

Issue #8

FROM THE BATTLEFIELD

Fall 2015

FOR THE WEAPONS OF OUR WARFARE ARE NOT CARNAL
BUT MIGHTY THROUGH GOD TO THE PULLING DOWN OF STRONGHOLDS



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This magazine is used as an outlet for expression for all those who have a desire for the Truth, for those who have been given to see how needful it is to maintain this perspective: that we are in fact in a battle! Much as the Israelites who, after having been delivered from Egypt found themselves engaging in warfare to move into the land promised to their father by the Lord, we press forward in our good fight of faith that we may obtain the prize which has been promised to those who overcome!

Listed here are some of our regular contributors to this work. We are always open to share the good things that the Lord has given the brethren to see. This opportunity is open to any and all. As long as it is edifying and according to the truth as it is in Christ, it may be considered for inclusion in our publication.

Visit our active group on facebook where you can read more insights from brethren that could not fit within the limited pages of this magazine!
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Anyone wishing to be added to the mailing list for this publication may send their requests to the above physical and email address. These magazines are provided free of charge, however, anyone wishing to make a donation to cover the cost of printing, the cost is approximately 2 dollars per issue. Anyone wishing to make a donation should make out their checks to the Word of Truth Fellowship in Joplin, Mo. All gifts are tax deductible, and a tax receipt can be sent upon your request.

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Author of "Praying with all Prayer"

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Brother Matthew does the layout/editing for this publication. He also delivers Lords Table meditations, and monthly sermons at the Word of Truth Fellowship in Joplin, Mo. His desire is that this publication would reach those who are in desperate need of comfort, edification, and clarification about the nature of the good fight of Faith.

BROTHER ROBERT COBB



Bro Robert has an extensive video ministry, through which he records and posts hundreds of gospel messages online yearly. He also delivers regular sermons and bible lessons. He has been a faithful steward of the work that the Lord has given him! Brother Robert handles the printing and distribution of this publication.

SISTER NICOLE COBB



Starting this issue of From the Battlefield Publication Sister Nicole Assists Brother Matthew in the proof reading of this publication (which it has been in dire need of!) She is a faithful helper. She is also a faithful mother to their 3 young boys, whom She is raising up in the Nurture and admonition of the Lord. Her perspective on the Truth is insightful and valuable.

BROTHER GIVEN BLAKELY



Brother Given has been a minister of the Word of God since 1954. He has preached to thousands spanning all denominational backgrounds. He is a prodigious writer, having been the author and editor of the Word of Truth Magazine from 1960-1992, written several books and an ongoing scripture commentary from which he teaches every week on Wednesday, and every other Friday. His commentaries now include 23 books of the Bible. He has an extensive online ministry - which includes wotruth.com, daily email devotions as well as facebook, twitter, and myspace blogs. He also has connections with brethren in Pakistan, India, and Kenya, which have translated many of his writings into their native languages.



Matthew 14:30: *and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.*

This account is a testimony to the spiritual sensitivity of our Brother Peter. Think of how long it takes for you to begin to sink in water. This instance is an actual literal example of making an instant prayer. What would have happened if Peter had hesitated? If Peter had tried to swim back to the boat, or tread water for a while until he thought of what to do how well would he have braved the boisterous waves all around him? He may very well have drowned in the process! Peter knew, the second he felt himself to begin to sink, that his only hope was to cast himself wholly upon the mercy of the Lord and depend upon his provision.

This is an important truth, that when a mis-step is made, the instant it is perceived it must be addressed! The same GOD who rescued you from sin to begin with must be involved in setting you back on the right path. When you are given to see that your direction has been drawn off the straight path, even ever so slightly, these are times when instant prayer should be made. Do not take for granted that this awareness will stay with you! It is only by a blessed provision of grace and mercy granted to you from the Lord that you have been enabled to see this.

I think that this has been the cause of death in many a professed believer, that they fell into a place where they did not take very seriously a mis-step on the path to glory. We must never think that we can somehow manage things on our own. Do not be deceived, this is not something that is able to be accomplished by willpower alone.

You can no more set yourself aright again, without the direct intervention of GOD through Christ, than you could deliver yourself to begin with.

If you find yourself in a sinking situation, will you try and overcome the situation? Will you languish in despair? Will you consider the winds and the waves even more so, or will your first recourse be to cry out to the Lord. When Peter realized that he was sinking, his first reaction was not to despair, or doubt - but to call upon Christ. Is that your first response? If at any time in your walk you feel yourself begin to sink, take example from your brother Peter, and give immediate response!

Dont forget that Peter did walk back to the boat with Jesus. Jesus didn't carry him there, Jesus lifted Peter up in his time of need and caused him to stand, so that he might walk with him. I thank GOD for this brothers example, we are after all speaking of the same apostle who was redirected with only a look from Jesus. This is a good example to follow.

Incidentally, Jesus still does this kind of work that he did with Peter, in empowering him to walk on stormy seas, today. If you find that you are beginning to sink, that your eyes have been drawn aside to this or that, and the confident, bold walk towards the savior that you once began is less steady as it once was, don't despair over it, cry out, "Lord save me"! Are you experiencing temptation? Have you found yourself delaying, even but for a moment, before casting that thought from yourself? Don't take any more time thinking of it, cry out "Lord save me"!

Just as Jesus saved you from the dangers of the waters, so to speak to walk out as far as you have, he can and is forward to, empower you to continue to walk beside him.



PRESS THE BATTLE

A COMMENTARY BY BROTHER GENE HUTCHCRAFT

“Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.”

(Isaiah 53:12)

Earth is a place of conflict both visible and invisible. The elements of our world compete and clash one with the other in a futile display of power, **(Romans 8:20)**. People often get caught in these, which produce storms and other forms of upheaval that even reshapes the earth in the case of volcanos or earthquakes. Moreover, there are invisible spiritual powers present and active in the earth. These have power over the physical elements just mentioned. Some powers are comparatively minor, such as angels who hold the winds, **(Revelation 7:1)**, or four angels bound in the Euphrates River, **(Revelation 9:14)**. Yet, there is One Who has dominion over all powers, visible and invisible, in heaven and earth. A prominent demonstration of this came in the days of Noah, *“And God said unto Noah, ‘The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.’”* **(Genesis 6:13)** *“And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die.”* **(Genesis 6:17)** God imposed His power in this manner because men rejected Him. They then entered a downward spiral which came to total corruption of heart and mind which the Lord ended by the violence of righteous judgment.

Scripture contains many lesser demonstrations of God’s ability and willingness to judge sin in His righteousness, truth, and goodness. However, it also contains a record of God’s surpassing judgment of sin and man. That judgment is the subject of our leading text from the prophet Isaiah’s record; a prophecy of what was to come seven centuries afterward. The words speak of a man under God’s wrath, suffering for deeds He did not do, now was He responsible for their effect. Sinful men are the source for, *“All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.”* **(Isaiah 53:6)**

God’s imputation or attribution of sin to another was violence on a level that has not entered the heart or mind of men. Yet, heaven enacted it within events when the Galilean, Jesus of Nazareth, suffered on the Roman cross at Golgotha. It was God Who made Jesus’ ‘soul an offering for sin.’ This action placed Jesus within God’s wrath and justice where Jesus paid and God received the cost for human sin. This payment satisfied the debt against the Almighty which man piled up by their rejection of God and His righteousness.

Such a transaction puzzles the human mind, that divinity would engage the earth as a man to pay a debt owed to heaven by the wicked human race! Yet, this is just what the Father and the Son did when He made ‘his soul an offering for sin.’ An action in which Jesus was fully aware and cooperative! Other beings were involved in this spiritual transaction. Satan was the primary one as to this rebellion against God. He rebelled in heavenly places and then God allowed him to also enter the earth and spread this rebellion through the innocent yet weak humans.

Now, the enemy of man's soul did not know that this creation of earth and man was heaven's offensive to expose the nature of sin and enhance the luster of God's glory in which Satan's earlier rebellion dealt a blow in the sight of heavenly powers. This glory of God is central to His eternal purpose. It involves His name and wisdom in which God uses His power to create the earth and orchestrate events that lead to Satan's destruction and an increase in God's glory. Jesus' death worked out part of this eternal purpose on the earth.

The text of Isaiah's record, with which this article began, goes right to the impact or outcome of these events which played out in Jesus Christ. His personal sacrifice of spirit, soul, and body greatly pleased, even satisfied, God's justice and wrath; that is their demand for payment of sin's offence. God's nature is such that He cannot simply overlook human sin. It must be resolved as the law directs; "...*life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe*" (**Exodus 21:23-25**). Such is God's justice and wrath for the sake of the truth!

So, this action centers on God, Whose righteousness and goodness found its fulfillment in Jesus. He gave His life and body as a ransom for many. And it is sufficient to satisfy the debt to God's name and more; even to purchase those whom God predestinates, calls, justifies, and will glorify by the life of His Son. God has, in fact, given all things to the Son for the glory of God's name. Jesus is able, by the power of His life, to fulfill God's will for this great purpose of having a people, taken out of the cursed earth, for fellowship with the Almighty. The fullness of God's grace now rests on Him Who proved, in the earth, that He is fully capable and willing to use the power of grace for God's purpose.

This purpose involves honoring His name and taking a godly people from this rebellious realm where the prince of the power of the air holds sway over all.

So, when Jesus appeared in the likeness of sinful flesh, He began destroying Satan and his works. Even as a man Jesus healed the sick, cast out demons, and raised the dead. Then He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself and so became the source of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him. This final act of His death finished the work of Satan's destruction!

By Jesus' all encompassing work of obedience He then obtains from God

the 'portion with the great', which is what the Father promised Him. David recorded this promise in one of his songs, "*Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession*" (**Psalms 2:8**.) God also granted Daniel a snapshot of the presentation ceremony, if you will, which he recorded for us. "*I saw in the night visions, and, behold,*

one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" (**Daniel 7:13-14**).

Human involvement to benefit of these things comes by faith which then produces its characteristic obedience in those saved by God's grace, (**Romans 1:5; 16:26**). God's great salvation in Christ Jesus is heaven's offensive to tie up the strong man and take his possessions, (**Matthew 12:29**).

..CONTINUED ON PAGE 5..

**"JESUS IS
ABLE, BY THE
POWER
OF HIS LIFE,
TO FULFILL
GOD'S WILL.."**

God engages this battle in a Man sent from heaven; in a body prepared for Him. Jesus inhabited this body in the wisdom and favor of God Who then grants Him the spoil to divide with the strong.

The strong are those who believe and, "according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." (Titus 3:5-7) And such blessing is only the beginning or the entry door, so to speak, of the realm which we now inhabit. In another place Paul calls these, "spiritual blessings in heavenly places." (Ephesians 1:3)

Believers are not strong in ourselves to enter and inhabit things such as this. It is only as we abide in Christ that we have such strength. Jesus declared, 'for without Me you can do nothing.' (John 15:5d) And Paul also declares, "...ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." (Colossians 3:3) One must be strong of heart and mind to enter and dwell in such an environment. God's power through Christ provides this power! The following were strong men: Yet, Moses trembled exceedingly and fell to the ground at the revelation of God, Daniel, a man highly esteemed of God, passed out in an angel's presence, and John the apostle fell prostrate to the glorified Christ Who then told him not to fear, (Revelation 1:17). So, dear readers, be strong in the might of God. "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised)." (Hebrews 10:22-23)



He was emptied so that you could be filled. He was wounded so that you could be healed. He was crushed so that you could be made whole. His soul was made an offering for sin so that your soul could be saved. He was made a curse so that you could be blessed. He was made to be sin so that you could be made the righteousness of God in him. He was judged so that you could be justified. He partook of flesh and blood so that you could partake of the Divine nature. He became poor on the earth so that you could be given riches in heaven. He died so that you could be made alive. He was raised from the dead so that you could die to yourself. God turned his face as it were away from him for a moment so that His face could look upon you for Eternity. He ascended on high so that he might prepare a place for you !



O God of Might.

You have called me to follow You against every hindrance, without and within. My resolve to press in strengthens as I look upon Your knowing countenance and follow Your eye. I behold your victorious strength and feel Your strong arm upon me, holding me up and equipping me with every needful provision. You go ahead of me to victory. Your mighty angels encamp around me, protecting my perimeter. Your mercy shields my back. The enemy cannot overtake me as I follow Your call. Every day is a fight, but it is not without hope. You will cause my faith to overcome in the face of all threats, for You are my Deliverer, Defender, and Refuge. Though I lose my life, yet will I be saved. Today I fight, and as long as I fight I know I am alive, for it is Christ who gives me strength. Lead on! In Christ's mighty name.

- Amen.

A Prayer for Confidence and Assurance of Hope: led by Sister Tasha Sims

Our Father in heaven, today may all of your people, everywhere, be convinced of their redemption. May we all be equipped by your grace and through faith in Jesus, to fight the good fight of faith and lay hold on eternal life. And may you increase our sights of our heavenly home where we will forever be with you. In Jesus' name we ask.

- Amen.

Till He Come

Part 3 of a series of articles on the subject of the Lords Table

By : Bro Robert Cobb

1 Corinthians 11:26 - *For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come.*

What does it mean to "show the Lord's Death Till He come?"

Every time the saints gather on the first day of the week to break bread together, if they do so properly, they do "show", proclaim, promulgate, declare, preach, shew, speak of, and teach The Lord's death, till He come.

The keeping alive of the remembrance of what Jesus accomplished that day when God laid on Him the sin of the world is very needful, and to some degree we can see that the lack of that remembrance is to blame for the lethargic state of the modern church. It seems that people have forgotten what Jesus did in order for them to enjoy the forgiveness of sin!

I am persuaded that the Lord is leading us to "remember Him" at this time. He is the one who personally took upon himself our sin: a specific work that was accomplished at a specific time, at a specific location. The cross of Christ is not just any cross!

This is where the power of sin was broken, this is the exact moment when the enemy was sternly and effectively defeated. It was at the end of this specific three hour period of time that sin was put away forever from the presence of His Father! God, in producing man, an evident token of that reality, rent the veil in the temple from the top to the bottom! This was no small feat seeing that it was about 4 to 6 inches thick (the breadth of a mans hand). However, in this, God was revealing that the way into the heavenly had been "opened up."

Later it would be referred to as "a new and living way" (**Hebrews 10:20-22**) "*By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.*"

Christ provides an effective salvation! It is right for us to gather and remember the one who has delivered us from certain destruction. We have all sinned and come short of the glory of God! (**Rom 3:23**) But once, in the end of the world, Christ has appeared to "put away sin" by the sacrifice of Himself. When we come together as an assembly, what could possibly take the place of "remembering Him"? How do you think Jesus feels about those who have set aside this "table of remembrance" and replaced it with a supposed "praise and worship" environment? What better praise and worship can be afforded than to "purposefully remember Jesus death, till he come"?

I will testify for myself, When someone stands and leads us in a lively remembrance of what Jesus accomplished on the cross for us, I am "transported" in the Spirit to heavenly places in Christ Jesus, I don't need someone to tell me to raise my hands, I am fellowshiping with the living Christ, as His body once again, eats his flesh, and drinks his blood, and a rejuvenation takes place in the "inner man" and the reality of my sins being removed emboldens me to face the battle another week!

I praise God for the ability to "remember Him"!



Sister
Susan
Brueck

In Times Like These We Need A Savior !

In times of peace and at times of war, never are we without the need of our precious Lord. He is *"the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world"* (**John 1:9**), *"As many as received Him gave He the power to become the sons of God. Even to them that believe on his name"* (**John 1:12**). As a believer in Christ, the Holy Spirit dwells within you. And even more so, *"the spirit itself bears witness with our own spirit, that we are the children of GOD"* (**Rom 8:16**). It is God who according to his mercy, saved us: not because of any good on our part. As we consider the Holy Spirit who dwells in us through faith, let us think of a child on the lap of his father. It is here where he seeks security, love, and assurance. He is seeking safety from things within and without. That is how it is for God's children. It is as if we are sitting in the bosom of the Father on his lap, looking to him for everything that pertains to life and godliness. Oftentimes God gives us a word of comfort, of peace, and of assurance. We can be confident knowing that the Holy Spirit will never minister anything that would stir up the flesh of man. He will not minister anything that would contradict himself. When the Holy Spirit bears witness with our spirit, it should not be something perceived as peculiar, strange, or extraordinary: because that is the work which the Holy Spirit has been sent to work in us, that we would have confidence that we are, in truth, the children of God.

When you are able to see these things, it is cause for thanksgiving and a cause to praise the Lord. That being said, it is not uncommon to be at a loss for words at the enormity of the precious thought of His Spirit bearing witness with ours. He affirms to us that we are a child of God. He affirms to us that our faith is the victory that overcomes the world. When we are in hard times he reminds us that God is working everything out for our good and will not let us be tested beyond what we are able to bear. He is near to all who call upon Him in truth. He hears the cry of the righteous and is forward to help in time of trouble. Have you ever considered this? How is it, that when you cry out to God, that he can hear the cry of your prayer over the millions of others who are crying out to him. Think about it, all the pleas for help, prayers of thanksgiving and praise going up simultaneously and he hears each one, each individual - how is this possible? It is possible because he is God! All things are possible with him. Those times when Satan reminds you of your past, remember that he is the accuser of the Brethren. If during these times, you listen to The Spirit, He speaks of a time when God brought you up out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay and set your feet upon that Blessed Rock, : The Rock of our salvation. He tells us "peace, be still" remember beloved, I am your strength, your refuge, your shield and your shepherd. I am the One who loves you more than any other. He reminds us that his eye is ever on us - I am your watchman, I never sleep or slumber, so that you may have peace. I pick you up when you fall down. I know you're weeping in the night and I give you joy in the morning. I bear your burdens, because I care for you.

Beloved, this spirit makes intercession on our behalf to God the Father when we can't or don't even know what to pray. He ministers peace to you when you are weary. Jesus sympathizes with your weaknesses so that you can come boldly to the throne of grace to obtain mercy and grace and help in your time of need. He bids you to draw near to him and he draws near to you. There is so much more that could be said on this matter, but I leave you with this: Each one of us is either presently, or have been in the past, in the midst of fiery trial, but we can be confident in these things that no matter what happens in this world, this is not the end of the matter. Jesus has rightly said: "let not your hearts be troubled, you believe in God, believe also in me". He will come again to carry his loved ones home.



Part 3 of a
series on "inner
conflict and its
remedy"

By: Brother Given O. Blakely

CONFLICT

from the Beginning

Adam, Eve, and Satan

The Holy Spirit and chaos

From the beginning, conflict has existed: the abrasive hostility of order and disorder, light and darkness, good and evil. The Word of God opens with an introduction to conflict. *"And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved (brooded) upon the face of the waters" (Gen 1:2).* Think of the Spirit of God, moving within the framework of Divine objective, brooding upon the face of the chaotic deep. Deity is averse to chaos and disorder, as is shown in creation. The extent of the conflict of that ancient chaos with God's Spirit transcends our imagination. The effect that disorder has upon you is a very faint reflection of that situation.

Light and darkness

The first creative work of God summoned light into existence. But even then, there was conflict. Light did not dissipate darkness, nor could it be merged with it. They are conflicting orders. What illuminates and what obscures cannot be joined together. Thus it is written, *"And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day" (Gen 1:4,5).* There is a divinely appointed line of demarcation between what illuminates and what obscures. They can never be joined. They are, by their very nature, in conflict.

The crowning work of God's creation was man. Everything led up to that. The Lord's observation at the conclusion of each creative act was, *"and God saw that it was good" (Gen 1:10,12,18,21,25).* But following His crowning work, the observation was, *"... and, behold, it was very good" (Gen 1:30).* The earth was created to be inhabited by man, not merely by the impersonal and brute creation. No sooner was man created, "male and female" (Gen 5:1), than hostility was introduced. Eve was confronted with moral conflict. She had to weigh something that God said against a contrary statement. The result of that confrontation is found in the reign of sin and death that has followed (Rom 5:12-21). With the introduction of "the knowledge of good and evil" came conflict, not known in the sweetness of innocence. Here is the first record of man confronting conflicting gods!

Cain and Abel

Struggle now became a part of our race. The first two sons were Cain and Abel. They were different. One was "of the evil one," and one was pleasing to God. This condition was not due to a deficiency in the family structure. It was the result of man's fall. Prompted by religious controversy, Cain *"rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him" (Gen 4:8).* Thus, are we introduced to the first person-to-person conflict on the human level. At the threshold of human history, therefore, the seriousness of conflict--particularly religious conflict--is demonstrated.

Enoch and the world

Before the passing of a millennium, corruption began to dominate the world. With the rapid multiplication of our race came the more rapid spread of evil. In the midst of a wicked generation a man equal to the conflict arose. His name was Enoch. He *"walked with God"* while others walked in their lusts (*Gen 5:24*). Because he was translated from this life without experiencing death, his analysis of that generation is important. *"And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him"* (*Jude 14,15*). In prophesying the impending flood, Enoch provides us with the first example of a man in conflict with the world.

Noah and the world

Lamech, Noah's father, lived during the last 56 years of Adam's life. The godly influence generated by that association was doubtless the contributing factor to Noah's godliness. Ungodliness reached its apex in his day. It was so dominant and unrestrained that God *"repented that He had made man on the earth"* (*Gen 6:6*). Those supposing that an omniscient God is indifferent to the attitudes of men need to consider the gravity of that statement! The all-seeing eye of God found a man in conflict with that wicked world: righteous Noah. The result was that Noah *"found grace in the eyes of the Lord"* (*Gen 6:8*). Commissioned to build *"an ark to the saving of his house,"* Noah became a witness to that conflicting generation. This *"preacher of righteousness,"* by obediently constructing an ark, *"condemned the world"* that contended with him (*Heb 11:7*). In Noah we have the first example of a winning minority!

Ishmael and Isaac

Following the dispersion of the proud would-be builders of Babel's tower, God called Abraham, separating him from the masses to Himself. He promised that the race would be rescued by Abraham's "Seed" (*Gen 12:1-3; 15:1-4; 17:16*). Eventually, two sons were found in his house: one from a bondmaid, and one from his wife. These sons were in conflict. Ishmael, the son of Hagar, *"mocked"* Isaac, the son of Sarah. The result of this conflict was the expulsion of the *"bondwoman and her son."* Commenting on that ancient conflict, Paul wrote, *"But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now"* (*Gal 4:29*).

Jacob and Esau

Jacob and Esau provide us with a remarkable portrayal of conflict. These were the twin sons of Isaac and Rebekah. While yet in the womb, these twins struggled with each other, locked, as it were, in combat. God revealed the reason for the conflict. *"And the children struggled together within her; and she said, If it be so, why am I thus? And she went to inquire of the LORD. And the LORD said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger"* (*Gen 25:23*). Not only were two nations represented by those infants, they were *"two manner of people."* They were different, and would be at variance with one another. To this very day, the descendants of Jacob and Esau are in conflict--and it all started within the same womb.

**The world, an
arena of conflict!**

The Author and Finisher



By: Sister Nicole Cobb

Ask yourself this question: Have any of you ever had that project, that work that you started on and never really completed? I know most of you probably have. Well, I have some good news for you today. The same One who began a good work in you has promised that He will finish it. Salvation is sure to those who, in faith, give themselves to the promises of God!

Philippians 1:6

Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.

If you are ever tempted to doubt your status in Christ, which we know is one of the wicked ones greatest tactics to turn you away from God, I ask you to look back and remember when that good work that was started. Do you remember? Can you remember that time that you came to the Lord, a time when He first made Himself known to you, when He called you? Do you remember all the times when the Lord kept you? Where are you now? Are you still in the miry clay or are your feet planted on a rock? Are you believing? Is Christ dwelling in you, is He working in you? I was blessed to look at this this way. I can be confident when the evil one throws this temptation my way. I can recognize that Christ began a good work in me. I can see growth that the Lord has given, and I commend this to all of Gods people: It is possible to see the good work that God has begun in you. Brethren, we have the Finisher working in us. Not only is He the Author, He is the Finisher! We can be sure that He will stand behind His work 100%. He doesn't do anything halfway. How will he perform it? He is accomplishing it through Jesus Christ. This is an encouragement! The same One who started this work in you is committed to completing it.

So today, brethren, I want to call you to keep pressing toward the mark, keep looking unto Jesus, and keep fighting. Keep laying hold, keep stretching forth and obtaining, that on that final day, we may stand perfect and COMPLETE in all the will of God. When Jesus gives the kingdom back to God it is going to be perfectly completed! We can be confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.

CONCERNING SUBSTANCE...

Hebrews 11:1 - Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Substance as it is defined in the natural realm is what makes something real. The substance of something is what makes it perceivable, what makes it able to be known. Anything that cannot be touched, tasted, smelt, seen, or heard in the natural is considered by mortal men to be imaginary. However, the substance that we are speaking of, which is presented by our text, is not substance as is thought of in the physical. GOD cannot be measured by earthly standards of perception.

It cannot be said that the promises of GOD, and the realities of the world to come are tangible. However, It also cannot be said that they are abstract. They are actually more stable than the reality in which we find ourselves in this present world, however mysterious and imperceivable they may seem.

In truth, the world in which we find ourselves only finds it's reality in that GOD is upholding all things from the unseen realm. Perception of this unseen realm, understanding of GOD's eternal purpose, and his promises to those who are in Christ, then, actually transcends the reality in which we find ourselves. While we do not deny the very real circumstances in which we find ourselves as we are passing through this world, (only a fool would do so), we realize that ultimately, present events are only really significant in that there are potential eternal consequences and rewards which our reactions to them result in.

We realize that this is not all there is to our existence. Eventually, this life will pass away, and the things which GOD has determined to do since before time and substance was even created will come to pass. Faith causes us to live in view of this future reality. Faith is what makes the promises of GOD real to us. It enables us to reach out and take a hold of the transcendent reality of them. It persuades us that GOD's word is more certain than anything else, that if He said it , no matter how things may seem in the present, it will come to pass.



A Personal Testimony and Thank Offering To The Lord

By: Brother Robert Cobb

I am thankful unto the Lord for giving me to be raised in a house where God was known and sought after, where God was honored and lifted up the a source of eternal life.

I am thankful that my mother was lead to a little church that was gathering together for one reason, to honor God and preach the gospel of His Son.

I am thankful that I heard the Lord's calling from a young boy, that He gave me grace to believe and that I was able to grow in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

I am thankful that God did not abandon me when I fell away for some time as a young married man, at that time I confess to God and men that I was worthy of abandonment, yet God brought me back after eight years of torment in the world.

I am thankful that God began once again to work in me "both to will and to do" of His good pleasure, that He gave me peace and confidence in His Son.

I am thankful that God kept me alive and sane during 21 years of working a construction job "on the road" - living from week to week in all types of assemblies, in all manner of circumstances, but God always remained faithful, even when it seemed like it would be impossible to survive, God kept me alive in the Spirit

I am thankful to God for being there with me, when it seemed as though the whole world was abandoning me and I am thankful for God, during those hardest times of all, for Him showing me that His promises are sure and steadfast, that He will never leave those who put their trust in Him.

I am thankful that the Lord took elements out of my life that were hindering me from advancing in His kingdom, some of which were people, of whom some were my own family in the flesh. I can see now that it had little to do with who they were, but it had everything to do with where I had put them in my heart. If I was going to "seek the Lord with my whole heart" then the situation had to change. I am thankful to God for making those impossible changes for me. At the time it was not a pleasant thing, but afterward I will testify, that it yielded the peaceable fruit of righteousness.

I am thankful unto God for allowing me to be connected with so many saints that were already "rooted and grounded" in the Lord - many of which attend the "Refreshing Waters Renewal". I can see, as I look back, that for the last 22 years God has allowed me to gather for one week out of the year (even the years when I felt really distant) with the brethren, to hear their words of comfort, to shake their hands and look into their eyes, to listen to their triumphs in the faith, and to share in their loss and pain. The Renewal for me has been a life-line to the things that matter the most, and I thank God for the "Renewals"

I thank God for sending me a wife, a companion, a friend, and a sister in Christ, all rolled up in one person. I give God praise and honor for being able to stabilize me through the ministry of Christ, as He works through my wife. It has been a joy to be "heirs together" with Anita.

I am thankful unto the Lord for drawing many of my children unto Himself, for giving them to believe and I am thankful that I can see God working in their lives.

I am thankful to God for allowing me the privilege of meeting with the saints several times a week, and twice on the Lords day.

I am thankful to worship God in the Spirit and have no confidence in the flesh.

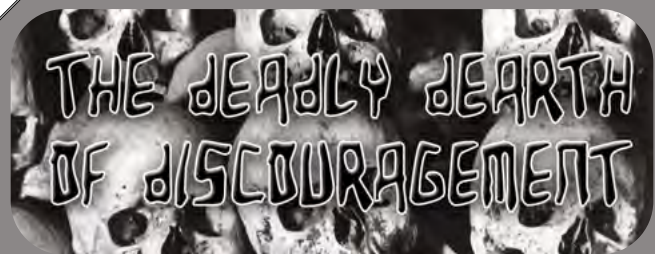
I am thankful for the environment in the assembly, where the word of God is loved and taught, where Christ is exalted, where God is extolled, where the Holy Spirit is able to minister freely and advancement in Holiness, righteousness, sanctification and edification is the normal mode of operations.

I am thankful for God giving His body "prophets, pastors and teachers" that are able to expound the word with clarity, that are able ministers of the grace of God. I confess that I need these vital members in His body and I submit to their leading and acknowledge their importance in the advancement of the body.

I am thankful and blessed to have been provided a warm bed at night and a dry house to live in, where the cupboards are filled with food and the work of the Lord is being accomplished. I am thankful for all the many blessings of technology and I ask for grace from God to always use it for the advancement of His kingdom, for the preaching of the glorious gospel that has brought life and immortality to light.

I am thankful to be thankful, I am thankful to have been given to see the Lord's hand at work in all of these things. The Lord woke me up this morning and as I lay there, all of these things (and many, many more) went through my mind and I could see very clearly that I would not be here if it were not for the grace of God - It is all owing to a merciful God, and a powerful God - a God that is able to "work all of these things together for good" - one who can deliver and bless and keep.

I praise God for His ability to save to the uttermost, all those who come unto Him, in Christ Jesus!



Discouragement is not as innocent as some may suggest. The structure of the word itself is clear enough, that this state is one that is a robber of courage. When it takes root, it has this affect on the believer - to rob them of their ability to live confidently. Although we all go through times of being "cast down", when our experience is difficult and the way seems exceedingly hard and tiresome, I would say that GOD does not intentionally lead us into an experience of discouragement: Rather, He sometimes leads us into deep waters where discouragement is a possible outcome for those who do not see the trial or test of faith that is intended to be worked out in that circumstance. The children of Israel had this experience when they saw the inhabitants of the Promised land, they preeminently considered the hardness of the work before them, and in the process forgot entirely the power of GOD that was able to make them equal to it. **(Numbers 32:9)** *"For when they went up unto the valley of Eshcol, and saw the land, they discouraged the heart of the children of Israel, that they should not go into the land which the LORD had given them."*

This does not have to be so! It is possible to go through trying times without succumbing to the propensity of man to be overcome by what seems to be according to mortal vision, the actual truth of a matter. The highs and lows of mortal life while in the earth can be braved without being swept away. You can have peace and Joy even in a time accompanied with sorrow and pain.

If you find yourself in a time of discouragement, There is danger in staying in this place for an extended period of time. If not properly dealt with, this condition can end in doubt and despair.

The available remedy is faith and hope. Consider the power of GOD that was towards you when you were brought out from the land of your captivity, so to speak. Put your confidence in the things done on your behalf in Christ, that accomplished for you what you never could have yourself. Consider diligently the promises that he has laid forth in the Gospel : that those who live according to these things will not be ashamed. GOD has committed himself to finish the work that he had begun in you. Reckon that the one who delivered you , regenerated you, and quickened you can keep you!

So, press in, lay hold, obtain, and maintain! Remember always that though weeping may endure for the night, joy comes in the morning!



Psalm 34:8 - *O taste and see that the Lord is good.*

GOD has called us by means of an appeal to desire, and affection. The truth answers any and all deep longing of man for purpose and meaning. The truest level of satisfaction and joy can only be experienced by those who know it. This is the manner of the kingdom, GOD graciously reveals to us the abundant nature of His Goodness and Truth. There is no good reason to not seek The Lord. GOD is compelling, and the revelation of his person and purpose through the gospel of his son, has provided more than adequate incentive for men to seek him.

One very compelling thing about following Jesus is that believers in Jesus are peculiar. As it concerns the Christian, our lives are focused upon obtaining, rather than restraining. We are primarily fulfilling a desire rather than trying to rid ourselves of desire. I should say, however, that the fulfillment of this desire, unlike any desire that mere men in the flesh have, is one which guarantees satisfaction lasting for eternity.

There are many religions that teach that ridding ones self of desire completely is the path to enlightenment. That desire itself is the enemy. There are also sects of Christianity who only ever speak about what should not do. While we are called to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and we certainly encourage ridding oneself of desires that are contrary to godliness, this is not the focus of our walk. Putting off, or restraining, is accomplished in putting on and embracing righteousness. Walking in the spirit is what guarantees that you will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.

These things are defined and experienced positively. We will see this in our makeup as men, that really we were made to fulfill a desire, we cannot live primarily in view of restraining want and have satisfaction. It is the manner of God to give us something to want. There are those who would tell us that to desire reward from The Lord is unlawful. That we should follow him purely for the reason of obedience. However, men are not made to live this way. Men are made to desire profit, glory and satisfaction.

THE MAKE UP OF MAN:

All men have within them certain characteristics that are a result of them being made in the image of GOD. All men do what they perceive is the best thing - the thing that they feel will give them the most benefit and pleasure. All men have a desire to prosper, to increase, to be profitable. Though marred and corrupted there is still this imprint of the divine there. It is the faint shadow of the purpose for their creation, The reason for this, is that Men were Made to desire GOD. Sin in its varied forms and manifestations really is desire that has been corrupted and turned in the wrong direction.

In the gospel of Jesus, we see a message of restoration and regeneration, when men's desire and affection are set in the direction which GOD has always intended. GOD appeals to us in this manner, giving men adequate incentive to seek him. As it concerns this, every man has been given advantage, in that we have been provided by gods mercy, as it were, a living parable even in every day things as it concerns the concept of appetite and hunger.

This principle exists in physical life in general, the Lord imprinted this on our very beings so that we could make this connection. GOD made us with appetites so that we would naturally hunger for what we needed to sustain us for life. He has made it enjoyable to eat, has made foods to taste good, that we might enjoy doing what is actually beneficial to our health. In natural life, when someone has to be forced to eat something, has to be reminded to eat, there is some kind of dysfunction, some kind of illness or malady. It is natural for men to want to eat.

Men, although they do not realize it in their fallen state, retain this sense of need, this desire to be fulfilled that can only be truly filled and satisfied by fellowship with GOD. This is something which much be revealed. We must be given, as it were, a taste of the goodness of GOD, if we are to seek him as we were made to. We are given something to want.

THE PROMISES OF GOD

GOD has always dictated what it is that we should seek him for. From the beginning of his workings with the patriarchs, we see the manner of his involvement with humanity. GOD did not ask Abraham, follow me to a land that I will show you, and I will give you whatever you want. GOD set the terms.

(Genesis 12:1-3) *"Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. "*

GOD gave Abraham a promise to believe, and in doing so, He set Abrahams attention towards what he intended to do.

Likewise, GOD didn't tell Moses on the mount to go down and ask the people what they would have Him do for them - He set the agenda. Even when David had a desire to build the temple, although this desire was a noble one, GOD fulfilled it in the way which he saw fit.

In salvation, when we talk about having our needs or desires fulfilled, it ought to be clarified that our ultimate need is defined by GOD. He knows what is truly the most beneficial and profitable.

Men do not have the ability to truly diagnose what it is that they really need, let alone perceive what it is they should want. The heart and desire of men can only ever be truly fulfilled by GOD himself. Men spend entire lifetimes seeking satisfaction by doing whatever they can perceive is fulfilling, but their is always an end.

JESUS'S EARTHLY MINISTRY AND DESIRE

People have gravely misinterpreted the miracles of Jesus. They assume that they primarily demonstrated the desire of GOD to fulfill men's wants and wishes. Many modern representations of Jesus portray him as a glorified Santa Claus - granting men their hopes and dreams. Even in the world, Jesus did not spend his time sitting around catering to the whims of what men wanted. There was no occasion upon which Jesus formed a line and said, "what would you like? Ok, here it is, next"

..CONTINUED ON PAGE 17...

***.. The heart and
desire of men can
only ever be truly
fulfilled by GOD
himself ..***

He was discriminate about who, and under what circumstances he helped men. As it concerns the man who asked Jesus to speak to his brother that he might divide the inheritance with him, we remember that Jesus refused his request. In many instances, Jesus's miraculous help towards men was according to his bidding.

(Matthew 12:13) *"Then saith he to the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it forth; and it was restored whole, like as the other."* **(John 5:8-9)** *"Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath".*

The real point of these miracles is not that Jesus gives men what they want, or need, rather, it points us in the direction of where our affection should reside. Jesus himself is what you need. The presence of Jesus in the world proved this saying, that outside of the intervention of GOD : **(Jeremiah 17:9)** *"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"* The heart of men without Jesus is like a compass that has lost its ability to read true north. It is only as our hearts are renewed in him that we are able to point ourselves in the right direction. In these miracles we have an index into the nature of the affect of Jesus upon the human race. The lame walk, the blind see, the withered are restored, the leprous regain their sensitivity, and the dead are raised. All that hinders man, that puts him at a disadvantage, that prevents him from lively, productive fellowship with GOD is answered not only by Jesus, but more specifically in Jesus. He is the focus and fulfillment of any and all legitimate desire.

Men speak much about how GOD wants to fulfill YOUR dreams, to give you what YOU desire. In truth, however, GOD wants you to desire what only He is able to give.

We ought to allow our expectations to be set by The Lord because only he is *"able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us"*, **(Ephesians 3:20 KJV)** Why would we rob ourselves by having our limits set by our own hopes and dreams? Even if GOD would grant unto men whatever they imagined would satisfy their need and longing, it would not even begin to compare with what he has purposed to give them in Christ

Our hope, the reason for which we have followed Jesus, and are being led by him, is nothing short of eternal Glory. We see in the manner of this leading a similar kind of experience. He placed within us this desire, he has tuned our hearts to point in the direction where these desires are fulfilled, and he gives us a taste of what is to come as a result of this joining in heart and mind.

REGENERATION, THE FIRST FRUITS OF THINGS TO COME

We have not been required to, as Saul required the people to, labor without eating. We have been called to "taste and see". This enlightening that Jonathan received in that occasion when he ate of the honey that was falling from the trees on that day - is similar to our own experience as we partake of the fatness that The Lord has put in front of us.

We also have not been called to seek after something which we have no frame of reference to. Even in the flesh, men do not generally crave things of which they have never tasted. We have been given a provision much like the one granted to Caleb and Joshua when they saw and tasted of the things waiting in the land which was promised to them by The Lord. We have been given the very same spiritual substance, of which our inheritance is made, to culture in us an appetite for these things.

(Isaiah 55:2) *'Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.'*

So then, let your soul DELIGHT itself in fatness. This involves a culturing, a developing of your Spiritual palette. This delight is something which ensures that we will continue to come back and eat of the fatness which is available to us. This is a protection to us, it is a provision. As long as we are sensitive, as long as we have ears to hear this gospel, as long as we have an appetite to a hunger and thirst for righteousness, we will continue to come back to our Lord, to rely upon him for what we need to survive. It is important, not only that we come to the water that GOD provides to quench our thirst, but that we maintain our desire for that water, and keep it within us. This water itself is actually designed to be partaken of in this manner. **(John 4:14)** *"But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."*

In Christ, we actually are guaranteed that we will get what we want, because our wants have changed to be in line with what GOD has purposed to do. Although they are in every way transcendent to anything that we have ever known in this world, the promise of a new heavens, new earth, and of a new body are not some far off foreign idea to us because we have been given something that wets our appetite for these things.

...Lay Hold on Eternal Life...

If The world to come is just some intellectual concept to you, you will not find yourself giving up your life here in order to attain to it. The lust of the flesh that we have denied and crucified is replaced by a much more compelling lusting of the spirit according to his promise. We have been given- actual substance from that land that corroborates the witness and testimony of Jesus in the scripture. Not only this, but we have been given, as it were, an outpost of heaven in which we can become acquainted with the culture, of heaven.

As it concerns the hope of righteousness - or being given a body like unto his glorious body, what we have been given in the present has made us able to long for this coming reality in a way that transcends a mere intellectual curiosity. We have been given the earnest of the spirit. We know by experience what is it like to be renewed, to be delivered from the old and given something new. We have been renewed in our spirits, and this is what gives us this longing to be joined to a body that is compatible with it. The conflict that has begun as a result of this duality of nature makes us long for a time when the struggle will be no more.

I praise GOD for this provision of appetite and promise of the ultimate fulfillment of it in eternal union and fellowship with him in the ages to come!

TO REMEMBER ! A PROVISION FROM GOD.

In our walk in this present earth, the Lord has been very gracious to us in allowing us to be able to recall things that have happened to us in our lives. The ability to learn, to build an index within our minds of the work of the Lord in our lives, allows us to be benefitted and encouraged. This capacity can be instrumental in building your reference when thinking about the character and personality of God. There are many things which can be learned from the demonstration of Gods person as recorded in scripture, however, we also learn these things through our experiences in life. After all, God is a person - not a theory. He is not to be studied, but to be known. It is not that God, as he has revealed himself in the scripture, is inadequate to enable us to have a proper understanding of his person, but our experience confirms the faith that we have placed in his word. He reveals himself to US. This fellowship, this working together with God, stabilizes our soul and establishes us.

Fay Restored

a poem by Sister Era Blakely

This Poem is a recollection of Oct., 7, '11, and, with humble thanks, is written as a result of the work GOD did in me; largely because of the ministry of John Newton, Logan and Jeremy Williams, Julie Miller, Jonathan Blakely and my own mother, June Blakely.

Psa. 51:10-12 Restore unto me The Joy of THY Salvation.....

*I was far off from The Fold
Sunk deep in sin and shame
No thought had I of leaving it
On me was all the blame*

*With stubborn pride and heart of stone
I held tight the things I loved
'My life is mine!' my vile mouth cried
From this I was not moved*

*In spite of my stubborn, stony heart
I heard The Still Small Voice
'Let go of all these worldly things.
Come back. Make your choice'*

*These gentle words I would not heed
I stopped my prideful ears
This made my life grievous and hard
My days oft filled with tears*

*I lived my life for self and sin
My days were idly spent
But, in the FATHER's steadfast love
Space HE gave me to repent*

*Some days I felt I had done wrong
But, back to sin I came Back and forth
my fickle heart was pulled Wanting
good, yet choosing shame*

*The day did come when I did see
How far from Christ I fell
I thought my state unsavable
Convinced was I of hell*

*My soul was lost, my spirit doomed
GOD's gifts and blessing gone
The good things of eternal worth
Taken from me for what I'd done*

*The weight of wicked, thoughtless deeds
Crushed my blackened soul
By worldly lusts I was eaten up
Ne'er again would I be whole*

*I beheld my hands, now raw and bare
What I loved had turned to dust
My heart had been betrayed, and I
Was left with my disgust*

*I thought upon my life and wept
O'er the time that I had spent
Producing naught, but offence to GOD
Then, I was given to repent*

*Prostrate I cast my filthy self
Upon the Mercy of my LORD
Every Hope I hung on HIM
Every breath clung to HIS Word*

OUR HOPE IS...

*Forgive me, Christ! Forgive!" I cried
'Take me back into the Fold!
The dreadful things that I once loved
I leave! I release my hold!'*

*Expecting a harsh and chastening hand
And the judgement of fire and hell
Instead, I felt a gentle touch
And heard words my fears to quell*

*'My Child', He said, 'Your sin is great
But, you debt has long been paid
Instead of you to bear the weight
On My shoulders it was laid'*

*'My sheep once lost is found', said He
'The prodical has come home
Th'Angels rejoice for you this day
In My House you are welcome'*

*I looked upon The Book, wherein
Are written the deeds of every man
My page, once black and full of stain
Was made white and had been washed
clean*

*He took my rags and gave me robes
Gave me Joy for my Sorrow and Hope for
my Fear
He forgave me my every sin and then
Beckoned to me 'Come Near'*

*He took my vile and stony heart
A heart of flesh was given
Where I was once convinced of hell
I'm now convinced of Heaven*

*"that blessed Hope"
(Tit 2:13)*

*"the Hope of
righteousness" (Gal 5:5)*

*a Hope that "maketh
not ashamed" (Rom 5:5)*

*"the Hope of glory"
(Rom 5:2)*

*an "anchor of the soul"
(Heb 6:19)*

*the "Hope of the gospel"
(Col 1:23)*

a "better Hope" (Heb 7:19)

a "lively Hope" (1 Pet 1:3)

"good Hope" (2 Thess 2:16)

*the "Hope of eternal life"
(Tit 1:2)*

*the hope by which
"we are saved" (Rom 8:24)*

Letter found in the pocket of a dead soldier..

Dad and Mom,

I don't think that we are going to be able to hold this position for very much longer. We have fought hard and given everything that we have to the good fight. They tell us that reinforcements will not be here for weeks, but I fear we may only have hours left, as our strength is almost gone.

I do not want to leave you with these horrible visions of defeat, but I also do not want you to ever wonder if we gave up in the fight. Danny, our platoon leader has been preaching the gospel to us ever since he came in December. I think I am right in saying that he has led many, if not all of the men to Christ. We are no longer afraid to die and we have had many victories in the past six months. I can see now that God sent him here to prepare us for what is about to happen.

Dad, I have witnessed some of the roughest men in the world turn from a life of sin, to the tender virtues found only in knowing God. Some might think this impossible and I am writing this to let you know that we did not die in vain. Ever since this company has come to know God we have struck out on missions that we deemed worthy. We are presently defending a large orphanage near the border, the enemy troops seem to have a great thirst for killing the youth in this war, they even send their own children out with bombs strapped to their little bodies, hoping to kill even more children.

Since this mission was not deemed a "high value target" to defend, we are not going to be getting the reinforcements that we needed. Most of the children have been moved to a more secure location and only our six-man squad remains behind to hold off the enemy until the remaining children are safe. I do not expect to be able to write again, and if this letter ever finds its way to you I want you both to know that I am glad to have been your son, your devotion to Christ and His people have been on my mind ever since I came to know the Lord. It was during one of Danny's "talks" that it hit me, Christ died to take away my sins, and it was at that moment I realized that I really believed that Jesus was the Son of God. I could have gone back with the others today, but I stayed behind to do what I knew God wanted me to do, I had to keep these kids alive.

I have given this letter to Danny; he will be accompanying the first group of kids to safety. I am praying that this letter will find its way to you, even if I do not. Know that God is with me, and that all your labors were not in vain.

Your son and new brother in Christ,

Andrew Gordon

P.S. This letter found its way to the Gordon family three months before Andrew awakened from a coma and was released from an Army hospital in Germany; he and his family were reunited and continue to serve Christ in the local assembly. All of the children at the orphanage were saved, yet a stray bullet, on the way back to camp, ushered Danny into the everlasting arms of Jesus. Many of those that Danny led to the Lord continue to trust in the God that saved them, both from sin, and from the hands of the enemy that day.

Dear Reader...

While this letter, and its contents, is purely fictional, it does depict conditions and circumstances that were prevalent during a time of war, and it also serves to direct our minds to consider that "our times and seasons" are in the hands of a great and mighty God.

Steadfast Saints



Brother Given and Sister June Blakely

For over three decades these brethren have been used of God through their insightful teachings and ministry in the assembly of the saints to bring blessing, comfort, and joy to the people of God.

Jesus said, "...He that is greatest among you shall be your servant. (Matthew 23:11) and this word is personified in these brethren. God has affected the lives of many through their carefulness to "Hold forth the words of Life" (Phil 2:16) - Both in the assembly and in their day to day lives. Brother Given and Sister June have exemplified what it means to "walk in the Spirit" (Gal 5:16) and "have fervent charity among yourselves" (1 Pet 4:8). God has given these brethren "grace to excel" in these divine attributes.

They have opened up their home for over twenty years so the saints of God would have a place to assemble. Three to four times a week, they willingly prepare their home to accommodate anywhere from fifty to ninety members of the body of Christ. This, as you might imagine, is no small feat! The result of this sacrifice can be witnessed in the rare solemnness with which these assemblies are conducted. These assemblies, in their home, are not marked by a shred of casualness. The effectiveness of many house churches is presently neutralized by the presence of this kind of casual attitude. God has evidently blessed these brethren in the giving of their home to the Lord. Because of their sacrifice, the saints are able to assemble and grow in a rare and most excellent environment, one in which God is the central focus, and Christ is the effectual worker through the Holy Spirit.

We take this opportunity to openly thank God for these brethren. We can all, as an assembly of the saints, testify that God is working to benefit the whole body, both in heaven and on the earth, because of the faithful ministry of Brother Given and Sister June

I THANK GOD FOR THESE STEADFAST SAINTS!



COMMENTS FROM THE FOXHOLE

Brother Ricky Sims - "Fervent charity is like the walls erected in Nehemiah's day. It will keep the enemy out of our assemblies".

Brother Jeff Hostetter - ".You can never be too "fanatical" in your love and devotion to Jesus."

Brother Tyler James Boyd - "Jesus can give you rest from your unprofitable labour and will call you into a restful rewarding work. So come unto Him, all ye that labour and are heavy laden."

Brother Justin Cobb - "My message to the Sanballat and Tobiahs of today : I'm not coming down off this wall!

Brother Benjamin Blakely - "Always remember one thing, Christ is the head, men are not the head."

Brother Jeremy Williams - "Those who are doing the calling on the name of the Lord now are the same ones who will someday be present with him"

Sister Susan Brueck - "Jesus never promoted Himself but His Father did",
"It is a tragedy to attach your life to anything but the eternal will of God."

Brother Al Stoner - "We have been drawn by God, To his Son Christ Jesus, because He asked for us to be given to him."

Brother Aaron Hutchcraft - "The catalyst of true change is from another world"
"The 'operation of God' change is not like any other change"