

UPLOOK

• ASSESS THE NEED • CATCH THE VISION • TAKE THE CHALLENGE •



DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB —Lord Byron

*The Assyrian came down like a wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.
Like the leaves of the forest when summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen:
Like the leaves of the forest when autumn hath blown,
That host on the morrow lay wither'd and strown.*

*For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he passed;
And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and forever grew still!
And there lay the steed with his nostrils all wide,
But through it there rolled not the breath of his pride;
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.*

*And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his mail:
And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,
The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown.
And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail
And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord!*

THE LONG WAR

EPIC BATTLES IN THE BIBLE

NIKE

Swoosh. The world renowned shoemaker didn't get it quite right.

It was in 1957 that University of Oregon track coach Bill Bowerman met a middle distance runner named Phil Knight. After graduating with an MBA from Stanford, Knight began importing athletic shoes from Japan, selling them out of the trunk of his car. His first shipment of 200 pairs arrived in 1963. The next year Bowerman and Knight each contributed \$500 and formed a partnership in what would become Nike Inc., named after the Greek goddess of victory. They paid an art student \$35 for the famous swoosh design that became their logo. It was Bowerman's experiments with "rubber spikes" that changed the athletic shoe industry and the design of running shoes. He did this by pouring rubber into his wife's waffle iron! The corporation is now valued in the billions and is famous for its "Just Do It" slogan.

In fact *nike* (actually pronounced nee'-kay) is a Bible word. Its cognates *nikao* and *nikos* are variously translated conquer, overcome, prevail, and get the victory.

In Matthew 12:19-20, we have a wonderful promise from Isaiah's first Servant Song (ch. 42) applied to our Lord. Interestingly, rather than *Just Do It*, it tells us seven things that the Lord Jesus *will not do*: "*He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear His voice in the streets. A bruised reed shall He not break, and smoking flax shall He not quench, till He send forth judgment unto victory (nikos).*"

And how would this victory be won? O the glorious triumph of our Lord's total defeat of our enemy! It is so thrilling that Paul uses the word not once but three times in quick succession: "*So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory (nikos). O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory (nikos)?...But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory (nikos) through our Lord Jesus Christ*" (1 Cor. 15:54-55, 57).

John does him one better, using the word four time in two verses. Again the victory spoken about is ours, but as Paul states, ours through Christ. "*For whatsoever is born of God overcometh (nikao) the world: and this is the victory (nike) that overcometh (nikao) the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh (nikao) the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?*" (1 Jn. 5:4-5). Again Phil Knight's *Just Do It* slogan falls short of the secret of true victory. It is not in the doing of personal effort but in the believing, placing our undivided loyalty in Jesus as the Son of God, that brings us into victory.

John takes us in the Revelation on a tour of things to come. In heaven he sees the true victors from the darkest chapter in the history of Planet Earth. They are not the successes featured in Nike ads. There is no mention of their footwear. But we *are* told where they stand. Having been through the fire and the water, John writes of them: "*And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory (nikao)...*" (Rev. 15:2). They, like the saints from other ages have discovered that the secret of true victory is found by making safe passage with the Victor Himself. He who passed through the billows of wrath at Calvary, who gave Himself as the ultimate Burnt Offering, has promised those who follow Him, "*When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee*" (Isa. 43:2). This is victory indeed!



J. B. Nicholson
J. B. NICHOLSON, JR.

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Q&A

IT SEEMS TO ME that many of the battles we have in life—even in the local church—are people problems. Can you give some practical guidelines so we can have more peace and joy in the assembly? So we can get along better with our neighbors and fellow workers? Give me some scriptures, please.

“AS MUCH AS LIETH IN YOU, live peaceably with all men” (Rom. 12:18). *“Follow peace with all men”* (Heb. 12:14). Denial of self is characteristic of a faithful follower of the Lord Jesus. He no longer seeks his own but allows himself rather to be defrauded (1 Cor. 6:7). He would rather be wronged than wrong.

Our Lord said, *“Agree with thine adversary quickly”* (Mt. 5:25). In other words, Make friends with your enemies and annoyances. You may be annoyed by obnoxious neighbors, a rival at work, or a contentious brother or critical sister in the assembly. Are you dealing with such in the spiritual way, in the way enjoined by the Lord Jesus? Or are you allowing yourself to be irritated? *“Doest thou well to be angry?”* (Jonah 4:4). Is it Christian to attack your adversary, to go to the authorities, to use force to remove the nuisance? Is it the best way to deal with it?

Aren’t you the loser in such an approach? Certainly you will lose time and energy; you may lose money and your health by doing this. Even if you succeed in getting the annoyance removed, things may actually go from bad to worse; you may have stirred up a hornet’s nest. There is *“a more excellent way”*—the way of love and co-operation, of making friends with those that disturb your peace. This is the way of freedom and blessing. You can actually learn to love the experience until you don’t want it removed. *“Love your enemies.” “Pray for them.” “Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good”* (Rom. 12:21). These injunctions are not impractical, not for some future day when there will be no enemy to love. They are for *“this present evil age.”* Love is the key to every situation:

1. *Assess what good you can do to your adversary.* Your neighbors may be greatly tried, and may long for a sympathetic friend to help them bear up under their burdens. Your unsaved fellow workers do not have a heavenly Father as you do. Your brother or sister in the assembly may be carrying some secret load that is crushing them. Thinking along these lines will arouse sympathy instead of anger and resentment. Let love take the matter in hand for you. Consider human frailty. Give others the benefit of the doubt. Love them for Jesus’ sake.

2. *Accept the experience as from God.* His ways are known through trials. *“As for God, His way is perfect.”* He wants to train us that He may entrust to us the true riches of His grace and goodness, and thus make us His witnesses. Are we learning of Him? By so doing we shall find rest to our souls (Mt. 11:29). Remember how He treated His enemies? Love turns you from a victim to a victor. It gives you a strategy, putting the momentum in your hands. Trying experiences are open doors to a deeper knowledge of God and a more Christlike life of peace and joy.

3. *Approach the Lord about the matter.* *“Pray for them which despitefully use you”* (Mt. 5:44). Seek grace to pray with reality. By so doing you will gain the victory. You will enjoy the liberty of the children of God. If your adversary is a business competitor, pray for his material prosperity and spiritual blessing. Men may call you a fool, but the Lord will commend your action. *“Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself”* (Mt. 22:39). Your competitor may obtain some of your trade, but God can open up new fields for you, or in some better way He will bless you. *“The Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends. Also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before”* (Job 42:10). What a convincing example of the way of love and of *“the end of the Lord”* (Jas. 5:11).

God may remove your adversary, or He may reform him. In any case, He will reward you—with a sweeter disposition, satisfaction in soul, and sanctification at present, but in *“that Day”* you will see greater things. You may even win your enemy for Christ. The wise wins souls. Yes, *“prayer changes things”* and also changes the one who prays. *“Love never faileth”* therefore *“Keep yourselves in the love of God.”* Breathe deeply in that atmosphere and your soul will prosper (Jude 21; 3 Jn. 2). Christ and His grace are the key to unlock the heavenly life. Commune with Him. Commit all to Him, and He will come to you and make His abode with you. *“Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another”* (Rom. 14:19).

J. W. NEWTON

WHEN WILL THE BATTLE BE OVER?

The restored nation some day will turn their swords into plowshares.

J. W. Clapham

Of absorbing interest to many students in the world today is the divine outlook presented in the Scriptures concerning the international Jewish problem and the final return of the Jews to their homeland. It becomes obvious to the most casual reader of the Old Testament prophecies that God is steadily working out His sovereign will in a vast and comprehensive plan, having for its three main objectives:

i) completing and taking out of the world the one true Church of the redeemed for a heavenly people;

ii) the pardoning and receiving of the Jewish remnant back to the land of Israel as the leading nation of His soon-coming earthly kingdom;

iii) the subjugation of all the Gentile nations to the benign and righteous monarchy of the One whose right it is to rule among men, both by virtue of His creatorial rights, and also by reason of His redemptive suffering for the sins of Adam's fallen race.

It was about 2000 years BC that Canaan first came into the world's limelight through being assigned to Abraham and his heirs by a divine covenant remarkable for its unequivocal language and its binding character. "Unto thy seed will I give this land" (Gen. 12:7). "And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession" (Gen. 17:8).

Time and time again this covenant was confirmed to the heirs of Abraham. Unlike most of the other divine commitments, this covenant was unconditional, and the Deed of Gift to Abraham was in perpetuity. That meant that no moral lapse or disobedience on the part of the Twelve Tribes could ever annul the promise. Though, in the event of national disobedience or apostasy, the children of Israel might subsequently be scattered among the Gentile nations—as indeed they were—to be punished doubly in proportion to the divine light and privileges

which they had enjoyed; notwithstanding, the prophets are all unanimous in their declaration that Israel would one day return to the Land, to take her place at the head of the millennial kingdom of the Messiah.

For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice... Afterward shall the children of Israel return and seek the Lord (Hos. 3:4-5).

And I will bring again the captivity of My people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities and inhabit them...and I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God (Amos 9:14-15).

But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will

teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem (Micah 4:1-2).

For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken...Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when He fought in the day of battle. And His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof (Zech. 14:2-4).

By these and many other references, the Bible makes it clear that at the end of the Gentile domination, which reaches its climax in the Antichrist, the Jews will be gathered back to the land for the millennial kingdom.

Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come unto thee the uncircumcised and the unclean. Shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion. For thus saith the Lord, Ye...shall be redeemed... (Isa. 52:1-3).



How can the nation bear fruit while still it acknowledges no Messiah, and has neither a temple nor a sacrifice? In vain did their national prophets warn them that their Messiah was to be born in Bethlehem and be called a Nazarene; that He would be “a man of sorrows,” “pierced,” “cut off” and “rejected”; yet, having made His soul “an offering for sin,” He was to “see His seed” and the pleasure of the Lord was to “prosper in His hand.” Despite these and scores of other prophecies being fulfilled before the very eyes of the Jews in the person of Christ, and despite the dynamic power of the Jewish apostles and other Christians who after Pentecost turned the world upside down by their preaching of the gospel of Christ, the Jews as a nation remained obdurate. They had rejected their Messiah, the Son of God, and calamities came upon them.

Today, after nearly two thousand years, whether in Palestine or out of it, God’s displeasure still rests upon the Jewish people. Persecuted and perplexed, they know not what awaits them on the morrow.

But the severest trial both for the Jewish people and also for the Gentile nations lies still ahead. It is known in Scripture as the “Time of Jacob’s Trouble.”

And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of Thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time; and at that time Thy people shall be delivered... (Dan. 12:1).

For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened... And then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory (Mt. 24:21-22, 30).

This will be when the flood tide of war, leading up to

the great Armageddon, rolls across the Middle East; Antichrist having violated his covenant with the Jews “in the midst of the week” (Dan. 9:27). In this bitterest hour of woe and judgment, the Lord will suddenly return to the Mount of Olives with power and great glory (Zech. 14:4); the Jews will be brought face to face with the One who was nailed to a Roman gibbet on Calvary.

And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for Him... (Zech. 12:10).

ABOVE THE STORM

Earth, what a sorrow lies before thee!
None like it in the shadowy past,
The sharpest throe that ever tore thee—
E’en though the briefest and the last.

I see the fair moon veil her luster,
I see the sackcloth of the sun;
The shrouding of each starry cluster,
The three-fold woe of earth begun.

I see the shadow of earth’s sunset,
And wrapped in these the Avenger’s form,
I see the Armageddon onset,
But I shall be above the storm.

There comes the moaning and the sighing,
There come the hot tears’ heavy fall,
The thousand agonies of dying,
But I shall be beyond them all!

—AUTHOR UNKNOWN

This mourning of the Jews will be followed by national repentance and forgiveness:

Comfort ye, comfort ye My people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned... (Isa. 40:1,2).

Thus shall sorrow be turned into joy. Jerusalem will be the world’s political and spiritual center of gravity. Vacillating democracies and arrogant dictators will give place to Christ’s sovereign sway. The Church in heaven, the Jew in the Holy Land, the Gentile nations around, all will be in complete subjection to His will. The millennial reign will be ushered in; there will be peace, plenty, and longevity on the earth; the curse on creation will be removed. The Jewish problem will be solved.

The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose...they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God...behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; He will come and save you...And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water...And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The Way of Holiness...but the redeemed shall walk there: and the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away (Isa. 35). ☛

FRONTLINES

PRAY AROUND THE WORLD • PRAISE AROUND THE CLOCK

BUILT ON THE ROCK

The Rock Bible Chapel, an assembly more than 50 years old, is located in the middle of Michigan's Upper Peninsula. It began as fruit from a Sunday School outreach started by John and Earlene Small. At first, they built their house in Rock to serve as a meeting-place for the new work. As the assembly grew, they found it necessary to build a modest building (with the help of many Christians from around the Midwest).

When the Smalls moved west to serve in another pioneer work, Ben and Carol Yeadon bought their house and took their place in the assembly. The assembly grew and now the present building is not big enough. Each Sunday morning, the young people travel across town to hold their classes in a senior citizen facility.

This group includes families from 25 miles away; and with the Upper Peninsula "on the grow," the Rock believers would like to be in a good position to grow with it. This year a building fund was started for the purpose of adding extra classrooms and a multi-purpose auditorium to the existing building. Don Abel, an interested brother from Appleton, WI, worked with an architect and the elders at the Rock chapel to come up with a workable plan that will not only meet their present needs, but future needs as well. It would be desirable to move ahead with construction this spring and the group is looking to the Lord for what is necessary to do so. A local contractor will be constructing a parking lot (after the snow is gone), and "staking out" where the addition will go.

The saints would appreciate prayer. You may contact John Small at jsmall1919@chartermi.net



RADIO OUTREACH

Moments of Melody, Ken Engle's five-minute radio broadcast, starts airing May 3 on more than 100 stations of the Bible Broadcast Network (M-W-F at 11:05 AM; T-Th-Sa at 5:05 PM. There is a possibility of his full 15 minute broadcast, "The Emmaus Bible Hour" being carried at a later date. You can hear a sample at: www.irelandstreetchapel.org

PRAY FOR TURKEY

The film *The Passion of the Christ* is being shown in Turkey. Prayer for an evangelistic event being launched in association with this film. An agreement has been signed with the largest newspaper distributor in the country to place 10,000 copies of an

evangelistic publication "The Sufferings of Jesus" on 1000 newsstands in the five principal cities, the first time that this has ever been done.

NEW MEETING

We have been informed that believers from the Big Stone Lake area on the Minnesota-South Dakota border are meeting in Ortonville, MN each Lord's Day from the Lord's Supper followed by a time of ministry. For meeting times and directions, contact Mark Huntington: 320-273-2401 huntington@pol.net

CRIPPLED IN BEATING

Mr. Chen Jingmao, a 72-year-old from Yunyang province, was report-

edly beaten and crippled in his prison cell on Feb. 6, 2004, as punishment for leading 50 prison inmates to become Christians.

Both Mr. Chen's legs were broken in a beating he received by prison guards. The guards said that "his action, of bringing others to Christianity, had brought shame upon the Communist Party." Since his conversion in 1991, Mr. Chen has been arrested twice; once in 1999, and again in Apr. 2001 for his "illegal evangelistic activities."

This is only one case of a widespread crackdown especially on evangelical Christians because Communist authorities are concerned about the growing number of Christians in China, which analysts say is

experiencing the fastest church growth in the world. The Chinese government has said it is only acting against "dangerous cults."

NY CONFERENCE

The Bellevue Gospel Chapel in Schenectady, NY and Northway Bible Chapel, Clifton Park, NY will hold an Annual Spring Conference at Northway Bible Chapel on May 1-2, 2004. The speaker will be James Comte (ON). The meetings will begin May 1 at 3:30 PM. Contact: John E. Smith at 518-861-6486 johnsmith@aol.com

ONTARIO WORKERS

The 12th Annual Ontario Workers' and Elders' Conference is to be held May 4-6, DV, at Markham Bible Chapel, 50 Cairns Dr., Markham, ON. Theme: God's Plan for the Ages. Alan Parks (SC), Dave Dunlap (PA) and others. Registration: 905-685-5090 rnrgee@sympatico.ca

CLAREMONT CA CONF.

Claremont (CA) Bible Chapel will host its 13th Annual Conference May 14-16. Speakers: Doug Kazen (WA) and Willie Burnett (ON). First meeting on Friday at 7:30 PM, Saturday at 10:00 and 1:30, concluding on Sunday. Info/accommodations: J. Harry Elliott at 909-621-1064 email: jhdelliott@aol.com

DELAWARE CONFERENCE

On Saturday, May 15, 2004, the Brandywine (DE) Chapel will have a one-day conference with Henry Sardina (MO) speaking on "Fundamentals of Our Faith." The conference will begin at 2 PM sharp and dinner will be provided at 5:45 so those travelling some distance can be

home at a reasonable time. Contact: Sid Bhatt: sbhatt@juno.com

RAMSEUR, NC, CONF.

Ramseur (NC) Gospel Chapel is hosting their annual Spring Conference May 16-19, 2004. Steve Hulshizer (PA) is the scheduled speaker. Mike Moody at 336-824-5525

VESSELS OF HONOR

This year's Vessels of Honor Young People's Conference is slated for May 28-30, again in Baldwin City, KS. Keynote speakers are John Heller (AR), Joe Mikhael (ON) and J. B. Nicholson (MI). Contact: Dan Moffitt danmoffitt@sbcglobal.net

IRELAND TnT TEAMS 2004

Teach and Testify (TnT) Teams Ireland is a cross-cultural missions opportunity that doesn't require knowing another language to be effective. After three days of cross-cultural orientation and evangelism training, team members are hosted by assemblies in Ireland and involved in a concentrated 17-day program of evangelism and ministering to Irish believers. Various methods of evangelism. The program (May 25-Jun 17) concludes with a 3-day sightseeing tour. Must be 18 or older, in good health, believe that the Lord would have you get involved in this work, and someone whom your home assembly would recommend for this. Contact Ron Hampton at: 874 London St Winnipeg, MB R2K 3P7 Ron.Hampton@TnTTeams.org 204-669-6026

WORCESTER CONFERENCE

Bethany Gospel Chapel, 242

Clark St, Worcester MA has arranged their conference, DV, for May 28-30, 2004 with speakers Alan Parks (SC) and Larry Price (FL). Ministry on Friday at 7:30 PM; Saturday, at 2:30 and 6:00 PM with dinner provided at 5:00. On the Lord's Day, Lord's Supper at 10:30 AM; lunch at noon; ministry at 2:30 and 6:30 PM with supper provided. For conference tapes or CDs, contact Kevin Thibodeau c/o the chapel or Louis Miller at 508-820-1548.

TABERNACLE CONFERENCE

Tavistock Bible Chapel invites you to a study on the tabernacle, presented by Randy Amos (NY) with a walk-through model. Friday, Jun 18, 7-9 PM and continuing Jun 19, from 9 AM to 4 PM. Held in the Tavistock Arena, Tavistock, Ontario. Lunch is not provided. Call Steve Gummerson: 519-655-3091

50 YEARS OF FAITH

Faith Bible Camp, an assembly-supported gospel work in Manitoba, is celebrating its 50th Anniversary this year. A weekend of celebration is planned, Lord willing, for Jul 1-4, 2004 in Winnipeg, MB. Contact Faith Bible Camp: P.O. Box 42059 Winnipeg, MB R3J 3X7 phone: 204-783-9564 email: info@faithbiblecamp.org

UPWARD BOUND ONTARIO

Upward Bound Ontario will be held at Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, ON, Aug 15-27. The first week consists of numerous Bible study seminars on various doctrinal and practical topics. A canoe trip in Algonquin Park is planned Aug 22-27. Speakers: Rex Trogdon (NC), Brian Russell (UK), Brian Cretney

(ON), Craig Beattie (ON), Joe Mikhael (ON), Charlie Tempest (ON), Sandy McEachern (NS).

S. McEachern at 902-420-9489
sandy mceachern@hotmail.com.

FOOTSTEPS OF PAUL

From Sep 20-Oct 4, 2004, Richard Strout is leading a tour in the Footsteps of Paul through Turkey and Greece, departing from Toronto, Canada. Visits include Istanbul, Tarsus, Antioch, Lystra, Derbe, Cappadocia, Ephesus, Pergamum Philippi, Thessalonica, Corinth and Athens. Contact before June 1:

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(type TRIP in the subject line)

NEW EMAIL ADDRESS

Evangelist Jim Paul (ON) sends his new email address:
jimpaul@niagara.com



UPDATE: GOD WORKS IN UTAH

In a previous *Uplook* Christians in Ogden, Utah requested prayer regarding the purchase of a building suitable to their needs. They specifically asked for prayer regarding a variance committee meeting to consider their request for relief from parking guidelines in the city code. They sent the following update:

We found out it would be nothing short of God working a miracle if our request were approved. We first thought we had about half of the parking spaces the city required. Later we discovered that the city had a 99-foot right of way for the street. That right of way extended within 12 feet of the building. This virtually cut our parking down to half a dozen spaces.

The city planner, who is a Christian, was sympathetic to our case. However, when he attempted to go to his superiors with our original site plan proposal they had denied it. He now had to represent the city's position to deny our request at the variance meeting! He asked if we would be upset that he would be presenting the city's case against us. We assured him that we were not concerned. If it was the Lord's will to deny our request we were at peace with that.

As we walked up the stairs to the Variance Committee Meeting that Wednesday night I thought...how many believers were even at that moment praying for us.... The City of Ogden's case against the approval was well documented in a previous 3-page report. At the meeting they highlighted the codes that would be violated among other reasons for their recommendation for denial. Our brother presented our case, attempting to show how our intended use was really the best option for the property. Then came a parade of other people interested in the case: the seller, her realtor, her family members and a couple of neighbors to the property. These all spoke up in favor of our position.... But the most surprising input came from one of the neighbors to the property. We had surmised he might oppose our request. But he said that he was LDS (Latter Day Saints) and attends the ward (Mormon church building) around the corner from the property. "We have hundreds attend there," he said, "and until recently did not have adequate parking and have had to park on the street. I don't see how you could deny his request while allowing others in the area to do the same."

At this point the brother beside me leaned over and said, "Wow, can you believe how this is happening?" After further discussion the committee made a motion for a vote. The vote was unanimous! All the committee members voted in favor of the variance request! The Lord had turned hearts.

After receiving the variance we proceeded with property inspections and tests. The results revealed major problems that needed to be corrected. We were also informed by the city that as a public building we would have to make changes to meet some requirements of the Americans for Disabilities Act as well as city codes for safety. It became obvious that we did not have the funds to cover all these requirements.... After prayer and discussion we approached the seller for help with these costs. The seller graciously renegotiated the contract to contribute almost \$10,000 toward the necessary repairs.

On March 30, we closed on the property and now are making the needed changes. We want to thank you for all your prayers and encouraging emails. As we have watched how the Lord has worked over the last few months we are looking forward to what the Head has planned for His Church in Utah.

ROGER WARDELL (rwardell@webpipe.net)

WAR—IN HEAVEN?

The Christian soldier fights for God on earth as surely as the angels do in the heavenlies.

T. H. Darlow

The Bible tells us little about the nature and powers of angels, whose functions seem often to dwarf their personality. Yet our Lord's own words in the Gospels acknowledge distinctly that angels are real, not any mere figure of speech. In the book of Daniel the name Michael is given to a chief of the heavenly host, who is styled "prince" or guardian angel of Israel. The New Testament refers to him as the supreme spirit of good triumphing over evil. Nothing less can be implied by the tremendous text in the Apocalypse: "*There was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon.*"

"War in heaven" sounds like an utter contradiction. Yet the gospel delights to express itself in paradox. Many of Christ's most penetrating sayings were spoken as paradoxes. The character which He creates is described by a series of apparent contradictions—hungry, and yet satisfied; meek, yet inheriting the earth; humble, yet receiving the kingdom; sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, and yet possessing all things. For the Word of the Lord is a double-edged sword, turning this way and that. Both edges are necessary, both sides of the truth must be blended in experience and character, before we can stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.

Christ compared Christians to the pungent salt of the earth, and to the gleaming light of the world. In His words we hear of lamps that flash, and trumpets that peal, and weapons that pierce, and a great cry that breaks upon the midnight, and fire from heaven that baptizes and burns. The very fact that we feel less at home among such metaphors warns us that we ought the more heedfully to lay their lesson to heart. This paradox of war in heaven declares that the Christian life is a battle.

Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon tells us in the sharpest and most vivid way that those who are

the friends of God must be the sworn enemies of Satan. As we love the Lord, we must hate that which is evil. We must not only renounce iniquity, but resist it, and fight against it, and trample it under our feet. Today tolerance is one of the most popular virtues; yet we must search our own hearts to see whether our tolerance be indeed rooted in divine charity, or whether it is a mere confusion between the eternal opposites of right and wrong. Much that people call tolerance is simply easy-going flabbiness; it proceeds from cowardice and sloth, from our dislike of clear thinking and strong feeling, from our doubt whether most things are worth being angry over, from a lurking suspicion whether anything seriously matters after all. How

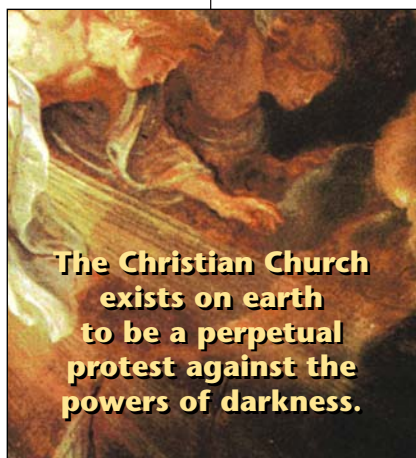
many Christians are holy enough to be as intolerant of evil as Christ was Himself?

The Christian Church exists on earth to be a perpetual protest against the powers of darkness; it is bound to be a constant offense and alarm to all that is contrary to the Word of God. We belong to the Church militant—the Church whose normal attitude towards this world's evil is neither compromise nor neutrality, but war.

The Bible proclaims the eternal doom of all things evil, and promises the

eternal triumph of all things good. We are apt to think of that triumph as a process rather than as a climax; yet it shall come in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump. For the trumpet shall sound: and the great archangel himself is set to herald the winning of the supreme battle in which he and his host are engaged.

Here is the spirit of the Christian soldier who fights for God on earth even as the angels fight in heaven. His heart is garrisoned by the almighty love which casts out fear. He is kept peaceful in the midst of strife. He can be calm with the assurance of final victory. The warrior-saint, who does battle for Christ always, can possess Christ always even in the midst of battle. For this profound paradox is itself double: war—even in heaven; but, not less surely, heaven—even in war. —*At Home in the Bible*, pp. 268-273



WORLDVIEW

THE CHURCH • THE CULTURE • THE CONFLICT

OH OH, CANADA! THE “CHILL BILL” COMETH

It appears that the day is approaching when grandfathers in Canada will take their grandchildren on their knees to tell them about the good ol' days of free speech and religious rights. Those days, it seems, are almost gone. Bill C250 is coming. In May of 2003, the House of Commons Justice Committee moved this private members bill to full House debate. Introduced by MP Svend Robinson, it proposes to add “sexual orientation” to the hate propaganda section of the Criminal Code. Bill Rogusky of Focus on the Family stated: “Bill C-250 could make sections of the Bible illegal, and anyone who criticizes homosexual behavior could face criminal prosecution.” Roy Beyer, president of the Canada Family Action Coalition, added: “In a world of judicial activism coming from the courts, it’s just a matter of time until the...expressing of an opinion or belief that homosexuality is wrong, immoral or unhealthy will be considered hateful and thus a crime.”

Robinson insists Christians have no cause for concern. He asks: “Does Mr. Toews (an MP who opposed the bill)...seriously believe that any Canadian attorney-general would prosecute those who simply quote the Bible?”

Rory Leishman in *The London Free Press* (Jun. 1/03) wrote: “Robinson might well direct that question to Hugh Owens, an evangelical Christian who has been taken to court by the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission for placing an advertisement in the Saskatoon *StarPhoenix* that listed Bible verses opposed to homosexual acts. In a ruling on Dec. 11, 2002, the Saskatchewan Court found that the advertisement exposed homosexuals to hatred. In his defense, Owens cited the guarantees of freedom of speech in...the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. However, the judge held that these guaranteed freedoms do not extend to expressions of hatred.” Owens appealed the verdict and lost. He was instructed to pay \$1,500 to each of three complainants.

In “There’s No Stopping Them Now” (*Chicago Sun-Times*, Jul. 13/03), Mark Steyn asks: “How far will it go? In Canada, the government has promised that the new law permitting same-sex marriage will ‘protect’ the rights of churches. But anybody who’s paid...attention to Canadian court decisions knows what happens when gays and religion come up against each other: A Christian printer is fined because he politely declined a printing job from gay propagandists; a Christian college is told it cannot fire a promiscuous gay employee; a Christian high school is instructed that a gay teenager must be allowed to take his boyfriend to the prom. I wouldn’t bet on the right of a Canadian church to decline to perform same-sex marriages surviving a sufficiently determined plaintiff.”

In Quesnel, BC, Chris Kempling, a high-school teacher, wrote a letter to his local newspaper. He included the statement that “homosexuality is not something to be applauded.” The British Columbia College of Teachers suspended him for a month without pay for “conduct unbecoming a member of the college.” No one had complained about Mr. Kempling; he was punished by the BCCT for expressing an opinion in the paper. Steyn, in an article in the *Jerusalem Post*, commented: “The BC Civil Liberties Association supported the suspension, not because of anything he’s done but because...he might discriminate against gay and lesbian students in the future.”

John Leo opines (*U.S. News*, Apr. 19, 2004): “The churches seem to be the key target of C-250. One of Canada’s gay senators denounced ‘ecclesiastical dictators’ and wrote to a critic, ‘You people are sick. God should strike you dead.’ In 1998, lesbian lawyer Barbara Finlay of British Columbia said, ‘the legal struggle for queer rights will one day be a struggle between freedom of religion versus sexual orientation.’” That day has arrived.

Now is the time for Christians to be gracious to all, holy in life, loyal to God’s Word, and ready to suffer. —ed.



VICTORY THROUGH THE SEA

"Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord" (Ex. 14:13).

F. B. Meyer

"Behold then," cries the Apostle, *"the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness"* (Rom. 11:22). Surely the chapter before us presents a notable illustration of the truth of his words. Towards Egypt, severity indeed, but for Israel, goodness, which has kept their heart singing for generations.

THE STAGE IS SET

It would ill repay us to enter into topographical details. The supreme importance of the fact remains, although the exact locality has been probably obliterated by the shifting sand and an alteration of the shore.

At first the direction of the Exodus was southeast, but suddenly the guiding cloud took a course due south, along the western shores of the Bitter Lakes. By this route, five or six days after setting forth, the Israelites found themselves in the extreme point of a wedge. On one side the Red Sea, on the other the wilderness, and in front an insuperable barrier of mountains. There was no natural egress from that *cul de sac*, except they turned back on their course.

Probably it was the supreme test of Moses' faith. He knew perfectly well what was happening, and the extreme peril into which he was leading this helpless flock of human beings; but he maintained an absolutely untroubled composure. He knew that God had pledged His word to deliver His people, and if He seemed to take them into an impossible labyrinth, there must be a solution and a way out. He knew in whom he had believed; his heart was fixed, trusting in the Lord.

In the meanwhile Pharaoh had recovered from his extreme alarm. No doubt he realized how great a loss he and his people would sustain in the exodus of so vast a body of slaves. When therefore he heard of the change of route, and knew that Israel was entangled in the land, he marched in pursuit with six hundred chariots and perhaps 100,000 footmen. What chance had these fugitive slaves against that seasoned host?

And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lifted up their



eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians marched after them; and they were sore afraid....And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will shew to you today; for the Egyptians whom ye have seen today, ye shall see them again no more for ever (14:10, 13).

The salvation of Israel from Pharaoh and his hosts cannot be viewed as an isolated fact. As the Apostle says:

Now these things happened unto them for examples; and they are written for our admonition" (1 Cor. 10:11).

Egypt is the invariable type of the cunning, thoughtless, wanton world, out of which in all ages God is calling His sons. The infant Jesus was called out of Egypt, and to every son of God a similar summons arrives: *"Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest."* You too are called to an Exodus. You are called to arise from your enslaving passions, your love of gain or applause, the leeks, onions, and garlicks of this enervating world, where self-gratification is the one law of life. You are summoned to come forth to the wilderness, the holy mount, the spiritual rock, the heavenly food. Be loyal to the divine voice; strike your tents, and follow. Though the Egyptians pursue, they shall not overtake. The Lord will be your rear-guard. He shall fight for you and save you; and the Egyptians whom you have seen today, you shall see them again no more for ever.

We are justified therefore in tracing an analogy between the deliverance of Israel and our own.

SAVED BY A DIVINE WORK

1. **The Movement of the Cloud.** It was sun-down when the Egyptians, after a hasty march, arrived on the ridges of the desert hills overlooking the Israelite camp on the seashore. They could watch every movement and were sure of their quarry. But suddenly the cloud removed from the head of the Israelite column and settled as a wall behind and around them. This movement spread a thick darkness over the Egyptian lines, and presented an apparently impenetrable barrier to their advance. Israel, on the contrary, enjoyed a brilliant glow of light which turned the darkness of the midnight into broad day. *"It was a cloud of darkness to the one, while it gave light by night to the other."*

2. **The Strong East Wind.** This the Lord used to drive back the upper waters of the bay, while at the same time a strong ebb-tide may have drawn the lower waters southwards as *"the waters were divided"* (Ex. 14:21), so that a pathway a mile or more in length was cleft across the sands. *"With the blast of Thy nostrils, the waters were gathered together; the floods stood upright as an heap; and the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea"* (15:8).

3. **The Storm.** When the Egyptians saw the cloud moving forward and realized that Israel was escaping, their rage knew no bounds; and they hurled themselves in pursuit. *"The enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; my lust shall be satisfied upon them; I will draw my sword; my hand shall destroy them"* (15:9).

So they *"pursued, and went in after them into the midst of the sea, even all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. And it came to pass that in the morning watch the Lord...troubled the host of the Egyptians"* (14:23-24).

The Psalmist thus describes the situation:

The clouds poured out water; the skies sent out a sound: Thine arrows also went abroad. The voice of Thy thunder was in the heaven; the lightnings lightened the world: the earth trembled and shook (Ps. 77:17-18).

Then as the Egyptians, stricken with panic, turned to flee, their chariot wheels sank deep in the softening seabed, so that escape became impossible.

4. **The Returning Tide.** When Moses stretched out his hand over the sea the second time, the wind lulled,

and the waters which it had upheld towards the land fell and rushed back, while from the south the tide turned and raced furiously forward. Those who know anything of the treacherous sands of the Wash, where King John lost his treasure, or of the Solway Firth, will be able to form a fairly true conception of the situation. The parted waves leapt together, and, encumbered by their heavy armor, the Egyptians *"sank as lead in the mighty waters"* (Ex. 15:10).

Explain it as you will, there can be no reasonable doubt that the deliverance of Israel from the clutches of their foes was a conspicuous act of divine power in answer to the faith and prayer of Moses, and through the operation of natural law. *"By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned"* (Heb. 11:29).

Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power: Thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy. In the greatness of Thine excellency Thou hast overthrown them that rose up against Thee. Thou sentest forth Thy wrath, which consumed them as stubble....Who is like unto Thee, O Lord, among the gods? who is like Thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders? (Ex. 15:6-7, 11).

But no less divine is the salvation of every soul of man. It is from beginning to end of God. The grace that prompts to redeem, the work of the Cross by which our redemption was effected, the tender wooings and strivings of the Holy Spirit which first suggested that we should wish to be redeemed, the patience which has never surrendered the conflict with the evil of our nature—all are of God. *"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth"* (Rom. 1:16).

Unless your salvation depends on a divine work, it may well be said to rest on a basis of sand. Unless your righteousness is God's righteousness, it can never stand the searching scrutiny of the white light of the Throne. Shut in there, between your heredity on the one hand and your temptations on the other, with your old taskmaster-sins blocking your retreat, what hope is there, unless your soul can stand still, and see your salvation achieved for you on the Cross by the Son of God, and accomplished in you by the efficiency of the Holy Spirit? *"Behold, God is my salvation. I will trust, and not be afraid."*

THAT DIVINE WORK BASED ON SACRIFICE

Take you a lamb according to your families and kill the Passover....It is the sacrifice of the Lord's Passover, when He smote the Egyptians and delivered our houses.

Was not a Lamb slain for us also? We worship Him who by His own blood entered in once into the Holy Place and obtained eternal redemption. Behold the Lamb of God, who was brought as a lamb to the slaughter. There is no other hope against the day of days. Not that we have been moral and blameless in the eyes of our fellows, not that we have met the requirements and standards around us, but that the Lamb was slain for us.

It is enough. We know that blood has been shed for us, and represents the self-giving of the Son of God. We do not attempt to bar the window or lock the iron door between us; we shelter beneath the altar.

CHARACTERIZED BY FINALITY

"The Egyptians whom ye have seen today, ye shall see them again no more for ever." Now, at last, the Egyptians, who had made their lives bitter, lay dead on the seashore. They looked for the last time on those hard, cold, stony faces, and then took their journey into a land wherein the Egyptian would have no part.

What is your Egyptian? Some besetting sin that has been your taskmaster for years. Long ago it made you its slave, or perhaps it enslaved your father before you. In former days you struggled valiantly for freedom; but all your efforts were in vain. Of late you have renounced the conflict, and have allowed yourself to yield at your tyrants' imperious behests. Perhaps you cherish the hope that some day the ebbing forces of your life will emancipate you from your servitude. But it is a weary prospect. Not for you the perfect peace, the erect head, the cheery tone, the victor's shout, *"Thanks be to God, who giveth the victory!"*

Now, from this hour, will you not begin to cherish the anticipation of complete deliverance, not hereafter in heaven, but now and here? Not because of your resolutions, or strivings, or agonies, but because you will stand still and see the salvation of God, because the Lord shall fight for you, and you will hold your peace.

1. Sin is not an inevitable part of our nature. It is not indigenous, but an alien and intruder. What smallpox and measles are to the fair flesh of a little child, that sin is to our nature. The Scripture says that it was not present in our first parents. Certainly it was not in Christ, who was perfect man, and it will not be in the perfected humanity of the future. There is no necessity that sin should have dominion over you, any more than that Israel should serve Egypt. Dare to believe that the enemy may die; that the jealousy, envy, passion, greed may absolutely pass out of


your experience; and that you shall be able to say with Paul, *"The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."*

The great message of Christianity is that sin has no business in human hearts. It is an intruder who is to be expelled, and can be expelled. Not that man can be sinless in this mortal life, because even if we are delivered from positive trespass, we shall always be coming short of the glory of God; but that there need be no perpetual conscious self-condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus; because God has sent forth His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and as an offering for sin, and has neutralized sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us.

2. It was on the far shores of the Red Sea that the Israelites saw the dead bodies of their ancient foes. This also suggests the lesson that it is on the other side of the Cross and the grave, in which we have been crucified and buried with Christ, that we really find deliverance. Do not be content to confine your Christian experience to the belief that the Saviour's Cross is only for your beholding; you must be crucified with Him, lie in the grave with Him, and rise with Him from the dead. Then, standing on the other—the Easter—side of death, you will know that the old Egyptian taskmaster has control no longer.

Begin today. Believe that old things are passed away, and that all things are become new. Not only avoid selfishness, but act unselfishly. Not only fight pride, but assume the girded towel of humility. Not only repress words of criticism, but fill your life with charitable deeds. Not only put off the old man, but put on the new. The easiest way to do the former is by all means to do the latter. You will put off the old best when putting on the new, as the sap of spring, pulsing through the branches of evergreens, pushes off the faded leaves of the previous summer.

Dare to believe that you were never meant to be the man that you have been so long; and next, step out of your grave under the blue sky, and live there as one alive from the dead, yielding your members unto God for ministry in His dear Name and in His power.

Finally, never forget that you were once a bondman. Even if you are now delivered, Egypt still exists and others are there enslaved. Do not vaunt yourself over them, but in humility and tenderness help the captive to freedom and the prisoner to breathe the air of liberty. *"Bear ye one another's burdens"* and restore the fallen in a spirit of meekness, considering yourselves, that your life may continue to encourage others into this glorious liberty in Christ. 

THE BATTLE FOR SOULS

Inviting others to join the winning side.

“**Harold P. Barker** tells of a conversation he had with a woman in Dublin. Her friend, a Christian, said that she had a question:

“What may it be?” I enquired.

“I believe that I belong to the right religion,” said the young lady. “But I don’t have that calmness and confidence that my friend has. Why is it?”

“Would you mind,” I said, “if we don’t discuss religion? I would be sorry to say something that would hurt your feelings. We both know our Saviour died on the cross for us.”

“Yes,” she replied, crossing herself with the forefinger of her right hand.

“St. Paul tells us that He was delivered for our offenses. He took the punishment that would otherwise have fallen on us because of our sins.”

“Yes!” said the lady very emphatically.

“God laid our sins on Him. Do you believe that?”

“Oh yes!”

“Where is the Saviour now?”

“In heaven.”

“Has He got your sins on Him up there?”

“Why—I don’t—why—No!” she responded.

“Then where are your sins now?”

“Why, they...they...they are GONE!” And the young lady burst into a flood of tears. I waited in silence. Then she dried her eyes and looked up. “Oh, thank God! Thank God!” she said. Why, that is what Jesus died for, isn’t it?”

It is indeed. And Ireland had one more inhabitant who learned the secret of the amazing rest of heart she had seen in her friend.

John Wanamaker (1838–1922) is considered the father of the department store, the first of which he established in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He later served as Postmaster-General of the U.S. In a letter dated March 12, 1888, he wrote a letter to the members of his Sunday School class. Here are excerpts from it:

I write to each of you as a saved soul. If you are not saved, my dear friend, flee to the merciful Savior, as you would fly into this warm room tonight out of the cold streets and the drifting snow. If you are saved—humbly trusting in what Jesus did when His love failed not on the Cross—think of others not saved—NOT SAVED—going to the eternal darkness—your near friend, your relative—and do something! When you have faith enough and love enough to start out in the effort to bring a soul to the Savior, God the Holy Ghost joins in your effort, for God wants every one saved and He works with even the poorest instrument that engages in His work. Please read over again the words I have just written.

I want to ask you to settle on some particular person to pray for and work with and not give up until that person is converted. Your help is in God. He will put thoughts into your heart, ways into your mind, and words into your mouth. He will tell you when to be silent and only pray and show your concern.

If you once have the joy and sweet pleasure of bringing one soul to Christ, you will be hungry to get another. Do not argue; do not be rebuffed; be patient and gentle and keep on with a prayer in your heart and drop a good word here and there as you go along.. Persevere. It is an undying soul you are laboring for and any angel would come down from heaven, if such could be, to do the very work you have the opportunity to do. Oh, what a pleasure it will be to you to have some newborn soul beside you at the next supper of the Lord. If you would like to work with me and tell me who you have chosen to labor for and will let me remember you in prayer, I will be very glad. If you wish me to advise with you in any way, let me know and do not feel that your letter or visit will take too much of my time. Do not put off a single hour—hearts grow harder and colder every day and Eternity is near. God bless you every moment and your home also. Yours in the hope of heaven and to win our friends to go with us. JOHN WANAMAKER

ARMAGEDDON

"And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour upon Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son. In that day shall there

Photo: Josh Fitzhugh, 1998

DEBORAH & BARAK vs. SISERA (Jud. 4–5): Sisera leads army of Jabin II of Hazor (n. of Sea of Galilee). From base camp at Harosheth, he hears of 10,000 Israelites at Mt. Tabor, where borders of Naphtali, Issachar and Zebulun meet. Moves up valley with chariots of iron to put down rebellion. Barak and troops descend Tabor, the Lord "discomfits" Sisera's troops, a deluge turns the valley into a quagmire and the Kishon sweeps army away. Sisera flees on foot e. and n. to Heber's tent at Zaanaïm where Jael kills him with a tent peg.

GIDEON vs. MIDIANITES (Jud. 6–7): After 40 years, Israel again goes into idolatry. The Midianites (from Abraham & Keturah, Gen. 25:1-2) had mixed relations with Israel. Moses married a Midianite; Joseph was sold by them into slavery; etc. Now the Lord calls Gideon to lead troops against a host "*like sand on the seashore*" based on Hill of Moreh. The 32,000 who show up at Harod Spring at base of Gilboa are reduced to 10,000, then to 300. The night attack routs the enemy who flee e. to the Jordan fords near Beth-shan.

SAUL vs. PHILISTINES (1 Sam. 28): The Philistines encamped at Shunem on the Hill of Moreh; Saul's troops were on Gilboa. Saul in desperation—the Lord no longer spoke to him "*by dreams or by Urim or by the prophets*" (v. 6)—sought a witch at Endor, 4 mi. from the Philistine camp. Samuel (no familiar demon) pronounced his doom. In the midst of the slaughter of his men, Saul committed suicide. The headless bodies of Israel's royal family were spiked to the walls of Beth-shan, and later removed by the brave men of Jabesh-gilead.

JOSIAH vs. PHAROAH NECHO (2 Ki. 23; 2 Chron. 35): The great-grandson of King Hezekiah and the last good king of Judah died needlessly when he interposed himself with Pharaoh Necho who was on his way to engage the Babylonians at the famed battle of Carchemish by the Euphrates. Although warned by the pharaoh not to "*meddle with God*," Josiah, so bright with promise, rode into the Plain of Esdraelon where he was "*sore wounded*." Carried by chariot to nearby Megiddo, he died at the age of thirty-nine and was lamented in passing.

ELIJAH vs. AHAB & JEZEBEL (1 Ki. 18, etc.): This region was the "orbit around which revolved the stern work of Elijah and the gracious ministries of Elisha" (J. Howard Kitchen). On the heights of Carmel, Elijah called for the Battle between the Gods. At the Kishon the Baal's priests were slain. Afterward on Carmel he prayed for Israel that the same heavens that had just sent forth fire would also send rain. When the cloud appeared, he outran Ahab's chariot to Jezreel. Near there he called down judgment for the death of Naboth.

JEHU vs. JORAM (2 Ki. 9): God's judgment on Ahab's house may have seemed slow, but it was sure. Wicked widow Jezebel was living at Jezreel with her son Joram. It so happened that Ahaziah, king of Judah, was visiting uncle Joram. They saw from the ramparts a chariot driving furiously up from the Jordan valley. It was late afternoon when Jehu attacked. Jezebel, thrown from the palace window, was eaten by dogs (as prophesied). Joram's carcass was tossed onto Naboth's plot. Ahaziah, wounded near Ibleam, died on arrival at Megiddo.

The Classic Battlefield

upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon.” ZECHARIAH 12:9-11

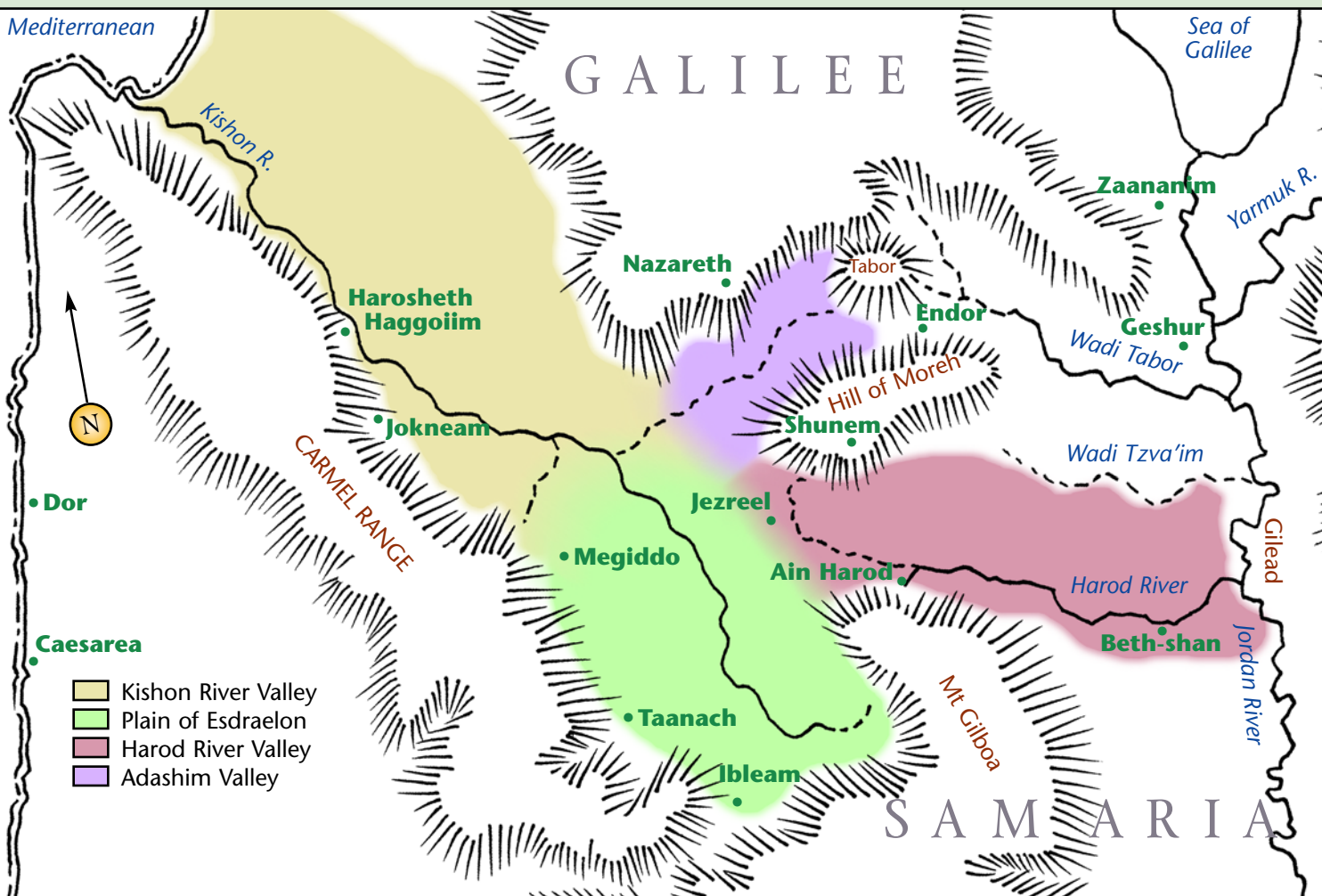
Because the land of Israel is so small—basically 60 by 150 miles—Bible stories pile on top of one another. But nowhere is that more evident than in the great plain that slashes through the mountain spine, dividing Galilee from Samaria. The Jezreel valley (meaning “God sows”) is really the Kishon and Harod valleys joined at their head waters and linking them with the broad plain of Esdraelon which is hemmed in by Mt. Gilboa. The Kishon, hugging the north flank of the Carmel range, flows into the Mediterranean at the modern city of Haifa. The Harod springs from the base of Mt. Gilboa and rapidly descends to join the Jordan not far from Beth-shan.

Only God knows how many soldier’s feet have tramped through this valley that takes its most dramatic name from Megiddo, the fortress halfway along its southern edge. Armageddon is really Har (hill of) Megiddo. When Napoleon viewed the plain, he called it the cockpit of the world, a classic battlefield. Ironically the meaning of Megiddo is said to come from a root, *gawdad*, meaning “rendezvous,” to assemble by troops. And so it shall be in history’s last battle: “*I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out*

of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth...to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty...And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon” (see Rev. 16:13-16, NKJV).

The best views of the valley are from near a Druze village, Muhraqua, on the northern edge of Mt. Carmel, and from the dome-like heights of Mount Tabor rising to 1,911 feet.

There are two stunning views. One is to the s. and w. from the terrace of a Franciscan hospice. The other is to the n. and e. It is obvious from here that Sisera’s 900 chariots could never make the climb up this slope! Barak was safe there—but he could never be Israel’s deliverer unless he came down in apparent weakness. Paul uses this as an illustration of the incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, and exaltation of Christ (Eph. 4). First He must descend before He ascends. And when He ascended, “*He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.*” This is the Spirit’s revision of Deborah and Barak’s victory song. It was the conqueror’s right to receive the spoils of the victory. But the One who subdued us when we were His enemies then enriched us with His triumphs and gave us back as gifts to the Church. Wonderful Deliverer!



SCIENCE & YOU

VISIBLE CREATION SHOWING US THE INVISIBLE GOD

The FLIGHT of the BUTTERFLY

Those flitting and fluttering motions of the butterfly, long thought to be “primitive” and “inefficient” movements of a creature struggling to improve, are no such thing, according to David Catchpoole, an Australian physiologist with *Answers in Genesis*. After filming red admiral butterflies flying in a wind tunnel, Catchpoole writes that “researchers have been surprised by a whole range of complicated wing movements which generate more lift than simple flapping would do.”

What are those seemingly random movements called? According to R. B. Srygely and A. I. R. (no kidding) Thomas, in an article in *Nature* magazine, they are “wake capture, two different types of leading-edge vortex, active and inactive upstrokes, in addition to the use of rotational mechanisms and the Weis-Fogh ‘clap-and-fling’ mechanism.” In fact the red admirals often use completely different movements on successive strokes. And, wonder of wonders, there isn’t a butterfly in the world who can describe, explain, or is required to learn any of it.

The author notes: “The flight control center of a fly has been estimated at about 3,000 neurons, which ‘gives the insect less computational power than a toaster, yet insects are more agile than aircraft with superfast digital electronics.’” Even unbelieving modern man must occasionally stand agape at the marvels God has wrought.



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QUOTE UNQUOTE

Dr. Michael Denton in *Evolution, A Theory in Crisis*: “Is it really credible that random processes could have constructed a reality, the smallest element of which—a functional protein or gene—is complex beyond our own creative capacities, a reality which is the very antithesis of chance, which excels in every sense anything produced by the intelligence of man?”

Stephen Jay Gould, Professor of Paleontology at Harvard in an article “Paleobiology” (Jan. 1980, p. 127): “The absence of fossil evidence for intermediary stages between major transitions in organic design, indeed our inability, even in our imagina-

tion, to construct functional intermediates in many cases, has been a persistent and nagging problem for gradualistic accounts of evolution.”

Professor Sir Edmund R. Leach, addressing the 1981 Annual Meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science: “Missing links in the sequence of fossil evidence were a worry to Darwin. He felt sure they would eventually turn up, but they are still missing and seem likely to remain so” (quoted in *Nature*, Sep. 3, 1981, pp. 19-20).

Charles Darwin: “To suppose that the eye with all its inimitable contrivances for adjusting the focus to different distances, for admitting different amounts of light, and for the

correction of spherical and chromatic aberrations, could have been formed by natural selection, seems, I freely confess, absurd in the highest degree” (*Origin of the Species*, J. M. Dent and Sons, 1971 p. 167).

“SNAKE MAN” MEETS HIS MATCH

USA Today reported the death of Boonreung Buachan, age 34, who held the *Guinness World Record* for having spent the most time penned up with poisonous snakes. Boonreung was showing villagers in Thailand a new cobra when he was bitten. He paused only long enough to take some herbal medicine and a shot of whiskey before he continued the show. He collapsed soon after. 🚑

THE MIGHT OF THE LORD

“Out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations” (Rev. 19:15).

H. Forbes Witherby

The decisive battle in Joshua 10 brings in a succession of victories and the eventual subjugation of the land. And with its telling, Part 1 of the Book of Joshua closes.

Finding that the Gibeonites had made terms with Israel, Adonizedec, king of Jerusalem, summoned the king of Hebron and the adjoining city states to go up with him against Gibeon, which at once called Joshua to its aid.

The king of Jerusalem, Adonizedec (lord of righteousness), bore a similar title to his predecessor, Melchizedek (king of righteousness) when Jerusalem was simply called Salem. We know how the “king of righteousness” and “king of peace” (Heb. 7; Gen. 14) met God’s servant Abraham with bread and wine. In those days the living God was honored in Salem, and through all ages Melchizedek shines brightly as a type of Christ, the Priest and King.

Hebron also, one of the earliest seats of civilization in Canaan, had its old associations with the patriarchs. But now to Hebron comes the first call to fight against Israel. In the time, therefore, of these kings, the fear of the Most High had been shaken off by the nations of Canaan. The sun and the moon, Baal and Ashtarothe (Jud. 2:13), were worshiped, their iniquity was full, their harvest had passed, their summer ended, and the wrath of God was about to fall.

No foes are so bitter in their hatred of God as those who once recognized His Name. When Christianity was at first spread abroad, the Jews were its most determined opposers. The very truths they held they turned as weapons against the gospel. They twisted the words of Moses and the prophets, and warred against God. Similarly papal Rome’s opposition to the truths of the Scriptures is greater than was that of pagan Rome; and in the present day modern infidelity, developed into apostate

Christendom, is proving itself the fiercest foe the Word of God has ever had. “Lords of righteousness,” bearing the good old titles and memories of faith in God long lost will be the powers of opposition in Christendom to Christ.

When the awful word of Jehovah demanding Israel to destroy the nations of Canaan is considered, the iniquity of the Amorites must ever be remembered. Their day had gone by; they were too wicked to be permitted to live.

Glancing through the Scriptures, and tracing God’s ways in government with men, His judgments long threat-

ened are seen coming at length upon the unrepentant. So it was with the men in Noah’s days, after God had given them 120 years in which to repent; their day had gone by; the flood came and swept them all away.

The tribes of Israel as well were warned by the prophets continually. But though often reprov’d, they hardened themselves and were swept into captivity.

After the wicked hands of Judah had taken Christ and crucified Him, messages from Himself, risen from the dead and ascended to heaven, were sent them but they repented not. Hence the terrible word came at last to them, “*Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive*” (Acts 28:26); and the Jews today largely remain in their willful unbelief.

Thus will it be in the coming day. The Gentiles, to whom now the word of God’s salvation is sent, having become wise in their own conceits and not continuing in His goodness, will be cut off (Rom. 11:17-25). At last the wrath of God will be revealed against the men of apostate Christendom who obey not the gospel (2 Thess. 1:7-10). The sudden and complete overthrow of the Amorites seemed to point to that day, and to the sudden destruction which shall come upon those who cry peace and safety, for “*the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night*” (1 Thess. 5:2.) The mighty intervention of Jehovah in casting down great hailstones from heaven, seems a kind of indication of



Gustave Doré

the time *"when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God."*

Thus in the day when Jehovah wrought in His majesty as *"the Most High God, possessor of heaven and earth"*—even as His priest Melchizedek had declared Him (Gen. 14:19)—both sun and moon obeyed the bidding of His servant, until the sinners of Canaan were destroyed.

We have only to read in the Book of Revelation to be aware that judgments more terrible are yet to fall on this earth, and to learn that many Jews who have turned their backs on the Christ of God, and the professors in Christendom, who are already doing the same, shall, in the approaching day of the Lord, like these Amorites, be forced to drink Jehovah's cup of trembling. And *"when the great day of His wrath is come, who shall be able to stand?"*

Up to Joshua 10:15, there is a brief account given of that great day of victory we are considering; from verse 16 to the end of the chapter incidents in Israel's conquest are related. The quotation from the Book of Jasher (the book of the upright) ends at verse 15 and records two great facts, both of which are again stated at the close of the chapter. The first great fact is this: *"Jehovah fought for Israel,"* which explains the people's success. The second is this: *"And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, into the camp to Gilgal,"* which gives the key to the submissive state of Israel and why Jehovah could be with them in might.

Now briefly glance at some incidents in the battle against the southern confederacy. The power of the five kings was suddenly and completely broken. *"Fear them not: for I have delivered them into thine hand; there shall not a man of them stand before thee."* Strong in the Lord and in the power of His might, Israel attacked the enemy, *"and the Lord discomfited them before Israel."* Faith in God gives unquenchable energy to God's people, and faith's victories are the result of God's people carrying out His purposes.

When Joshua bade the sun stand still, he was carrying out the purpose of God, whose power is almighty, and whose bidding both sun and moon obey. The idolaters might cry to the sun and the moon for help—to Baal and Ashtaroth—but Jehovah would show to His people that the powers of heaven are His servants.

The five kings fled and hid in a cave, where Joshua kept them prisoners while the judgment of Jehovah overtook their armies. The victory over the multitudes of Canaan was not to be used in a half-and-half kind of way. Success should be the occasion of fresh effort. In their energy for the Lord, Israel pursued and slew until not a foe remained.


Such is the spirit of true Christian warfare. Every success, truly regarded, is an incentive to further conquest.

After the people had returned safe and sound to Makkedah, their temporary camp, Joshua ordered the five kings to be brought out. He then bade the captains of the men of war to put their feet on the necks of these kings, expressing in the most emphatic way the subjugation of Canaan to the Lord's army. And while Joshua fixed this fact in Israel's mind, he reiterated the great exhortation which had been the spring of their energy: *"Fear not, nor be dismayed, be strong and of good courage: for thus shall the Lord do to all your enemies against whom ye fight."*

The Christian soldier finds in his victories the confirmation of the sure promises of his God, and the anticipation of that final conquest of Satan which is near at hand, for *"the God of peace shall bruise [or tread] Satan under your feet shortly"* (Rom. 16:20).

The kings conquered and slain, city after city fell rapidly as *"the Lord delivered them"* into Israel's hands. Thus the whole of the south country, hills, vales and springs, became their possession. *"All these kings and their land did Joshua take at one time, because the Lord God of Israel fought for Israel."* It was a very great conquest *"at one time,"* and the consideration of it stirs the soldiers of Christ to faith and zeal, to act in implicit obedience to the Lord.

An instructive lesson is to be gathered from the second victory at Hebron (Josh. 10:23, 36). The king of Hebron was one of the five who had been slain at Makkedah, but a fresh king had been set up in the city. This center of government, with *"all the cities thereof"* and *"all the souls therein,"* was now overthrown. In their rapid conquest, Israel had not had time to search out all the hiding-places of the fugitives, who therefore returned and refortified old Hebron. Hence it had to be reconquered. And in Christian warfare victory must be thorough. It is not enough to scatter foes: the stronghold must be utterly destroyed. Spiritual enemies, though defeated, are not easily annihilated. Their lurking-places must be sought out, else the enemy recovers his strength and returns to the war with revived activity. Watchfulness needs to be incessant, otherwise the wars will have to be fought over and over again.

The campaign over, Joshua and all Israel returned to the camp at Gilgal. And Gilgal must be our camp; there we must return after our victories. Makkedah may avail to witness the destruction of the power of the enemy, but Gilgal, place of circumcision, witnesses the judgment of self, and the power of the cross of Christ in our lives. 

THE BATTLE AT MOUNT TABOR

Deborah and Barak (Jud. 4–5)

H. L. Rossier

Jabin, king of Canaan, reigned in Hazor, a formidable city in the Huleh Valley in northern Galilee. With ruthless efficiency—his army boasting nine hundred chariots of iron—he conquered Israel and oppressed them.

In Joshua 11 we find an ancestor of this very Jabin, also with chariots of war and occupying the same capital. In those days Israel understood, under the mighty energy of the Spirit of God, that there could be nothing in common between them and Jabin. They smote him with the edge of the sword, after having burnt his chariots with fire, and they destroyed his capital. Whatever connection could there be between the people of God and the political and military world, whose domination was to be erased from the map of Canaan? Alas, all that changed, and Israel, unfaithful, fell under the government of the world.

Hazor, their ancient enemy, arises from its ashes, and is resuscitated. It is rebuilt within the limits of Canaan, and the people's inheritance becomes the kingdom of Jabin!

This has its parallel in the history of the Church, whose position at the beginning was one of entire separation from the world. Consequently there was no thought of the latter being allowed to take any part in the affairs of the

assembly. But the carnal state of the assembly at Corinth led one in its midst who had a matter against another to go to law before the unjust and not before the saints (1 Cor. 6) *"Do you not know,"* said the apostle, *"that the saints shall judge the world?"* And rebuking them he adds: *"I speak to your shame."* But what road has the Church travelled since then? In reality it is the world that governs the church. *"I know,"* says the Lord to Pergamos, *"where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is"* (Rev. 2:13). Even in the great revival at the Reformation, saints had recourse to the governments of the world, and leaned upon them.

In the present day there are Christians who, when persecuted, instead of rejoicing to suffer for Christ's sake, claim protection from the powers that be.

The judgment on the Hazor of Joshua's day was no longer anything but a remembrance. Israel served the gods of the Canaanites, having taken their daughters to be their wives and given their daughters to their sons (Jud. 3:5-6). This union bore fruit, and Jabin oppressed the people who, whether they wanted to or not, were forced to endure his rule. Moreover, this was not the only symptom of Israel's low condition in these inauspicious days.

If outwardly they were ruled over by their enemy, what was the state of government within? Committed to the hands of a woman! At the outset, as the Word of God



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teaches us, the oversight of the church locally was committed to elders, appointed for this purpose by the apostles or their delegates, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The order of the assembly, in that which pertained to it locally, fell to their charge. Dropping for a moment man's imitation of this divine institution, would there be any exaggeration in saying that the tendency to entrust government, wholly or partially, into the hands of women is becoming increasingly marked among the sects of Christendom in the present day? It is even boasted of, and Christians go so far as to state and seek to prove that such a condition of things is of God, and shows the flourishing state of the church. They quote Deborah in favor of their opinion, but let us see what she was like.

Deborah was a remarkable woman, a woman of faith, one deeply impressed with the humiliating condition of the people of God. She saw that it would be to the shame of the leaders in Israel that God should entrust a post of public activity to a woman in their midst. She says to Barak: "*I will surely go with thee; notwithstanding the journey that thou takest shall not be for thy honor, for the Lord shall sell Sisera into the hand of a woman*" (v. 9).

But in all her exercise of authority for God—to the confusion of this people rendered weak and effeminate by sin—Deborah maintains, in circumstances which might have proved a great snare to her, the place assigned by God in His Word to woman. She would not otherwise have been such a woman of faith.

This chapter gives us the history of two women of faith, Deborah and Jael. Each maintains the character in keeping with the position assigned by God to woman. Where does Deborah exercise her authority? Is she seen, as other judges, going in circuit over the land of Israel, or placing herself at the head of the armies? Nothing of the kind. And it is not without reason, it seems to me, that the Word says: "*She dwelt under the palm tree of Deborah...and the children of Israel came up to her for judgment*" (5:5). Prophetess and judge though she was in Israel, she did not step out of the sphere God had assigned to her. Instead of going to Barak, she sent and called him to her where she dwelt.

Barak was a man of God, and accounted by the Word a judge in Israel. *The time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Sampson, and of Jephthae* (Heb. 11:32). But Barak seemed to be a man lacking in boldness, moral energy and confidence in God. We must not expect in a day of ruin to see all the divine resources displayed in the instruments employed by God.

The laborers are few, but not only so, what little

distinctiveness there is on the part of those who have the gifts of the Spirit, how little is their absence felt by Christians. Lack of character in Barak made him wish to be the woman's helper, whereas Genesis 2:18 makes her the helper of the man. He degraded the office in which God had set him, and what was worse, he sought to take Deborah out of her place of dependence as a woman: "*If thou wilt go with me, then I will go; but if thou wilt not go with me, then I will not go*" (5:8). "*I will surely go with thee,*" she replied. This she could do consistently with her place according to Scripture. We read in later times of holy women who accompanied the Lord, becoming His servants in order to minister to His needs. Deborah's act was right, but Barak's motive was wrong, and Deborah rebuked him severely (v. 9).

What was Barak's motive at bottom? He was willing to depend on God, but not without a human and tangible prop as well. There are many such souls in Christendom. There is, on their part, so little sense of the presence of God, so slight a knowledge of His will, so little decision as to their walk, that in order to go on in the path of God they prefer leaning on another to direct dependence on Him only. What if the leader they follow be mistaken? But God, the Lord, His Spirit, His Word, are infallible! Faithful Deborah does not encourage Barak in this wrong course, and Barak suffers the consequences of his lack of faith.

He goes up with his army, and Deborah with him. Heber, one of the Kenites, of whom we have already spoken in Chapter 1, had, in these troublous times, seen fit to sever himself from his tribe and pitch his tent elsewhere (v. 11). Now "*there was peace between Jabin, the king of Hazor and the house of Heber the Kenite*" (v. 17).

Heber's act does not seem to have been one of faith. He separated himself from the people in their low estate so as to relieve himself of the responsibility of Israel's sorrowful condition. Moreover, he was at peace with the avowed enemy of his people; and he had so managed as not to be disquieted by Jabin. But a vulnerable woman dwelt under Heber's tent who refused safety at such a price, and did not acknowledge an alliance with the enemy of her nation. Israel had undivided possession of her heart.

So Barak gained the victory, and Deborah, this woman of faith, and mother in Israel, played virtually no part in it. Sisera's army was defeated; and he himself, forced to flee away on foot. Coming to the tent of Jael, he counts on finding a hospitable shelter. Jael in fact hid him. Then he asked for a drink of water, and she gives him what was better—milk. She did not treat him at first as an enemy, but with

pity; yet asked by him to tell a lie, she became resolute.

The instrument she used for Israel's deliverance was even more worthless than Shamgar's, for the only weapons she had were the tools of a woman who keeps the tent; it is with them that she dealt the fatal blow to the head of the enemy.

Jael, like Deborah and every woman of faith, did not go at all beyond her sphere. She carried out her work of vengeance inside her dwelling, with the arms with which the tent supplied her, and gained the victory there. For women are also called to face the enemy, though it be in the place and with the special weapons assigned to them by God. The faith of these women shines out in this chapter. Jael does not, like Barak, seek a helper; she depends entirely on the Lord. The secret of her action lies between herself and God. She handles the weapons belonging to

her contracted sphere as skillfully as a man could have done; for had her hand trembled in the very least, all would have been compromised. Alone (her husband, her natural protector, being absent), but with the Lord, she—one in heart with all the arrayed armies of Israel—fought within her tent. And Deborah in her song can say of her: *"Blessed above women shall Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite, be; blessed shall she be above women in the tent"* (v. 24).

With what feelings of humiliation Barak must have gazed on Jael's victory, seeing a woman thus honored by God, in a path in which he, though leader and judge, had not desired to walk.

All honor to these women! God made use of them to arouse the children of His people to a sense of their responsibility, for once awakened: *"they had destroyed Jabin, king of Canaan"* (v. 24).



JEPHTHAH'S VOW *for* VICTORY

The main outline of the story in Judges 10–11 is clear. After the death of the judge Jair, once again the Israelites had turned to idolatry of a most virulent kind. The Lord thus lifted His protective care from them and the Ammonites threatened to attack Israel from across the Jordan. When Israel appealed to God, He said He had no interest in being called upon only in their times of distress. *"Go and cry unto the gods which you have chosen"* (10:14), He responded. Undeterred, Israel turned to Jephthah, the illegitimate son of a harlot, for help. Having been previously *"thrust out"* by his brothers, he seems to have joined up with some unsavory fellows of the "wild east" in the heights of Gilead.

Though he at first refused for the same reason God had done (*"Did not ye hate me, and expel me out of my father's house? and why are ye come unto me now when ye are in distress?"* 11:7), he later relented. And why? Because they promised that, if victorious, he would be their *"head."* Unlike the other judges who appear content to do their work for God and pass from the scene, it seems Jephthah had grander plans to become the head of a ruling family. But such dreams of a dynasty came to nothing.

The judge before Jephthah had 30 sons! The judge after had 30 sons and 30 daughters! But poor Jephthah had only one daughter. On her hung all his hope of a ruling family. But it was not to be. When the Ammonites attacked (after failed peace negotiations), Jephthah vowed that, if the Lord gave him victory, *"whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall surely be the Lord's, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering"* (11:31). To his grief, it was his only child. That much of the story is clear.

Now the question: did he really sacrifice his daughter in a macabre attempt to pay off God for His assistance? If so, it was in direct violation of the law's prohibition (Deut. 18:9), Abraham's offering of Isaac notwithstanding. That was "commanded but never intended"—to prove Abraham's fealty to God. The answer to Micah 6:7, *"Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?"* should be obvious.

Notice that Jephthah's daughter does not ask for a two-month reprieve to bewail her death but her virginity (Jud. 11:37). And verse 39 explains: *"her father...did with her according to his vow which he had vowed: and she knew no man."* The RV margin suggests the vow to read, *"whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me...shall surely be the Lord's, or I will offer it up for a burnt offering"* (vv. 30-31). And the same version gives "celebrate" for "lament" in verse 40, and the marginal reading as *"talk with,"* suggesting that each year the young women met with his daughter to acknowledge her heroic act of submission. Those who suggest such could not be an admirable act might read 1 Corinthians 7:38 again. —J.B.N.



BOOKSHELF

TREND SETTERS • LIFE CHANGERS • TIMELESS CLASSICS

STUDY BIBLES

Schofield, Ryrie, Newberry, et al.

Above all other books, the Bible stands alone in its authority and importance in our lives. But the Bible comes in a variety of styles, translations, and formats. I have 22 different Bibles on my desk and bookshelves. That, of course, is more than I need, but I happen to enjoy collecting Bibles and find all of them useful in one way or another.

Let me introduce you to the world of study Bibles. In general there are five kinds.

The first is *doctrinal*. It is best exemplified by the Scofield Reference Bible. Scofield's notes are excellent in many ways and this Bible has been recognized for many years as the greatest exponent of dispensational theology. First introduced in 1917, it was revised in the mid-sixties when the editors felt a need to "update" Dr. Scofield's notes. While it may be considered an advantage by some, the notes are not now exclusively Dr. Scofield's. Therefore, to get his notes, you must have the 1917 edition.

The second kind of study Bible is the *analytical*. This is best seen in the very good and popular Ryrie Study Bible. Dr. Ryrie comes alongside and helps explain the text. Word meanings, background information, and interpretations of the verses are all part of his notes. As a result he sheds a great deal of light on the Scriptures. By the way, his notes on 1 Corinthians 11 are very helpful and demonstrate that the headcovering is not a "brethrenism," but a legitimate explanation of the text.

The third type of study Bible is what I call the *informational* study Bible. The most widely used example of this kind is the Open Bible, published by Nelson. Another is the Life Application Bible, published by Zondervan. These Bibles have maps, charts, outlines, key verses and key chapters listed alongside the text. They also have good discussions on the author, time, and circumstances in which the various books were written. With all of this right at your fingertips, your understanding of the text is greatly enhanced.

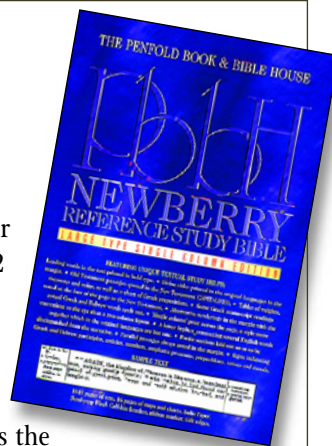
The fourth kind is *topical*, which is seen basically in the Thompson Chain Reference Bible. With over 4,000 topics listed in the index and coded in the margins, this helps you trace any topic through the Bible. This becomes especially helpful in character studies. This Bible also features a great number of charts in the back showing, in a graphic fashion, many related topics.

Last, but not least, is the *grammatical* study Bible which is the chief feature of the Newberry Bible. By a system of keyed notations, Mr. Newberry gives some of the intricacies of the Hebrew and Greek languages which are difficult or impossible to directly translate into English. The good introductions in the front of both Testaments help the student, who does not know the original languages, come to a fuller understanding of the text. The understanding of the names of God in the Old Testament and the prepositions of the Greek language in the New, I have found especially helpful.

You don't need all of these, but these will all do you good. It is important that we read and understand the Scriptures. As Ezra the scribe gathered Israel together centuries ago, he "*read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.*" May we all not only read the Book but be caused to understand what our God has to say to us.

JIM MCKENDRICK

This helpful article is reprinted from the January 1992 Uplook.



NEVER GIVE UP

From an upcoming book entitled "The Disciple's Manual."

William MacDonald

Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. You have not yet resisted to blood, striving against sin, and you have forgotten the exhortation that speaks to you as to sons:

My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; for whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives (Heb. 12:1-6, NKJV).

DEFINING ENDURANCE

Endurance is not the mere acceptance of trial and suffering but triumphing in it. It is not the patience of fatalism, but the patience that masters things. Endurance halts neither for discouragement from within nor from opposition from without. It is the steadfastness that carries on until, in the end, it gets there. Endurance is not the fatalistic acceptance of circumstances but the steadfastness that carries on until the end.

Endurance is not the way of salvation, despite one or two verses that seem to say so. "But he who endures to the end shall be saved" (Mt. 24:13). Here the subject is the Tribulation Period. Believers should not think that safety lies in yielding to the enemy. It is those who endure who will be saved to enter the Millennium.

"No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (Lk. 9:62). The subject here is service, not salvation. Quitters are not fit servants.

AREAS IN WHICH WE NEED ENDURANCE

We need it in family life and in raising children. We need it in getting an education.

We need it in the local church where "the normal condition...is difficulty" (J. Alexander Clarke). We need it on the mission field with its constant inter-personal conflicts. And we need it in days of illness and disability when the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak: "The Christian life must not be an initial spasm followed by chronic inertia."

ENDURANCE

- A wrong love affair or a marriage not made in heaven.
- Sin in one's life: "The foolishness of a man twists his way, and his heart frets against the Lord" (Prov. 19:3). Or as Today's English Version puts it: "Some people ruin themselves by their own stupid actions and then blame the Lord."
- False profession as seen in the four soils of Matthew 13. The seed that fell on the wayside, the seed that fell on stony places, and the seed that fell among thorns are all false professors. Only the seed that bore fruit was genuine. Today people turn aside because of materialism, covetousness, false expectations, disappointment in people, discouragement, and persecution. The cost is too great.

BIBLICAL EXAMPLES OF ENDURANCE

Job suffered more material loss in one day than any other person in the Bible. He was not always patient but he did endure.

When we read of Paul's afflictions, dangers, persecutions, and sufferings for Christ's sake (2 Cor. 11:23-28), it is easy to wonder if we ourselves are Christians.

Jesus, of course, is the prime example of endurance (Heb. 12:1-4). The worst testings that demons and men could heap upon Him did not deter Him from going on to the cross.

EXAMPLES OF PHYSICAL ENDURANCE

Robert Bruce had suffered six military defeats in his efforts to make Scotland independent. Hiding in a cave, he saw a spider trying to connect the web from one point to another. Six times it failed, but the seventh time it succeeded. This spoke to Bruce and encouraged him to try again. This time he succeeded.

Five fishermen from Costa Rica were caught in a storm.

Their boat was badly damaged. It took on water so that constant bailing was necessary. The radio went out. After days they ran out of food and water. At one time a tanker drew near and gave them water, then pulled away. When they were finally picked up, they had set a world's record for drifting at sea. They survived 142 days living on water, fish, and an estimated 200 turtles. They had traveled over 3600 miles and crossed four times zones.

Although he is a paraplegic, Mark Wellman climbed El Capitan, the world's largest monolith. It took him seven days and four hours to climb the 3000 feet, six inches at a time. Sometimes strong winds blew him out 10 feet from the face of the cliff. Then he climbed up the face of Half Dome, also in Yosemite National Park. It took almost two weeks to climb the 2200 feet.

These men were like Timex watches—they took a licking but kept on ticking. The Christian life is a marathon, not a hundred-yard dash. Remember the words of Winston Churchill. "Never give in. Never give in. Never, never, never, never—in nothing, great or small, large or petty—never give in, except to convictions of honor and good sense."

Coleman Cox said, "Even the woodpecker owes his success to the fact that he uses his head and keeps pecking away until he finishes the job he starts."

And a prominent leader said, "Most people give up just when they're about to achieve success. They quit on the one-yard line. They give up at the last minute of the game, one foot from a winning touchdown."

When things go wrong, as they sometimes will,
When the road you're trudging seems all uphill,
When care is pressing you down a bit,
Rest, if you must—but don't ever quit.
Often the goal is nearer than

It seems to a faint and faltering man;
Often the struggler has given up
When he might have captured the victor's cup.
Press on. (Author unknown)

There was a man who failed in business. He ran for a seat in the Legislature and lost. Then there was another business fiasco. After finally getting elected to the Legislature, he suffered a nervous breakdown. During the next ten years, he failed in elections for Speaker, Land Officer, Elector, and Congressman. He was finally elected to Congress, but was defeated for re-election. He tried for the U.S. Senate but lost. A year later he was defeated in a bid for the Vice Presidency. And once again he failed to reach the U.S. Senate. Finally, after all these reverses, he was elected President of the United States. His name was Abraham Lincoln.

The Lord Jesus endured untold contradiction of sinners against Himself (Heb. 12:3). He endured the cross, despising the shame (Heb. 12:2). He finished the work which His Father had given Him to do (Jn. 17:4). There was never the slightest thought of turning back. It was like nourishment for Jesus to finish the work the Father gave Him to do (Jn. 4:34).

If we would be like Jesus, we must have endurance. We must have the spirit of Amy Carmichael when she wrote:

My hand is on the plow, my falt'ring hand;
But all in front of me is untilled land.
The wilderness and solitary place,
The lonely desert with its interspace.

The handles of my plow with tears are wet;
The shares with rust are spoiled, and yet, and yet,
Out in the field, ne'er let the reins be slack;
My God! my God! keep me from turning back.



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TRUE STORY

“Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee” (Mk. 5:19).

WHEN SORROWS LIKE SEA BILLOWS ROLL: AS IT HAPPENED

As told by Bertha Spafford Vester, daughter of H. G. Spafford who penned the well-known hymn.

A few months before the Great Chicago Fire, Father came to the conclusion that the law, while highly remunerative, was absorbing too much of his time. He had no idea of giving up his practice. He was senior partner in the prominent and influential Chicago firm of Spafford, McDaid and Wilson, and was considered an authority on national as well as international law. But Father became convinced that dealing in real estate would give him opportunity to achieve honorable success without being wholly engrossed by it and also give him more time to devote his attention to philanthropic and Christian work, particularly that being started by his close friend the evangelist, Mr. Dwight L. Moody.

With this idea in mind, in the spring of 1871, Father, with several of his friends, invested in land in the direction of which the city of Chicago was expanding—land which is now part of Lincoln Park—and other extensive tracts north of the city, on the Lake Shore. They put all the available money, and borrowed more to enlarge their holdings, into this project that seemed sound.

At this time he and Mother were living in the suburb of Lake View, on the north side of Chicago, in a vine-covered gabled cottage surrounded by twelve acres of lawn. They had four little daughters. I think of these children as my “little sisters” although this was before I was born. Anna, named for our mother, was nine. Margaret

Lee, aged seven, was named after Father’s favorite sister, whose husband, Colonel Arthur T. Lee, had been seriously wounded in the Battle of Gettysburg a few weeks before Maggie was born. Elizabeth, called Bessie, was five, and on July the fourth a little girl was born and named Tanetta for our grandmother, who came from Norway and died when Mother was a little girl....

During the first weeks of October [1871] there was a continual succession of small fires in the city. Father was in Indiana interviewing a prospective purchaser for some of the Lake Shore property. He was there on October 8, 1871, when the knell of desolation sounded across the American continent in gigantic headlines: CHICAGO IN ASHES. There was no more thought of a sale. Father’s only thought was to rush back to Chicago....

The Great Fire was a crushing misfortune to nearly every inhabitant of Chicago. To Father and his associates in the real estate venture it was a



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calamity. Who at such a time could think of enlarging parks or expanding the city? But interest on the borrowed money had to be paid. Father's law library and adjoining law office in the city, built up with so much expense and pride, were in ashes. Only the contents of a fireproof safe were found and among them, charred and brittle from heat, was a little notebook that has revealed to me much of my parents' lives in these years before I was born.

Father rejoiced that his wife and children were with him and that the beloved Lake View cottage, although it would have to carry a small mortgage, was still their own.

...The family doctor advised a change for Mother. Dr. Hedges realized that going away without her family only aggravated Mother's condition, and she could not be happy without them, so he advised Father to take the entire family on a trip to Europe....

Since his own trip three years before Father had been looking forward to showing Mother the museums, art galleries, and all the haunts he had so enjoyed. It would be a costly journey, and the land investment he and his friends had made just before the Great Fire and the loss of his law office in the fire had left Father rather heavily in debt. But he persuaded himself that his wife's health was more important, and they planned for months, and finally all their plans were complete. They would go first to France, where they had many friends, and then on to Switzerland...Reservations were made on the most luxurious ship then afloat—the French liner S.S. *Ville du Havre*.

Just before they left Chicago, Father had an offer from a man who wanted to buy part of the land in which he had invested so disastrously before the Great Fire. He could not afford to forego such an important offer. The sale would relieve the partners of almost all their indebtedness

and enable Father to take his family to Europe without anxiety. It was decided that their plans should not be entirely postponed. Mother, the children, and Mlle. Nicolet would sail on the *Ville du Havre* and Father would join them later in France....

It was a merry and companionable group of twelve that left Chicago in November 1873. Father went with the party as far as New York....

The evening of November 21, 1873, found the *Ville du Havre*, according to Captain Surmount's report, prow east for France on a calm Atlantic, which was good news for everyone aboard. There had been a sharp squall off the coast of Newfoundland that gave most of the passengers a few seasick hours. But now there was no motion, and the calm was so complete that Mother said later she found it difficult to realize they were on the sea. The weather was clear and it was too early to fear icebergs....

About two o'clock that morning, November 22, the *Ville du Havre* was carrying its sleeping passengers over a quiet sea when two terrific claps, like thunder, were followed by frightening screams. The engines stopped and the ship stood still. The passageways filled with terrified, half-dressed people shouting questions no one could answer. Mother and Mlle. Nicolet threw on dressing gowns, drew some clothing over the children...They were among the first passengers to reach the deck.

Pastor Lorriaux hurried across the dark deck to meet them. "That must be the vessel that struck us," he exclaimed. Several hundred yards away, to starboard of the *Ville du Havre*, towered the masted silhouette of a great iron sailing vessel. This ship that had rammed theirs and was itself badly damaged was the English *Lochearn*, Captain Robertson in command....

Aboard the decks was indescribable confusion. Captain Surmount appeared on the bridge of the *Ville du Havre* and began shouting orders. Some of the officers and men were struggling on the afterdeck to loosen the lifeboats but they could not detach them, for it was discovered that everything aboard the beautiful pleasure ship was newly painted and stuck fast. By this time crowds of passengers, in nightdresses or scantily attired, were crowding about the boats or trying to extricate the life preservers suspended along the taffrail, but these, too, were stuck fast....

The *Ville du Havre* was sinking rapidly. Mother knew this was the end; she knew, too, it was not hard to die. She thought of Father with anguish, then, "he would rather think of me with the children." That gave her courage.

The great ship careened to starboard. The water was

very near. There was a moment of awful silence as the deck slid lower to meet the sea....

There was another loud crash as the bow broke from the ship and sank. Maggie, who until this moment had been terrified, dropped Mr. Weiss's hand and went to Mother. She was suddenly calm and unafraid. Tanetta, her arms around Mother's neck, was quiet. Annie was still helping Mother support her, and Bessie, silent and pale, clutched Mother's knees....

As Maggie stepped beside Mother she lifted her dark eyes. "Mama, God will take care of us." Then little Annie said, "Don't be afraid. The sea is His and He made it."

The sea rushed over the afterdeck as a watery canyon opened to receive the vast ruin of the *Ville du Havre*. The little group went down together, with all on that crowded deck and all those trapped below into blackness whose depth stretched many miles, into a whirlpool created by suction of bodies, wreckage, and savage water. Only twelve minutes after the *Ville du Havre* was struck it sank....

As Mother was pulled down she felt her baby torn violently from her arms. She reached out through the water and caught Tanetta's little gown. For a moment she held her again, then the cloth wrenched from her hand. She reached out again and touched a man's leg in corduroy trousers.

Once in Jerusalem, when I was a child and we were very poor, someone gave me a little corduroy coat. Mother was pleased that I had a warm coat to wear, for winters are cold in Jerusalem, but I saw the agony on her face. She could never touch that material without reliving the moment of helpless anguish when she felt her baby drawn from her hands by the power of the Atlantic, and reached for her again and felt the corduroy.

The splash of an oar brought her to consciousness. She was lying in a boat, bruised from head to foot and sick with sea water, her long hair heavy with salt and her thick dressing gown in ribbons. She knew, with no need of being told, that her children were gone.

From a watch one of the passengers carried, that stopped when the ship sank, they estimated that Mother had been in the sea for an hour. She had been rolled under and down, and as she rose unconscious to the surface a plank floated under her, saving her life.

The English sailors of the *Lochearn* were patrolling the littered waters in their small boats, saving all they could of the survivors of the ship their own had sent to the bottom of the sea. Only drifting fragments were left of the once magnificent *Ville du Havre*....

Mother...knew her children were gone, but she could not forbear hoping. As each boatload was hoisted aboard the *Lochearn* she joined the others who ran to scan the newly rescued relatives or friends. There were parents who met their children and embraced silently and long. There were others who turned silently away. Poor Mother was one of these; still, as each boatload came she sought her four little girls....

The cries for help that at first had come from every direction were growing fainter. The icy waters were crushing out the lives of the last survivors swept beyond range of the rescue crews....By this time it was nearly four in the morning. The stars were still brilliant, and the skies clear, as they had been since the beautiful sunset the evening before. If the night had been stormy, not a soul could have been saved from the *Ville du Havre*.

Gradually the heart-rending sounds of affliction aboard the *Lochearn* gave way to the softer tones of mourning as the last hopes were replaced by sorrowful reality. Everybody had lost someone, and some families were totally wiped out.

Over the weeping was heard the tranquil murmur of the Atlantic, as if nothing had happened to disturb its calm. The sea looked so placid that it was difficult to realize that it had just annihilated one of the largest steamers afloat, and engulfed, as if in play, two hundred and twenty-six lives.

The *Ville du Havre* had been manned by Captain Surmount and a crew of 172 officers and men. When Captain Robertson of the *Lochearn* completed the two-hours search after the collision, his men had picked up six officers and twenty-three of the crew, twenty-eight passengers, ten of them women, seventeen men, and one little girl, nine years old, making a total of 57 saved....

Each day the realization of loss seemed more acute. The companions in grief, living under crowded, almost intolerable conditions, showed calmness and courage. They organized themselves for their mutual benefit and each had some duty to perform that drew forth their spirit of ingenuity and helped make life bearable on the tiny ship.

Pastor Weiss, in his report on the journey, states that as the days went by Mother became quieter and outwardly more reconciled. He quotes her as saying: "God gave me four little daughters. Now they have been taken from me. Someday I will understand why."

Nine days after the shipwreck, on December 1, 1873, they reached Cardiff, Wales...As soon as the survivors of the *Ville du Havre* were landed they were able to send dis-

patches. Mother's cable to Father consisted of two words: "Saved Alone."

On the other side of the Atlantic, Father was waiting for news of his family. A curtain of silence descended on the *Ville du Havre* after she left American waters. Father quieted his anxiety with the hope that no news was good news....Then the blow fell; the cable arrived, not from France, but from Wales. All that night, with Major Whittle and another devoted friend beside him, Father walked the floor in anguish. Major Whittle said that toward morning Father turned to him. "I am glad to trust the Lord when it will cost me something," he said....

He cabled Mother that she should proceed to Paris... where he would join her as soon as he could cross the Atlantic.

On the way across the Atlantic the captain called... Father into his private cabin. "A careful reckoning has been made," he told them, "and I believe we are now passing the place where the *Ville du Havre* was wrecked."

Father wrote to Aunt Rachel:

On Thursday last we passed over the spot where she went down, in mid-ocean, the water three miles deep. But I do not think of our dear ones there. They are safe, folded, the dear lambs, and there, before very long, shall we be too. In the meantime, thanks to God, we have an opportunity to serve and praise Him for His love and mercy to us and ours. "*I will praise Him while I have my being.*" May we each one arise, leave all, and follow Him.

To Father this was a passing through the "*valley of the shadow of death*," but his faith came through triumphant and strong. On the high seas, near the place where his children perished, he wrote the hymn that was to give comfort to so many:

When peace like a river attendeth my way,
When sorrows like sea-billows roll,
Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say
"It is well, it is well with my soul."

Tho' Satan should buffet, tho' trials should come,
Let this blest assurance control,
That Christ hath regarded my helpless estate,
And hath shed His own blood for my soul.

My sin—oh, the bliss of this glorious thought!
My sin—not in part but the whole,
Is nailed to His cross and I bear it no more;
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, oh, my soul!

And, Lord, haste the day when the faith shall be sight,
The clouds be rolled back as a scroll,
The trump shall resound, and the Lord shall descend—
"Even so—it is well with my soul."

For me, be it Christ, be it Christ hence to live
If Jordan above me shall roll,
No pang shall be mine, for in death as in life
Thou wilt whisper Thy peace to my soul.

I have sat by the bedside of a woman dying of cancer and, holding her limp and clammy hand, have quietly sung this hymn over and over again. I have sung it by other bedsides as war after war came to Jerusalem; once, by the bed of a private from the Argyle and Sutherland Regiment, taken prisoner by the Turks before Jerusalem was delivered by Allenby's army in 1917. Blood poisoning was in an advanced stage, and we had very little medicine and no narcotics to alleviate his suffering. He was doomed, and his agony was great. I sat by him hour upon hour and sang softly, "It is well with my soul." Just before the end he looked up into my face. "Sister," he said, "you have fought half this battle."

Innumerable letters have told me the same story in different ways, as the hymn affected and helped the despondent and despairing. I turned on the radio once at random and heard a faint voice coming from a remote station telling the story of the writing of the hymn. Hymns that are the fruit of such anguish victoriously overcome are bound to bring blessing.

"*Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God*" (2 Cor. 1:3-4).

A son, Horatio, was born to the Spaffords in 1876 and Bertha, the author of *Our Jerusalem*, the autobiography from which this story was excerpted, was born in 1878. Horatio died of scarlet fever in February of 1880. When another daughter was born in January of 1881, Mrs. Spafford gave her the name Grace as a living testimony to the truth of the verse, "*My grace is sufficient for thee.*"

Later that year the Spaffords settled in Jerusalem where, among other things, they founded the Spafford Children's Centre and the American Colony.



LOOKING AT THE LORD'S SUPPER

A veteran Bible teacher asks us to consider our ways.

For over 150 years assemblies seeking to follow the simplicity of the New Testament have conducted the Lord's Supper as an open meeting. This means it was not prearranged, but was open for all the brothers to take part audibly, leading the assembly in worship and praise. I remember my first exposure to such a meeting in Tucson, Arizona after I was saved. I had been raised in a formal church where the minister conducted the whole service and the congregation did nothing. In the assembly I saw different men stand, give out hymns, read the Scripture and pray. The meeting was marked by spontaneity and fervor. I saw men weep; I was moved as we worshiped.

Today the winds of change are blowing. Some advocate hiring a man to lead the fellowship—of course, with the aid of other elders. He may be called a “pastor-elder” or some other name but his role is similar to the pastor in many churches. Often too there is the feeling that more planning is needed for the Breaking of Bread. Appoint one man to choose a theme, arrange the song service and prayers. One elder told me, “I don't think it matters how you do it. Just do it every Sunday.” If that is true we have no guidelines for worship. The Church of Christ, the Christian Church, the Episcopalians and others have communion each Sunday. Are all equally scriptural?

Why did those early brethren choose to have an open meeting? First of all, they rejected emphatically the clergy-laity practice of the churches around them. “*One is your Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brethren*” (Mt. 23:8, NKJV). While some of them were educated men, they rejected the concept of ordination and of a clergy. This meant any group of Christians could gather in the Lord's Name and remember Him—without a clergyman officiating. Had not Peter taught that all believers are priests, “*a holy priesthood*” (1 Pet. 2:5)? This was revolutionary and radical and was abhorred by the clergy. Their position was under attack by this dangerous teaching.

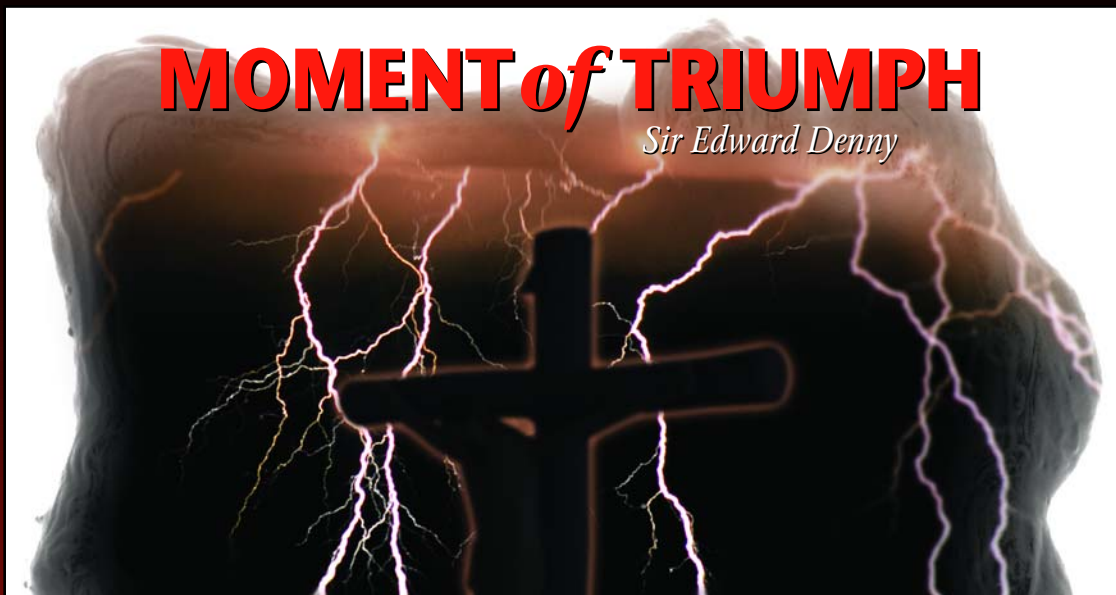
An open meeting proclaims the priesthood of every believer and rejects the concept of a clergy. It also encourages spiritual exercise of heart through the week. If one realizes the service is all planned, he may come with little spiritual exercise of heart. It is easy to be a spectator as the professionals conduct the service. At an assembly in Japan I was told that every brother prepares his heart during the week and comes exercised to take part. And they did. One after another, the men were on their feet, praising and worshiping God. It was a rich service. We grow spiritually by participation. And unlike a formal, structured service, each meeting can be new, fresh and exciting as God's people unite their hearts in spiritual worship.

An open meeting also follows the instruction of Paul to the church in Corinth. There is to be openness for various believers to participate (1 Cor. 14:26, 31). But there is to be order, not confusion. One is to speak at a time so all can benefit. This negates the practice of some churches today where all pray out loud at once and there is a scene of noisy confusion. “*Let all things be done for edification*” (1 Cor. 14:26).

These are some of the reasons why assemblies worldwide have had meetings which are open to participation. Some cite as a reason for changing that their meetings are slow and dull, with few participating. If that is so, shame on us for our lack of spiritual preparation to meet with our Lord. The problem is not the open meeting, it is the carnality of God's people. If our meetings are dead and slow, we should be on our faces, crying out to God for a revival of love toward Him. The worship meeting is a good barometer of the spiritual health of an assembly.

“But the hour is coming and now is, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him” (Jn. 4:23).

DONALD L. NORBIE



MOMENT *of* TRIUMPH

Sir Edward Denny

“Father, the hour is come...” (Jn. 17:1).

*One hour there is on history’s page, preeminent o’er all the past;
‘Twill shine and shine from age to age while earth—while Heaven itself—shall last.*

*O’ercome by time’s oblivious power, all earthly glories soon decay;
But memories of that blessed hour shall never, never pass away.*

*You ask: What deeds of glory gave such luster to that single hour?
Go ask the earth, the sun, the grave—these all confessed its thrilling power.*

*Aye, wrapped at noon in deepest night, the trembling planet shook with dread,
The sun at midday lost its sight, the opening grave gave up its dead.*

*Christian, ‘tis yours alone to know and prize it more than all beside;
So bright with love, so dark with woe—*

THE WONDROUS HOUR WHEN JESUS DIED.