>Henry, M. (1706). Exodus. In *Matthew Henry commentary on the whole Bible (complete)*. Retrieved from <http://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew-henry-complete/exodus/>

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