



by Richard A. Bennett

## Forward in Faith

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## Preface

**“Forward in Faith”** conducts the reader from Pharaohs’ land of bondage into the Promised Land of spiritual blessing. It will encourage a life of faith by contemplating the awesome Holiness of God; the ‘Finished Work’ of the Lamb of God and courage, as we follow the footsteps of Caleb and Joshua concluding with our position in the heavenlies, as we *“reign in life by One Christ Jesus.”*



A young minister, who had recently graduated from a very liberal seminary, scoffed at Dorothy when she explained her conviction as to why a holy God must judge sin. This was the reason for the destruction of the Canaanites and their associates.

Habakkuk was a prophet who lived, under the Chaldeans, at a time of great national crisis and distress such as we see today:

\* Violence in the nation: *“For spoiling and violence are before me”* Habakkuk 1:3.

\* Corrupt judiciary: *“The law is slacked, and justice doth never go forth”* Habakkuk 1:4.

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\*Land-grabbing by the environmentalists and ‘preservation agencies’: “*shall . . . possess the dwelling places that are not theirs*” Habakkuk 1:6.

\* Sexual promiscuity and evil practices: “*Why dost thou show me iniquity*” Habakkuk 1:3.

\* Civil unrest and internal strife: by lewd demonstrations and anger on the streets: “*For spoiling and violence are before me: and there are those who raise up strife and contention*” Habakkuk 1:3.

**Chaos:** You might ask, “What can I do in this present chaotic age?” What did Habakkuk do when he faced a similar corrupt environment?

Though Habakkuk accurately prophesied future events, he concluded his three brief chapters, not by looking to the future, but by looking at the past. In this way, his faith and confidence in the power and providence of Almighty God was quickened to believe that the God of yesterday is the God of today!

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In chapter three, the word “*Selah*” is mentioned three times. This means, ‘pause, and think about this’—a practice seldom pursued in our quick, slick Christian culture. We read Bible facts, but often miss their application! Each mention of the word “*Selah*,” is in the context of cosmological and anthropological miracles. First—the mountains. Second—the river and sea. Third—the sun, moon and the stars. Let us fortify our faith as we reflect on a Law-giving, a Life-giving and a Listening-God!

**The Law-giving God:** “*God came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran. Selah*” Habakkuk 3:3. Stop and think about that! Mount Paran was in the same range of mountains as Mount Sinai. This is where the presence of a holy God gave Moses the tablets of the Law. This Law cannot be broken but, those who defy it, will themselves be broken by it!

**The Life-giving God:** “*Was the Lord displeased against the rivers? was thine anger against the rivers? was thy*

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*wrath against the sea, that Thou didst ride upon Thine horses and Thy chariots of salvation? Selah. . .*” Habakkuk 3:8-9. Stop and think about that! The almighty power of God divided the Red Sea to deliver the children of Israel from the wicked armies of Pharaoh. This surely encourages us to take away our thoughts from the impossible and to project our faith in the God of the impossible. Again, our all-powerful God halted the water flow of the river Jordan and opened a way for the children of Israel to enter the Promised Land. This is the God we love and serve!

**The Listening God:** The children of Israel faced much resistance in the Promised Land. It was God’s command that the Canaanites and other licentious nations, be judged and destroyed.

Habakkuk remembered: *“The sun and the moon stood still in their habitation; at the light of Thine arrows they went, and at the shining of Thy glittering spear. Thou didst march through the land in indignation; Thou didst thresh*

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*the nations in anger. . . Selah*” Habakkuk 3:11-13. Stop and think about that for a while!

When did the orbital rhythm of the galactic system cease for 24 hours? It was the critical battle after five kings had made a treaty to unite and strengthen their defense against the advancing forces of Israel. At that time, one man Joshua, went to intercessory prayer before the God of the impossible: *“Then spoke Joshua to the Lord in the day when the Lord delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Aijalon. And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies . . . And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the Lord harkened unto the voice of a man; for the Lord fought for Israel”*” Joshua 10:12-14. This is putting our self out on the limb of faith and trusting God to do the impossible. What an encouragement for you and me as we increasingly face days of chaos and conflict.

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**Conflict:** Thankfully, true born-again believers will be ‘taken up’ before ‘The Great Day of God’s Wrath’. The destruction of the Canaanites is but a preview of what the future holds for this rebellious world. This period is called “*The Great Tribulation.*” Today, we witness an increasing ‘Pre-Tribulation’ tribulation. This is the outpouring of the wrath of unbelievers upon born-again believers: “*Then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time*” Matthew 24:21. This “*Great Tribulation*” judgement, will be a seven-year period when the ‘Wrath of God’ will be poured out on a Christ-rejecting world.

**Conquest:** Prior to going to the cross, the Lord Jesus said, “*Now is the judgement of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out*” John 12:31. So today, we can also reflect that: “*Through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil*” Hebrews 2:14. Yes, all satanic and demonic subterfuge was defanged as chaos moved to conflict, and conflict to conquest!

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Praise the Lord, the prayer of faith does not fight **for** the victory, but rejoices **in** the victory that has already been established. Faith in His ‘Finished Work’ enables us to joyfully triumph in our days of testing!

*“Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no food; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: **Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation**”*

Habakkuk 3:17-19.

**Great Joy!** The joy of the Lord is made possible for you and me because He came into this world in a sinless body, suffered and died on the Cross, rose triumphantly from the dead, ascended to heaven, and poured out His Spirit on earth. Through His Resurrection Life we can rejoice in His coming and in every circumstance. Surely, the secret of the victorious Christian life is Joy! Joy! Joy! So, let us REJOICE in Him!

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### Chapter Two



If I am able to convey in these words a portion of the wonder, love and praise that has flowed from my heart in contemplating this theme, then my prayer will be answered.

It was a life-transforming experience for Isaiah when, 2,600 years ago, he said: *"I saw the Lord."* Accompanying this vision of the Lord sitting upon a throne, there echoed through the temple the voices of seraphim. Each seraphim had six wings. Four of those wings were used for self-effacement and only two of them were used to fly. In today's church, the very opposite happens. People imagine that to be successful in the work

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of the Lord they must convey the right image; their own achievements, abilities and appearance. Not so with the seraphim!

Ringling through the courts of the Temple, were the voices of the seraphim who said one to another, “*Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory*” Isaiah 6:3. In effect they were saying, ‘Turn your eyes from us and behold the Lord in His glory and holiness’.

In this atmosphere of transparent holiness and glory, Isaiah became conscious of his own sin and need. “*Woe is me!*” he bewailed, “*because I am a man of unclean lips: and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts*” Isaiah 6:5. The drama of the moment when the ‘Lord of hosts’ made His appearance, toppled Isaiah from his pedestal of proclaiming the needs of others and he himself became a broken man—crying: “*Woe is me!*”

Revival commences when believers encounter the God of

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holiness and glory. No need for stained glass windows or a spotlight focusing on the preacher, or emotive music to draw the crowds; just an encounter with a Holy God of glory. To catch an understanding of holiness is the prerequisite to understanding the absolute need of cleansing by the spotless blood of the Lord Jesus.

*“Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus . . . 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”* Hebrews 10:19, 22.

### **For Isaiah, the process was three-fold:**

First: As Isaiah fell from his pedestal he said: *“I am undone,”* or, in other words, ‘I am finished’.

Second: Isaiah confessed previously unconscious sins of which he became aware in the presence of a Holy God: *“I am a man of unclean lips.”* The seared conscience becomes sensitized as we truly meet a Holy God. For

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Isaiah, his problem was unclean lips: *“But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison . . . Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be”* James 3:8,10.

I am master of my unspoken words but I am a slave to the words I have spoken—angry words; boastful words; critical words; deceitful words; envious words; flattering words; gossiping words—the list could go on and on!

Third: At the point of Isaiah’s need, the Lord responded: *“Then flew one of the seraphims . . . having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar”* Isaiah 6:6. Yes, the live coal was taken from the altar—the place of sacrifice where the blood was shed. The fire of Pentecost can never fall on lips where the fire of hell is already burning. Only an open and honest confession of ungodly words, thoughts and deeds can bring a cleansing of the lips and a renewed commission to the life!

Fourth: The Lord said, *“Whom shall I send, and who will*

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*go for us?”* Then answered Isaiah: *“Here am I; send me”*  
Isaiah 6:8. With brokenness and honest confession of sin and failure, Isaiah, who had been undone, was now made over anew. He was no longer dependent upon his own ability but totally dependent on the living God.

Notice, also, that the Lord said: *“and who will go for us?”*  
This commission was from the eternal Triune God who is One in Three and Three in One: *“Holy, Holy, Holy,”* Holy Father; Holy Child Jesus and Holy Spirit.

**Holy Father:** Just before the Lord Jesus approached the ignominy of the Cross, He, *“lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come . . .”* John 17:1. Then, in anticipation of His crucifixion, resurrection and ascension, He prayed for His disciples who would remain on earth after His departure: *“**Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, as We are”*** John 17:11.

**Holy Child Jesus:** When Peter and John proclaimed the gospel, they were subject to vicious threats and possible

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imprisonment. Correctly identifying the real goal of this antagonism, they said: “. . . *against Thy **Holy Child Jesus***”

Acts 4:27.

Around the world, hostility to the gospel is increasing by a Christ-rejecting civilization. This attack is primarily directed at true believers. Praise God, for many the light of the gospel is attracting people to the Lord Jesus Christ. But, at the same time it is also antagonizing those who resist all that is holy, pure, righteous and true.

As a result, many believers are being persecuted, victimized, isolated and even beheaded. Even in our classrooms, the pressure of political expediency is designed to silence the lips of Christian teachers and students. Whatever persecution we might personally meet, let us always remember that the attack is inspired by Satan against the indwelling Lord Jesus Christ and He alone is the Victor!

**Holy Spirit:** Last evening, Dorothy and I were reading of the Day of Pentecost when the disciples, “*were all filled*

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*with the Holy Spirit*” Acts 2:4. Because the spotless blood of the Lord Jesus had been shed at Calvary and accepted in heaven, the Holy Spirit bears witness to the cleansing power of the precious blood and, with a repentant heart, we can now cry: “*Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me*” Psalm 51:10. Is it your desire to continually seek the infilling and overflowing of the Holy Spirit in your life and ministry? If so, the provision has been made!

*“And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness”* 1 John 5:19. Remember that in this wicked world it takes God to be godly! “*God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that He is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands . . . For in Him we live, and move, and have our being*” Acts 17:24,28.

It takes the Lord Jesus Christ to be a Christian: “*Christ in you, the hope of glory*” Colossians 1:27. It takes the Holy Spirit to be holy (that is to be separated unto Him),

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*“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?”* 1 Corinthians 6:19.

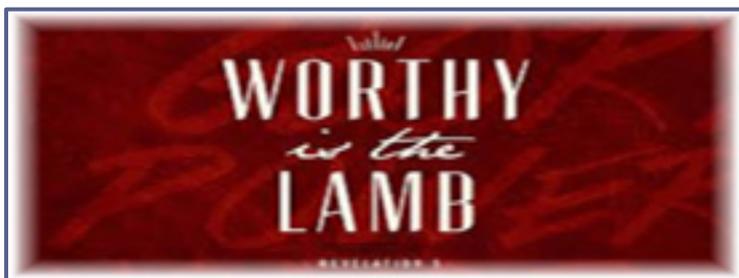
All too often we ask God for what He has already provided and lack the faith to say, ‘Thank you, LORD. You have already provided all that I need to be an authentic living witness’. Blessed and holy three, “*Holy, Holy, Holy,*” glorious Tri-unity!

Breathe on me, Breath of God,  
Fill me with life anew,  
That I may love what Thou dost love,  
And do what Thou wouldst do.

Breathe on me, Breath of God,  
Till I am wholly Thine,  
Until this earthly part of me  
Glows with Thy fire divine.

Breathe on me, Breath of God,  
So shall I never die,  
But live with Thee the perfect life  
Of Thine eternity.

-Edwin Hatch



Whether or not this is my last ministry communication before I am heralded into the presence of my God of Eternal Light and Holiness, I want to point to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. There is no better way for me to do this than to quote the words of the Apostle John: *“Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power.”* Also, *“Worthy is the Lamb that was slain”* Revelation 4:11, 5:12. I want that to be my testimonial when I leave this present scene of action.

Now, for my testimony: In stark contrast to the worthiness of the Lord, I identify with the words of Jacob: *“I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth,*

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*which Thou hast shewed unto thy servant”* Genesis 32:10. Yes, ‘Worthy is the Lamb’ and certainly ‘I am not worthy’! Accordingly, as the old Charles Wesley hymn says: “It is all my business here below to cry, *Behold the Lamb!* Happy, if with my latest breath I might but gasp His name; preach Him to all, and cry in death, *Behold, behold the Lamb!*”

It was John the Baptist who first publicly introduced the Lord Jesus Christ as, ‘the Lamb of God’: “*Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world*” John 1:29. The writer of the Gospel of John, amplified this astonishing truth when testifying of the Lord Jesus: “. . . *(and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth*” John 1:14. Yes! The Lamb of God, and the eternal glory of God, are compactly related as we are introduced to the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Revelation opens with: “*The revelation of Jesus Christ*” Revelation 1:1. Although this book of Revelation prophecies

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dark clouds of ominous judgement on this Christ-rejecting world, it concludes in eternal triumph. Hallelujah! However, at this time, let us focus on the Lord Jesus Christ as He is portrayed: *“The Lamb of God.”*

The prophet Isaiah gave a precise prediction concerning the Lord Jesus: *“He is brought as a Lamb to the slaughter”* Isaiah 53:7. In His *“revelation of Jesus Christ,”* the Apostle John records: *“In the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain”* Revelation 5:6. Could it be that a vivid reminder of the suffering Lamb of God will impel us to fall before the throne *“saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever”*? Revelation 5:13.

“When I fall before the throne, dressed in beauty not my own; when I see Thee as Thou art, love Thee with unsinning heart: Then, Lord, shall I fully know, not ‘til then, how much I owe.” Robert Murray M 'Cheyne.

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The shocking spectacle of the slaughtered Lamb compelled the twenty-four elders to: “. . . *fall down before Him that sat on the throne, and worship Him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power*” Revelation 4:10-11.

The late Dr. Alan Redpath said, “I can never really pray ‘Thy kingdom come’ until I first pray ‘my kingdom go’! As believers, whether in heaven or on earth, let us cast our crowns before the one and only Monarch—the Lord Jesus. Is He really in control of your life and mine?

*“Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us [a kingdom of priests] unto God and His Father”* Revelation 1:5-6. The priesthood commenced with Aaron and his sons when they were all anointed with oil. Oil is a type of the Holy Spirit. However, there is a significant difference between the anointing of Aaron and the anointing of his sons.

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Aaron (a type of our Great High Priest, the Lord Jesus) needed no blood to be applied **before** he was anointed. Likewise, the Lord Jesus Himself, needed no cleansing before He was anointed by the Holy Spirit: “. . . *a Lamb without blemish and without spot*” 1 Peter 1:19. A voice, “*out of the cloud*” spoke on the Mount of Transfiguration: “*This is My Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him*” Matthew 17:5.

Reading the prophecy of Isaiah at the synagogue of Nazareth, the Lord Jesus said, “*The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised*” Luke 4:18. It was by the power of the anointing of the Holy Spirit that the Lord Jesus ministered deliverance and forgiveness among the multitudes.

The sons of Aaron (a type of born-again believers) were not anointed until ‘after’ the sacrificial blood had been

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shed. You and I live after the Lord Jesus, the Lamb of God, shed His precious blood. For the believer the anointing of the Holy Spirit is not God's reward for faithfulness but His provision for my need!

It was after His crucifixion, resurrection and ascension into heaven that the Lord Jesus promised: *“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Spirit has come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth”* Acts 1:8.

It is only by the enabling power of the Holy Spirit that our silent lips will witness well and frequently of the Lord Jesus Christ to those who do not know Him. When did you last speak to an unconverted person about your Savior? Not about your understanding of prophecy, or about your pastor or about church, but about your Lord and Savior? Such a ministry is not appointed to a select few with a special gift but to all born-again believers.

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While there is much talk about the Holy Spirit among Christian teachers and laymen today, seldom is there any recognition of the power of the Blood. The Holy Spirit is quenched and lips remain silent until confession and forsaking of sin is made and His Blood applied. Praise the Lord! Yes, *“He hath made us [a kingdom of priests] unto God” Revelation 1:6.*

In a glorious crescendo of eternal blessing we read: *“I will show thee the Bride, the Lamb’s wife” Revelation 21:9.* Hosea had an unfaithful wife, Gomer. Hosea went to the slave market and bought her back out of her slavery to give her shelter and food.

That is exactly what the Lord Jesus did when he came down to the slave market of sin for you and for me: *“For as much as ye know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain [manner of life] received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot” 1 Peter 1:18-19.*

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When concluding “*The revelation of Jesus Christ,*” John wrote: “*I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True . . . and on His head were many crowns . . . and He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and His name is called The Word of God . . . And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, **KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS***” Revelation 19:11-13,16.

Thou art the everlasting Word,  
The Father’s only Son;  
God manifestly seen and heard,  
And Heav’n’s beloved One:  
Worthy, O Lamb of God, art Thou  
That every knee to Thee should bow.  
~Josiah Conder



Joshua was commissioned by the Lord to cross the River Jordan and conquer the land of Canaan. This was to be an act of God's judgment upon the Canaanites who were contaminated with multiple sexual diseases and worshipped idols: As an act of worship, they demonically sacrificed babies by placing them into the red-hot arms of their idol, Baal. Such evil must be judged by a righteous God.

Similarly, our sin demands the judgment of a righteous God. God's judgment for our sin was poured out upon His beloved Son, the Lord Jesus, when He died on the cross. Although we rejoice to think of His death for us as an act of His supreme love, it was also an act of His righteous

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judgement. His death was sufficient for everyone but only efficient for those who repent and personally receive Him and accordingly are born from above.

As God, the Lord Jesus could not die. As Man: “*He who knew no sin was made to be sin for us*” 2 Cor. 5:21. He voluntarily suffered the judgement of God for sin: “*No man taketh My life from Me, I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it again*” John 10:17.

Following His resurrection and ascension, Jesus Christ as perfect Man, became the ‘*forerunner*’ (Hebrews 6:10) for born-again believers to enter heaven. When a sinner repents and confesses their sin to the Lord Jesus, they are cleansed by His spotless life-giving blood and born-again by His Spirit.

Moses and the children of Israel were delivered from their captors as they crossed the Red Sea. They “*went out of Egypt and into the land of Canaan*” Genesis 45:25. The secret of a victorious Christian life is “Out and In!”

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Having been rescued from bondage and the revengeful purpose of Pharaoh in Egypt, God did not leave His children wandering in the sun-drenched and barren wilderness.

Also, Joshua, when standing at the brink of the River Jordan with the children of Israel, faced a humanly impossible situation. It was not God's intent that they should be left to languish in the wilderness. But, His purpose was to bring them into the land that overflowed with milk and honey!

Neither is it His intent to leave a child of God in the barrenness of self-effort. *"Giving thanks unto the Father . . . Who hath delivered us **from** [out of] the power of darkness, and hath translated us **into** the kingdom of His dear Son"* Colossians 1:12-13.

The Lord Jesus offers the believer abundant life: *"I am come that ye might have life, and that you might have it **more abundantly**"* John 10:10.

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Facing the impossible task of crossing the River Jordan and conquering the land, God told Joshua, “*to be of good courage*” promising: “*I will be with you.*”

**Be of good COURAGE:** God told Joshua three times: “*Be of good **courage***” Joshua 1:6,7,9. On one of the occasions, He promised: “*Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; **be not afraid**, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee withersoever thou goest*” verse 9.

Today, real courage is in short supply in our comfort-loving churches, both in the pulpit and in the pew. It is not easy to swim upstream and defy contemporary worldly trends. Spurgeon warned his students, “The pulpit can become a coward’s castle.” This is so when a pastor seeks to please ‘Deacon-Dominant’, ‘Sister-Sensitive’, ‘Mr. Primary Pleasure’, and ‘Brother Businessman’! After all, the pastor might reason, these people are the prime supporters of the church.

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Accordingly, the laymen in the congregation find it easy to huddle in a social atmosphere of like-minded believers. When did you last hear, or have you ever heard, a congregation heartily sing, “Stand up, stand up for Jesus, ye soldiers of the cross. Lift high His royal banner, it must not suffer loss?”

With such a resolved commitment, believers will go into a Christ-rejecting world with the overflow of God’s love and the ringing reality of the indwelling Christ. In this way, God’s enabling grace will grant us courage as we stand against sin and Satan.

At the same time, believers living in restrictive countries are tortured, imprisoned and beheaded because of their commitment to Christ. In a recent 12 month period, it has been reliably reported, that over 90,000 believers have been martyred for Christ.

It is interesting to note, that Joshua’s credentials to be a leader, were not attained in a seminar on ‘leadership skills,’ but in the rugged reality of confrontational

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conflict. So later, when in the Land of Promise, the children of Israel were in the midst of a critical battle, Joshua himself was qualified to exhort: *“Fear not, be not dismayed, be strong and of good **courage**”* Joshua 10:25. Surely that is what the Apostle Paul meant when he wrote: *“Be ye followers of me even as I also am of Christ”* 1 Corinthians 11:1.

All the soldiers of The British Expeditionary Force, were withdrawn before the overwhelming odds of the Nazi war machine. Thousands of despondent soldiers lingered on the sandy shores of Dunkirk hoping for an early evacuation. At this critical moment, Prime Minister Winston Churchill called for a National Day of Prayer. This resulted in every church in the United Kingdom being packed to overflowing—as never seen before nor since.

The Lord was good, literally thousands of unworthy sea vessels, pleasure crafts, fishing boats etc. were able to rescue the men and take them to the English shores over

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an unusually becalmed English Channel. Dorothy and I both remember Prime Minister Winston Churchill's stirring address to the nation: "Defeat is not fatal; victory is never final; **its courage that counts.**" Yes, take courage and *be of good cheer!*

In future chapters, let us reflect in more detail upon '**Forward in Faith**' and apply the provision of the Lord Jesus as we further understand His presence and power to be with us even in our own darkest days!



Have you ever felt alone even though among many people? The Lord Jesus Himself felt very much alone. When in the shadow of the cross He said: *“Behold, the hour cometh, yes, is now come, that you shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me”* John 16:32.

Alone, yet not alone. So it is with true disciples of the Lord who say, “Let the world despise and leave me, they have left my Savior, too. Foes may hate, and friends forsake me . . . But Thou dost smile upon me, show Thy face and all is bright.” Henry Lyte. Yes, there is a vast

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difference between knowing ‘about’ the Lord Jesus and knowing Him personally and intimately.

In His Sermon on the Mount, the Lord Jesus said, “*You are the salt of the earth!*” (Matthew 5:13) not, ‘you are the honey of the earth’. As a child, did your mother ever use salt to cleanse your scraped knee? If so, you will remember how salt produces a real sting! When a born-again Christian is in the company of non-believers, the temptation is to make every conversation polite and friendly. However, when we take up our cross and witness about the Lord Jesus, the atmosphere might change to a salty sting. The Bible calls this conviction of sin (John 16:8).

Often, when a mother is about to give birth to her child, she experiences much travail and great pain. Why is it then today, we want to live in an ‘ouch less’ spiritual delivery room without the necessary conviction of sin?

To fortify our faith and obedience to Him to be His witnesses, let us turn to the historic record when Joshua

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and his people crossed the River Jordan. Preceding his death, Joshua's mentor Moses, "*called unto Joshua, and said unto him in the sight of all Israel, Be strong and of a good courage: for thou must go with this people unto the land which the LORD hath sworn unto their fathers to give them; and thou shalt cause them to inherit it. And the LORD, He it is that doth go before thee; He will be with thee, He will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed. And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests the sons of Levi, which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and unto all the elders of Israel*" Deuteronomy 31:7-9.

**Three essentials:** As an encouragement to both writer and reader, we will reflect on the three essentials that were necessary for Joshua to lead his people through the River Jordan and inherit the Promised Land.

The Promise: ". . . *for the Lord thy God is with thee withersoever thou goest*" Joshua 1:9.

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The Procedure: *“Then Joshua spoke to the priests, saying, Take up the Ark of the Covenant, and pass over before the people”* Joshua 3:6.

The Purpose: *“And the priests that bare the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan”* Joshua 3:17.

### **The Promise**

The promise that was given to Joshua, was the same as the promise the Lord Jesus gave to His disciples when He commissioned them to take the gospel to the uttermost parts of the earth.

The Lord said, *“All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach [evangelize] all nations, baptizing them [enlist] in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: Teaching them [educate] to observe all things whatsoever I have*

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*commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age”* Matthew 28:18-20.

### **The Procedure**

This involved an act of faith as four Levites were to carry the Ark of the Covenant: “*When ye are come to the brink of the water of Jordan, ye shall stand still in Jordan . . . And it shall come to pass, as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests that bear the ark of the Lord, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of Jordan, that the waters of Jordan shall be cut off from the waters that come down from above; and they shall stand upon an heap”*

Joshua 3:8,13.

When at the Red Sea, God demonstrated His mighty power, He used the rod of Moses. When God demonstrated His power to validate the leadership of Joshua, He used the Ark of the Covenant.

We will observe how the Ark of the Covenant represented the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. “*And Bezaleel made*

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*the ark of shittim wood . . . and he overlaid it with pure gold . . . and he made the mercy seat of pure gold” Exodus 37:1,2,6. “And thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony . . . I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat...” Exodus 25:21-22.*

Every year, on the Day of Atonement, the high priest would enter the Holy of Holies to sprinkle the blood of a sacrificial lamb on the mercy seat. Without that covering for sin (because sin and holiness cannot co-exist) the high priest would die.

Around the hem of the priest’s robe there hung golden bells and pomegranates. These bells rang when he entered the Holy of Holies. But before presenting the sin offering, the priest disrobed his garments and the bells ceased to ring. Outside the Holy of Holies, people listened intently. Would the bells ever ring again?

However, after the blood had been sprinkled on the mercy seat and had been accepted by God as a sin offering, the

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priest put on his garment and the bells rang again. He was alive! The blood that had been offered was accepted by God as a sin offering. So for one year, the sins of Israel were covered by the sacrificial blood.

The Lord Jesus shed His own precious blood and died on the cross. He then rose from the dead and ascended to the Holy of Holies in heaven. There, He presented His own precious blood on the mercy seat. How do we know that a mercy seat was in heaven?

We are told that the tabernacle on earth was a shadow of the tabernacle in heaven. *“It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these”* Hebrews 9:23.

Again, recording his vision of future events, the Apostle John wrote: *“And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened”* Revelation 15:5. There can be no tabernacle or

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temple without a Holy of Holies. **There can be no Holy of Holies without a mercy seat. There can be no mercy seat without blood.**

To help us understand the supreme significance of the “*precious blood of Christ*” (1 Peter 1:19) we remember that, when the angel announced to the Virgin Mary that she was to become pregnant, he said, “*The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God*” Luke 1:35.

It was at that time that the eternal life of the Holy Spirit was transmuted to blood. “*For the life of the flesh is in the blood*” Leviticus 17:11. This blood would then flow through the veins of the Holy Baby Jesus. Yes, indeed, it is this precious blood that was a onetime sacrifice for sin!

The blood of the Lord Jesus had been accepted in the resplendent light of the God of glory, and the bells of heaven began to ring! Soon thereafter the bells of heaven

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would be repeated on earth. By a mighty effusion of the Holy Spirit, “*There came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind*” Acts 2:2.

People from far and wide were in Jerusalem and witnessed the perplexing phenomena resulting from the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. They cried, “*What meaneth this?*” Acts 2:12. Successful soul winning begins by those whose manner of life can only be explained in the power of the indwelling Christ.

Peter answered their question by delivering a model gospel message to hearts that were already prepared. This produced another question, “*What shall we do?*” Acts 2:37. Peter did not give cozy words of comfort but in effect said, ‘Turn’, ‘Trust’ and ‘Take’: “*Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit*” Acts 2:38. To this day, the Holy Spirit still continues His ministry on earth, “*to convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment*” John 16:8.

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The late Dr. Martin Lloyd Jones explained that the Lord Jesus was not only the ‘propitiation’ for our sins, to remove them forever, but He is also the Propitiator—the mercy seat! In this way the judgement seat of God has become a mercy seat for everyone who believes! “*Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission [removal] of sins*” Romans 3:24-25. Therefore, “*Let us come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need*” Hebrews 4:16.

Praise the Lord, He has made a way possible for sin to be removed forever—not just ‘covered’ for a year! Every person who repents and receives the Lord Jesus into their heart and life, and will humbly confess Him in a Christ-rejecting world, will forever be with Him. “*If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shall believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto*

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*righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture sayeth, whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed... For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved”*

Romans 10:9-13.

### **The Provision of God**

One significant content of the Ark of the Covenant was, “*The golden pot that had manna:*” Another was, “*Aaron’s rod that budded*” and the third was, “*The tables of the covenant*” [the law] Hebrews 9:4.

**Manna!** The Hebrew word ‘Manna’ means: ‘What is it?’ That is a good question which we will attempt to answer. In so doing we will consider, ‘The Incarnate Word’ and, ‘The Inspired Word’.

**The Incarnate Word:** We read, “*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God . . . and the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us . . .*” John 1:1,14. Yes, before the beginning of time, God

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already existed. He is the God of eternity! The staggering fact is that this God, who came from Eternity to Time, did so for you and me. He knew our perilous spiritual plight and knew that we *“were dead in trespasses and sins”*

Ephesians 2:1.

When we open the door of our heart to the incoming and indwelling Christ, a vital living fellowship with the eternal God will result: *“I will sup with him and he with Me.”* He still pleads, *“Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me”*

Revelation 3:20.

**The Inspired Word:** Because of the unbelief and disobedience of the Israelites, a journey that could have taken seventeen days lasted forty years.

In their weary wilderness wanderings, God’s people bemoaned, *“Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots,*

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*and when we did eat bread to the full . . . Then said the Lord unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you”* Exodus 16:2-4. The Manna was the ‘type’. The Lord Jesus is the ‘anti-type’.

After feeding 5,000 hungry people, the Lord Jesus said, *“Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven . . . I am the bread of life: he that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst”* John 6:32-35.

A believer’s most important daily duty and delight is to bring their soul into a happy relationship with God. The Apostle Paul testified that his supreme goal was: *“That I may know Him”* Philippians 3:10.

## The Law Giver is The Law Keeper!



As previously considered, “*Manna*” was in the Ark of the Covenant. Let us now note, “*Aaron’s rod that budded*” and “*The tables of the law*” Hebrews 9:4.

**Aaron’s rod that budded!** After the dissention of a rebellious, anarchistic crowd rose up against the leadership, God poured out His judgement, then confirmed that Aaron was Israel’s high priest: “*Take of every one of them a rod...according to their fathers twelve rods; write thou every man’s name upon his rod. And thou shalt write Aaron’s name upon the rod of Levi: for one rod shall be for the head of the house of their fathers. And thou shalt lay them up in the tabernacle of the*

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*congregation before the testimony, where I will meet with you. And it shall come to pass, that the man's rod, **whom I shall choose, shall blossom . . . behold, the rod of Aaron***



*of the house of Levi was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds” Numbers 17:2-8.*

Yes, three stages of development were in themselves a miracle—buds, blossoms and almonds—all on one rod! Accordingly, Aaron was shown to be high priest.

The risen, glorified Lord Jesus Christ conquered death, defied the grave, and ascended to heaven in His resurrection body. “*Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner ...*”

Acts 1:11. Yes, there is a Man in the glory land. He is our Great High Priest!

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The late C.S. Lewis said: “Today’s educational system is like a giant harvest machine mowing down stalks of grain. Everyone is reduced to one level. No brilliant student can emerge and no one can be thought to be a failure. This prepares the way for a ‘strong man’ to come on the scene and take control of an overripe democratic society.” We know that this ‘strong person’ will be the Antichrist. Our anarchistic age prepares for such an evil person!

While on earth, as perfect Man the Lord Jesus had faced and triumphed over every satanic attack. *Now, in heaven, He* intercedes for His own and is, “*touched with the feeling of our infirmities*” Hebrews 4:15. Yes, the Lord Jesus ever lives to make intercession for believers. Hallelujah!

**The tables of stone!** Mount Sinai quaked in the fiery presence of Almighty God. There, Moses received the Law on “*Two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God*” Exodus 31:18.

As God, the Lord Jesus was the Law Giver. On earth, as Perfect Man, the Lord Jesus was the Law Keeper!

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When God, as Perfect Man, was manifest in the flesh, He was the only one in human history to fulfill the Law. Then how does this affect me? *“The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ”* Galatians 3:24.

New life in Christ is now available to all who will receive Him. *“In this the love of God was manifested towards us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him”* 1 John 4:9. “. . .not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another” 2 John 5.

This will result in ‘the expulsive power of a new affection’. This will mean that we, *“love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. [Because] If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him”* 1 John 2:15.

A newly converted 12 year old girl, living in a mining district of South Wales, attended a small prayer meeting. At testimony time, she stood to her feet and, with a

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quivering voice said, “I love the Lord Jesus with all of my heart.” This resulted in a deep conviction of sin among the few people attending the prayer meeting. Brokenness, confession and heart-rending prayers continued to 2 am! This prayer meeting was one of the catalysts which ignited the mighty Welsh Revival in 1904.

A deciduous oak tree is near our home. In the spring new leaves appear, in the autumn they show signs of age and become brown. When winter comes, the leaves fall off the twigs and branches. However, one tenacious leaf will sometimes hang on the branch. It defies the winter winds, the snow and rain. Not until there is a surge of new life flowing through the branches will the dead leaf fall off.

Similarly, the wonder of new life in Christ will bring a new priority in our life: ‘To know Him and to make Him known’. Paul testified, “*I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord*”

Philippians 3:8.

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In writing to Timothy, his son in the faith, Paul instructed:  
*“And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also”* 2 Timothy 2:2. “Me” is the first generation; “Those who heard me” is the second generation; “Faithful men” is the third generation; “Teach others” is the fourth generation. That is God’s plan for the perpetuation of the gospel. What I keep, I lose; what I share, I keep as I press **‘Forward in Faith!’**



In an Asian palace there hangs a hall of glass. It is called 'The Hall of a Thousand Mirrors'. You enter—a thousand hands are stretched out to meet you, a thousand smiles greet your smile, a thousand eyes will weep if you weep, they are all your hands, your smiles and your tears. What a picture of a self-centered man—*self* all around, *self*-multiplied.

“Only the other day one of my students said to me in substance: ‘I wish you would pray for me. I realize there is altogether too much of self in me. When I sing or speak, I find I am thinking of myself and how everything affects me’. Immediately Galatians 2:20 came to mind

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emphasizing the words, '*Not I, but Christ*'. The next time you find you are thinking of yourself, substitute Christ for self and He will give you the victory. And I trust the student went on his way to ever say, '*Not I, but Christ*'."

Howard Ferrin.

The self-life will readily volunteer to serve God but when tested will soon discover it will raise its' ugly head! Dorothy and I remember ministering in Africa to a gathering of 500 Nationals and Missionaries. At the closing prayer time, there was much brokenness and tears. Some workers were disheartened at the lack of fruit in their demonically deceived and hostile environment. Others were so disheartened and depressed that they were ready to quit the ministry. But in the meetings, having been exposed to the searching eye of the God of light and glory, they made a new commitment to go 'Forward in Faith' claiming: "*Not I, but Christ*."

In my parent's retirement home, they had acquired a little 'budgie' bird and I taught it to say, "*Ye must be born-again*." Unconverted visitors clearly heard the message!

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Would you say the budgie was an evangelist? No! It had no idea what it was repeating.

So it is with many of us who can readily quote, “*I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me*” Galatians 2:20. For me to quote a verse is meaningless unless applied!

“*The faith of the Son of God!*” Note, it is by **the faith of the Lord Jesus** in His ‘Finished Work’ at the cross, that He is able to daily deliver us from our self-life. Am I willing to link my faith with His and go ‘Forward in Faith’? As the late A.B. Simpson wrote:

Once it was the blessing, now it is the Lord;  
Once it was the feeling, now it is His Word;  
Once His gift I wanted, now the Giver own;  
Once I sought for healing, now Himself alone.  
Once it was my working, His it hence shall be;  
Once I tried to use Him, now He uses me.  
Once the power I wanted, now the Mighty One;  
Once for self I labored, now for Him alone.

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A clear illustration of this ‘exchange’ of my life for His life is found in the description of when the children of Israel crossed the River Jordan. In order to make this possible, God heaped up the water of the River at a place called ‘Adam’. No geologist or archaeologist has ever been able to locate a place called Adam. Could this be a symbol of when Adam yielded to fleshly desires, ate forbidden fruit, disobeyed God and obeyed Satan? The disastrous result was that spiritual life died in Adam’s soul leaving a devastating heritage for us all as we have all been born: “*dead in trespasses and sins.*” Ephesians 2:1. It was after the Ark of the Covenant—which represented Christ—had passed through the Jordan that the heaped-up waters began to flow again: “*Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth passeth over before you into Jordan*” Joshua 3:11.

**Twelve stones covered!** “*Now, therefore, take you twelve men out of the tribes of Israel, out of every tribe a man . . . and take ye up every man of you a stone upon his shoulder . . . And Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst*

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*of Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests who bore the ark of the covenant stood; and they are **there unto this day***” Joshua 3:12; 4:5,9. Yes, covered, never again to be seen! Practically, this means that the ‘self-life’ will no longer want to be the bride at every wedding and the corpse at every funeral! Are you willing to put the name ‘self’ on your stone and say: “*I am crucified with Christ*”?

**Twelve stones recovered!** “*Take you hence out of the midst of Jordan, out of the place where the priests’ feet stood firm, twelve stones, and ye shall carry them over with you, and leave them in the lodging place, where ye shall lodge this night*” Joshua 4:3. Twelve stones under the water and twelve different stones recovered from the river. As the Apostle Paul testified, “*That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death*” Philippians 3:10.

The twenty-four stones represent twelve stones which were left buried in the water and twelve stones which were carried out: “*We are buried with Him by baptism into*

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*death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life” Romans 6:4.*

God brings self-seeking and self-pleasing to death so that it will be replaced by new life in Christ. He never educates the self-life to develop a good self-image and become socially acceptable, but instead replaces our heritage from Adam with our inheritance in Christ! Therefore, “*examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?*” 2 Corinthians 13:5.

When in the presence of the Holy God of Light and Glory, such painful self-examination will reveal ourselves as we really are. Then we will want to inscribe ‘self’ on our own stone, and similarly cast it into the ‘River’ to be: “*No longer I, but Christ who liveth in me*” Galatians 2:20. This will cause us to say: “*Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created*” Revelation 4:11.

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My funeral procession must proceed my victory march:

*“For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God”*

Colossians 3:3. *“Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord”* Romans 6:11.

**Out and In!** The purpose of God for the children of Israel was not only to deliver them from Egypt but also to bring them into the Land of Promise. “. . . *the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand . . . and He brought us out from thence, that He might bring us in, to give us the land which He swore unto our fathers”* Deuteronomy 6:21,23.

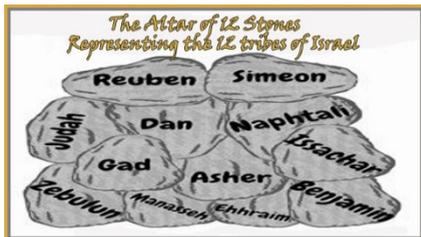
It is wonderful to know that the Lord Jesus shed His Blood to make me fit for heaven. It is also wonderful to know that, at the cross, I died with Him to make me fit for earth. Amen!



The Apostle Paul, in Romans chapter six, proclaimed the believer's identification with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection. However, in the following chapter he wrote: *"But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of coveting" . . . "For that which I do I understand not; for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I" "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord . . ."* Romans 7:8,15,24-25. It is important for us to note that, when the children of Israel had been miraculously brought through the River Jordan, and took twelve stones out of the midst: *"Joshua said unto them, Pass over before the ark of the Lord your God into*

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*the midst of the Jordan, and take ye up every man of you*



*a stone upon his shoulder, according unto the number of the tribes . . .” Joshua 4:5.*

*“And it came to pass, when the priests who bore the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, **were come up out of the midst of the Jordan**, and the soles of the priests’ feet were lifted up unto the dry land, that the waters of Jordan returned unto their place, and flowed over all its banks, as they did before . . . and those twelve stones, **which they took out of Jordan, did Joshua set up in Gilgal**” Joshua 4:18,20.*

These twelve resurrection **stones** were set up at Gilgal as **a testimony**: *“That this may be a sign among you, that when your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean ye by these stones? Then ye shall answer them, That the waters of Jordan were cut off before the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord; when it passed*

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*over Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off. And these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel forever” Joshua 4:6-7.*

**Gilgal** was a testimony (memorial) to the mighty deliverance of God and bringing His children into the Promised Land. However, even more importantly, Gilgal was a place where the ordinance of circumcision was to be restored.

In the wilderness, all the men over 40 years of age had died. They had been circumcised, but the generation that was born in the wilderness had never been circumcised. Therefore, it was important that these Jewish people should obey the commandment of God and be circumcised.



Today, circumcision is not merely an external observance, **but of a heart attitude toward God.** When writing to both Jew

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and Gentile, the Apostle Paul declared: “*But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and **circumcision is of the heart in the spirit and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God***” Romans 2:29. The transaction of faith, in which the self-life dies, will henceforth be a life Christ-centered instead of self-centered! However, this does not mean that the sin nature—the flesh—has died but, only through the Holy Spirit will this be maintained:

*“For if ye live according to the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye, **through the spirit**, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live”* Romans 8:13.

**First:** In the original Greek, the word “*you*” is the subject of the phrase ‘put to death’ and is written in the active voice. **Biblical fact:** If I am to be delivered from the deeds of my body, I need to actively and positively cooperate with God.

**Second:** It is only “*through the Spirit*”— God’s Divine Executioner—that the deeds of the body will be mortified [rendered inoperative]. This is God’s wonderful provision

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for us to experience victory over the flesh. **Biblical fact:** Though I must prayerfully and biblically be involved in the process, by myself I cannot bring my flesh to death no matter how hard I try. Only the Holy Spirit can radically sever me from the deeds of the flesh.

**Third:** This verse is written in the present tense. In practical terms, this means my constant return to Gilgal.

**Biblical fact:** Though it can be a transforming experience when the Christian first asks the Holy Spirit to deal with the actions of the self-life, this does not mean that our sinful nature has been eradicated. The initial response of faith is intended by God to be a continual, ongoing, ever-present experience.

To illustrate this truth, let us go in our imagination to a courtroom. There a man is being tried for murder. The evidence is being sifted, the man's guilt has been established and now the judge has the solemn responsibility of pronouncing the sentence. A hush falls over the courtroom as the judge rises to say, "This man

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has been found guilty of murder and therefore is condemned to die.”

With that somber statement, the task of the judge is complete. However, if the judge were to carry out his sentence of death by taking a pistol from under his bench and shoot the murderer himself he would become guilty of murder. He has to hand over the condemned man to the State Executioner. No, we cannot crucify our self. It is only the Holy Spirit, the Divine Executioner, who can render inoperative the “*deeds of the body.*”

Similarly, we can do nothing to improve our ‘flesh’ other than confess its guilt and hand over to the Divine Executioner, the Holy Spirit. In this way we pronounce the judgement of death upon the “*deeds of the body*” which has a preconditioned response to defend and promote self. **Prayer:** “Lord Jesus, by Your Holy Spirit, enfold me to the Cross and love my self-life to death. I want it to be no longer ‘I’: but Christ who lives in me.”

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**“Forward in Faith.”** To maintain the liberating joy of a life that is truly Christ-centered we will regularly need to return to our personal “*Gilgal*,” the place of “*heart*” circumcision. There is no experience in the Christian life which renders it unnecessary for me to live by faith in total dependence upon the Lord.



Amassed armies assembled at docklands to cross the English Channel and then to establish a beachhead in order to proceed and liberate nations from the iron claw of the evil Nazi regime.

The crossing of the Channel was a feat requiring incredible engineering skill and courage. **A temporary landing dock was engineered to enable tanks and artillery to be unloaded on a highly defended enemy coastline.**

A successful landing was vital to provide a beachhead for many subsequent and dangerous battles. **First a**

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**beachhead, then a battle.** The same principle holds true today.

As a little girl, Dorothy remembers that in the early hours of the morning she was wakened by the ‘thud’ ‘thud’ of soldier’s army boots as they passed the house where she was staying. Neighbors quietly lined the street waving their handkerchiefs wet from tears of loving farewell as they watched brave men face the unknown, knowing that many might not return to home and family.

In like manner, when God displayed His mighty power and piled up the waters of the River Jordan, it was to provide a beachhead for the Children of Israel to first conquer, to cleanse and then to occupy the Land of Promise! The crossing of the Jordan was not the goal but the means to establish a beachhead for future victories as was promised: *“The Lord thy God will put out those*

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*nations before thee by little and little*” Deuteronomy 7:22.

**By Little and little:** “Take for instance the way in which the British Commonwealth secured the addition of Canada. Canada was wrested from the French in one battle, the Battle of Quebec in 1759. Although the result of that one battle was crucial, it took many long years and many local skirmishes to occupy the whole land. That is what I mean by the distinction between possessing the whole and then proceeding to possess the parts.” Martin Lloyd Jones.

To prevail in the forthcoming battles the Children of Israel would face, God selected two proven leaders of fearless faith: Caleb and Joshua. Of Caleb, when in the wilderness we read: “*He hath wholly followed the Lord*” Deuteronomy 1:36. Of Joshua, who remained faithful to Moses his mentor, when the Children of Israel rebelled against him as they bemoaned their monotonous daily diet.

Men of character and fearless faith are not forged in the company of like-minded people but in the plateau of daily

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experience. The daily chores, of a Christian mother or the daily testing of a Christian business man in a secular world, are designed by God to produce people of character and fearless faith!

Accordingly, Caleb was selected to join a contingent of men who were dispatched as spies to evaluate the strength of the Canaanites they were about to conquer. The unbelieving majority of the spies reported of huge giants living in the land! **But Caleb reported of a land**



**abundantly overflowing with fruit. Unbelief sees a problem in every opportunity, faith sees an opportunity in every problem!**

**Reign in life:** As previously noted, the crossing of the River Jordan was a ‘type’ of our identity with Christ in His death and resurrection. Only through His established victory can we “*reign in life by One, Jesus Christ*” Romans

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5:17. But the ‘flesh’ often volunteers to replace ‘faith’ as Paul bluntly warned the church in Galatia: “*O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you? . . . Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?*” Galatians 3:1,3. Therefore, to reign in our Lord Jesus Christ it is necessary that we do not submit to Satan’s deceptive devices.

When David was in respite from King Saul, he asked Nabal for ‘rite of passage’ for his army to pass through his territory. David anticipated Nabal would grant permission because he had previously extended privileges to him. However, Nabal refused because he was “*churlish and evil in his doings.*” His rebuttal greatly angered David, who acting “*by the flesh*” prepared to destroy Nabal’s holdings.

Enter Abigail! “*Abigail . . . was a woman of good understanding, and of a beautiful countenance*” 1 Samuel 25:3. Good understanding and beauty all in one person! For single men looking for a wife remember the order; first

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wisdom, then beauty. Abigail counselled David, “*Yet a man is risen to pursue thee, and to seek thy soul: but the soul of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of life with the Lord thy God*” 1 Samuel 25:29. To which David humbly replied, “*Blessed be thy advice, and blessed be thou, which hast kept me this day from coming to shed blood, and from avenging myself with mine own hand*” 1 Samuel 25:33.

**Co-ascension with Christ:** The Holy Spirit alone reveals such glorious truths that: “*the eyes of your understanding be enlightened*” Ephesians 1:18. The amazing fact of my co-ascension with Christ is implicit in the Old Testament and explicit in the New Testament. In the Old Testament we read: “*The soul of thy lord has been bound up in the bundle of life with the Lord thy God.*” And in the New Testament we read: “*For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God*” Colossians 3:3.

**In heavenly places:** The Holy Spirit reveals that: “*The exceeding greatness of His power . . . which He wrought*

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*in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under His feet . . .”* Ephesians 1:19-22.

Yes, for the believer, “*all things are under His feet*” and therefore, in Him, all things are under mine. Seated in heavenly places. Yes! “*God . . . hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus*” Ephesians 2:4,6.

**Altitude:** Two years before the armies assembled to



liberate Europe, Britain stood alone in defense of the homeland. **The “Battle of Britain” was won in the air as Spitfire and Hurricane**

**fighter planes ‘scrambled’** to fast gain altitude as soon

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as the, then secret weapon of ‘radar’ detected enemy bombers approaching the Coastline. **Spitfires quickly gained altitude** above the Luftwaffe bombers **to combat their enemy**, and bring them to humiliating defeat before they could unload their bombs. **Altitude was vital for victory!**

“But some believers do not enter into the privilege of instant altitude and instant authority because of all the obvious spiritual implications of conflict. Many such believers would prefer to enter into dialogue with the enemy on ‘strategic arms limitations’. But that is fighting ‘upwards’, and when we fight that way, the enemy always has the advantage. When we fight victoriously, then we fight ‘downwards!’” R. Arthur Matthews.

We do not fight a fight that is lost, but, by faith we enter a victory which has already been secured! A born-again Christian is already co-ascended with Christ and therefore **‘up’!** To look horizontally is to pessimistically view the horrific chaos developing in the world. Because we are

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“*in Him,*” we can see from His heavenly perspective where the Lord Jesus has already “*put all things under His feet.*” As believers, we are not called to confront demonic hosts and battle with powers and principalities of the air in our own strength. Always remember, faith fights **from** the victory and **not for** the victory!

“Altitude is always a vital factor. Victory depends upon it! Understandably, therefore, Satan’s craft is dedicated to luring us away from this place of advantage and causing us to forget his vulnerability. The significance of being made powerful in the Lord, is directly connected to faith that maintains its position ‘far above all’ in every circumstance and ‘puts on’ our Jesus Christ as the only adequate armor of God” R. Arthur Matthews.

Victory in Christ demands a life of faith: “*This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith*” 1 John 5:4. Make-belief is no substitute for a life available to the anointing authority of the Holy Spirit! When a humble man is anointed by the Holy Spirit, genuine authority in

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testimony and message will result. There will be no more timidity in confessing our Lord Jesus! When a believer testifies under the Holy Spirit's anointing and authority, a joyful assurance will produce a conviction of sin, of righteousness and of judgement to come.

I once saw a bumper sticker on a car: 'Resist all Authority'! Such resistance of authority is evident in our



society as demonstrated on our streets, in our classrooms and in our

political system. As a Chinese proverb says: "He who knows not and knows not that he knows not: is a fool ~ shun him. He who knows not and knows that he knows not: is simple ~ teach him. He who knows and knows not what he knows: is asleep ~ wake him. He who knows and knows that he knows: is wise ~ follow him!"

Lucifer resisted the authority of the Most High when he rebelled against God: *"For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne about the*

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*stars of the congregation, in the sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High”* Isaiah 14:13-14.

However: “*We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one. And we know that the Son of God is come, and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life”* 1 John 5:19-20.

**Very much land to be possessed:** God said to Joshua even in his advanced years: “*There remaineth yet very much land to be possessed”* Joshua 13:1.

However, God also warns: “*But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for He that cometh to God [the eternal existing One] must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him”* Hebrews 11:6.

The Scripture urges us: “*But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea*

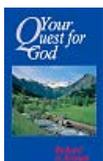
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*driven with the wind [of doctrine] and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord”*

James 1:6-7.

Only by a personal understanding that we are co-crucified, co-risen and co-ascended in our victorious Lord Jesus Christ, will we be enabled to enter into His triumphant faith. Then, the risen Christ will receive all the glory as He accomplishes His eternal purposes. *“This is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith”* 1 John 5:4.

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