



THE BIBLE WAY



"If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God . . ." - I Pet. 4:11 -

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THE CRUMBLING WALLS

John G. Shaver

Often in the course of the preaching and teaching of God's word, we neglect the books of the Old Testament. This is a mistake. The old Testament is replete with lessons that are as applicable today as they were in the period of time in which they occurred (Rom. 15:4; I Cor. 10:11). Such is the valuable lesson we may learn from the crumbling walls of Jericho. We understand, of course, that the walls of Jericho were felled by the power of God, but do we really understand that great power, and the profound lessons to be learned?

Picture, if you will, a well fortified city with thousands of men of war stationed around the walls, ready to repel any attack upon their city. These men are welltrained and armed, the city is well-provisioned in case of attack, and any attacking force would pay dearly for an attack upon this city. The walls are not just an arrangement of logs or stacked stones, but are foreboding, formidable, and sturdy enough that houses could be built upon them. (Josh. 2:15).

Picture now the attacking force in the formulation of their battle plans. Instructions must be given to the men of war, and the plans must be followed exactly if the victory was to be won, and the city theirs. How would you have approached this well fortified city? What would have been your plan of battle? Holy Writ divulges the formulation of God's battle plan (Josh. 6:3-5). This battle plan is unlike any other we have ever examined, for it is from God, it is divine. I must be followed down to the minutest detail, for the record says, "And the Lord said. . ." (Josh. 6:2). What more need be said? Here we have a plan originated by God, drawn by His majestic finger - no mistakes, no room for error, perfect in every detail. The city of Jericho is under siege; none can go in, none can come out. The battle plan is given to Joshua, he who must initiate God's plan, and motivate the army of God to accomplish that which was commanded.

There is one point in this plan that is completely out of the ordinary. "See, I have given into thine hand Jericho. . ." (Josh. 6:2). The city of Jericho has already been given into the hand of the children of Israel! In the thinking of some people today, there would have been no need to go further. Why carry out the plan of battle if the city was already theirs? In their minds the city of Jericho was an unconditional gift. Many of our own brethren seem to feel that the grace of God is unconditional, and that relieves us of any obligation to obey God. Of all the unholy, vile and evil doctrines that have infiltrated the churches of Christ, this one is one of the most insidious ever to come from the pits of hell! If this city was to be given unconditionally, why the plan of battle? Why did Joshua relate the plan to the people? Why did the people carry out the plan to the slightest detail? Because they knew that God meant what

He said, and said what He meant! Would it not be wonderful if some among our number today would come to this realization, and return from their adherence to the sin-filled denominational concepts and doctrines, and return to the pure and undefiled word of God?

Joshua has received the divine strategy. He has at his disposal the weapons of warfare that would be needed to take the city. This strategy is not one that he, a mere man, would have implemented. He would have employed catapults, battering rams, and other implements of war known in that day and time. But did you notice that Joshua did not question God's plan at any time. Why? Because he knew several things about the God he faithfully served. He knew that He was the merciful, compassionate, and loving God of heaven. He also knew that He was also the God that demanded and expected complete obedience from His subjects. Obedience such as demonstrated by Abraham (Gen. 22:1-19; Heb. 11:17-19), Noah (Gen. 6:9; Heb. 11:7), and Moses (Ex. 2:10-Deut. 34:8; Heb. 11:24-28). The all important factor that would place this city in their hands was complete, unwavering obedience to the will of God (Eccl. 12:13).

The divine plan is carried out (Josh. 6:6-19). Joshua has instructed that people and thee of their respective duties. None questioned the plan of God as some question His plan of salvation today. None refused to obey as some today refuse to obey. The great march started with seven priests bearing seven trumpets of ram's horns before the ark of the covenant. They marched around the city once a day for six days, seven times on the seventh day. In all of this we note that there was not one deviation from the divine strategy. During the seven days of marching we see two types of people involved. Inside the city, the heathenistic, idolatrous, and unbelieving, who would jeer, ridicule and deride those who were marching. Those outside the city, marching on, regardless of the jeering, ridiculing, deriding and taunting from the city walls. They were carrying out the plan of God.

Observe the results of following God's plan of battle (Josh. 6:20-27). The plan was carried out to the letter - no deviation, no disregard, no addition nor subtraction, not one instance of disobedience. The children of Israel had done their part, they had obeyed God explicitly. Then the great shout! The laughing, jeering, ridicule and taunting from within the walls suddenly turned to screams of terror as the walls fell. The city was theirs, and was utterly destroyed. Why? Because they had obeyed God (Eccl. 12:13; Heb. 6:18).

Let us examine some things we have learned from this important period of Israel's history. The walls fell, but not

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Editorial:

"WOE UNTO HIM THAT GIVETH HIS NEIGHBOR DRINK . . ."

Ken Butterworth

In a few weeks people in many cities and towns will be voting to either approve or deny the sale of alcohol. Just think; voting on the possibility of legalizing America's number one drug problem! I pray that good people will arise and defeat this ungodly proposition! I am saddened at the very thought of having such a decision to make via vote and I am even more sad to think that some of our "prominent" businessmen and leaders, yea, even members of the church, are pushing it — for shame! What some folks will not resort to when it comes to the almighty dollar (1 Tim. 6:10). Note a few facts:

1. Between 35-40% of drivers in fatal accidents had been drinking.
2. Between 45-60% of all fatal crashes with a young driver were alcohol-related.
3. Between 50-68% of drowning victims had been drinking.
4. A divorce rate of 40% where alcohol was involved.
5. About 26% of adult fires involve alcohol.
6. The economic lost and/or cost due to alcohol:

Lost production - over 19 billion dollars
 Health and medical - over 12 billion dollars.
 Motor vehicle accidents - over 5 billion dollars
 Violent crime - over 2 billion dollars
 Social responses - over 2 billion dollars
 Fire losses - almost 500 million dollars
 (Note - these figures are now higher)

Friends, the cost of having the sale of alcohol will outweigh the tax dollars many-fold. Do not fall for the old devil's trap in believing the approval of the sale will benefit us - it will not - in any way whatsoever. Just think - 70 people daily die because of alcohol. I can tell you one thing, the approval of the sale of it will bring even more immoral practices to our cities. The following are what accompanies alcohol and besides, the Bible tells us the same:

1. Drunkenness (Gen. 9:21, Gal. 5:19-21)
2. Incest and fornication (Gen. 19:30-38)
3. Stubborn, rebellious and gluttonous children (Deut. 21:20)
4. Death (2 Sam. 13:28)
5. Poverty (Proverbs 23:21)
6. Whoredom (Hosea 4:10, 11)
7. Slavery and/or prostitution (Joel 3:3)
8. Violence (Luke 12:45)
9. Greed (Isa. 56:12)
10. Lust (Proverbs 23:29-33)

You can mark it down, these things will follow (even more so than what we now have) the sale of alcohol. I realize that many will not listen to this, but note what Jehovah God says about our subject: Lev. 10:8-11, Gal. 5:19-21, Hab. 2:15, Prov. 20:1 and the list goes on and on. All sober thinking, decent people need to arise and fight against this damnable possibility. It will not only effect the city but our county, state and nation. Not only must we fight this thing but we will be wrong if we do not.

Another thought, I wonder if our so-called "prominent" businessmen who favor and are pushing the passing of such will be willing to share in the guilt to what all it will bring. Those who fight for the passage and/or vote for it are as guilty as the one who makes it, the one who sells it

and the one who drinks it and goes out and (among other things) murders innocent people. Answer please, "prominent" leaders!

Oh, the "fine" courts of our land may slap those involved on the wrist but (1) can you live with that? (2) God will bring it into judgment and "God will by no means clear the guilty". (Nahum 1:3)

Those who push and will vote for it, can you be thinking rationally? Can you be thinking with common sense? You say yes? A true example: a baby, its tender white skin bruised and bloody, its golden curls matted with dirt and blood, one tiny jaw crushed to a pulp, a wee hand hanging limp, just a ball of flesh with broken bones protruding against a pair of pink rompers soiled with great splotches of muddy blood - then - then - then - then - (I tremble to say it) a wobbly, drunken wretch blubbers, "What happened?" Friend, if you wrote for and/or push the passage of alcohol sales you are as guilty as that wretched drunk! If you can live with that then you are beyond help. When that drunk asked, "What happened," then the resounding answer comes "What happened was that I help put that wretch on the highway filled with alcohol." This you will do many times over if you vote for the sale of alcohol!

In closing, on September 11, 1984 on the front page of the Mountain Eagle, Jasper, AL, there was a caption "Progress Committee kicks off 'Wet drive.'" Among other things there were two statements made that I want to comment on (1) "It's time we faced up to the fact that, if we are going to positively affect the future of our city, we need to **take advantage of every financial resource available to us.**" What garbage! Sir, bring in 1000 prostitutes and line them up on the streets of Jasper, that surely will bring in money! Open a honky tonk and have strip shows in front of the City Hall, that surely will bring in money. Legalize the selling of any and all dope and have a big tent to sell it and tax it and place the tent in front of the City Hall, that surely will bring in money! (2) "Etowah County, Alabama received \$1.8 million in revenues in 1983 from alcohol sales." I am from that area, I lived there most of my life. Take a drive from Anniston (Calhoun County) through Gadsden (Etowah County) and notice the immoral, scummy honky tonk strip joints - what a sight and what a price to pay for alcohol. Yes, the same will happen anywhere!

There is no way any of us can benefit by alcohol. "Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink. . ." (Hab. 2:15)

P.O. Box 714
 Dresden, TN 38225

BAGS PACKED

Howard R. Horton

I heard an expression the other day that I had forgotten all about. "Bags packed". The expression came up while I was talking with an older brother-in-the-faith. He reported that he remembered when a preacher here in Oklahoma used to preach the Word of God right-down-the-line. When he finished a sermon that he knew had dealt with real problems and effected real people he, according to this older brother, would say: "And if the elders don't like it that is too bad; besides, I had my bags packed when I came here and I still do."

Now, I realize that this can come across as a little arrogant and "catty". However, what if the man, the preacher, meant it in a real and serious way. What if he felt like the elders would not like Gospel Preaching out of a Loving Heart? Would that change the way the preacher preached? It should not; nay, it must not!

One of the problems in the church today is not ignorance in the pulpit. We live in an age when we have the latest teaching facilities and best Bible teachers around. The problem is men are SCARED to preach that knowledge; scared because they have something, they have heaped themselves "things". They don't want to move, they don't want to go to the trouble of relocating themselves and their kids. They don't want to go to the trouble of taking drivers exams over and getting different tags for their cars. They don't want to have to go through the hassle of notifying magazine companies and billing agencies about a change of address. They don't want to have to drive a U-Haul and let the little wife follow behind. They don't want to have to be worried and anxious over "trying out" and all that entails. Hey! Neither do I!!! But, let's remember one thing: "That is a whole lot better than being nailed to a tree!" And, if I may be so bold, it is a sad day when a Gospel Preacher will allow sin and rebellion to go unchecked in a congregation by not preaching about it and against it! The GOOD that a gospel sermon, preaching out of a loving heart, will do is worth all the ups and downs that comes with moving. If, indeed, moving to another location is the result.

Sure, preachers don't preach like they used to. They, we, have MORE than we used to! ! And, we may not want to lose it.

Question: Didn't we know this before we started preaching? Of course we did. So, why all of a sudden are we acting like it is something new. Preachers, Gospel Preachers, have been fired for years . . . and it isn't going to change. Now, to be sure, every-once-in-a-while preachers find themselves blessed by an eldership where EVERY ELDER is God's man; every elder is visiting, seeing to the needs of the erring, can be SEEN BY THE BRETHREN doing his work. There are those type of congregations; surely, pray God, there must be.

However, if you are not working for such a congregation; then, continue to Pray about your work and your endeavors (I Thess 5:17). And continue to preach the Word (II Tim. 4: 1-4). Continue to speak boldly (Acts 4: 29-31). It may be that God, Our Father, will bless our work. And, if He does, the congregation may grow up into a wonderful example of a spiritually mature Body of Christ. If it doesn't. . . well, we, may be asked to leave.

The point is this: Preachers need to always have some

type of reserve. Now, this does not have to be money, it can also mean flexibility.

Preachers must have all their eggs in one basket, all the time. We never, really know when the "time to leave" is going to come about. However, when it does, we must and need to leave. If the situation calls for it. And, sad to say, when a man continues to preach the truth, consistently preaches the truth without compromise or "giving an inch", he is **usually** asked to leave.

I want to make this next part of this article very clear. I think it is an insult to a gospel preacher for the "sound brethren" in the congregation, who would not and did not speak up in the business meeting when the preacher was getting railroaded, for them to come up to him and **then** complain about how sorry they are that he and his family is leaving. Could it be that "going away" parties for the "ran off" preacher are nothing more than an elaborate way to soothe over cowardly consciences? Indeed, I believe they are.

Sometimes, we preachers are our own worst enemies. What we need to do is to make an immediate commitment, an immediate decision to **MOVE**. Go ahead and get that out of the way. Now, go and continue to preach and teach the unadulterated, inspired from Genesis to Revelation, Whole counsel of God. And, do so in a Christian manner and out of a loving heart.

Reprove and rebuke, if that is what needed; however, do it in a longsuffering manner (II Tim. 4:1-4).

If you, because of Sound, loving Gospel Preaching, are asked to leave, ran off because a few did not like Sound Doctrine and because the REST OF THE CONGREGATION was going to let them get away with it, leave.

Let's talk about leaving. A preacher of the word of God, God's man, should never, ever, leave a congregation reeling under a "vengeful" rebuke. Listen, fellow preachers, no one knows how to deal out revenge like the Almighty. Nobody. Let's leave that to him. Sure, sure! Gospel preachers have been unjustly fired; and, on the otherhand, some needed to be fired. However, this is dealing with those who have felt the "whip" of the liberal brethren. God knows, God Cares.

Let's all give 100% to our work as Preachers of the Gospel of Christ; let's all be committed 100% to our work. However, let's be wise and realistic as well. Let's understand that there is the possibility of jeopardizing our careers and day to day lives of our families because we will not compromise and will not let sin go unchecked. Since that is the case go ahead and make a decision. Once you have made the decision to move; put it in your back pocket and keep it there. Don't be **AFRAID OF MOVING!**

Once you have this "fear" whipped, you will find a "burden" lifted off of you. You will realize that it was not one family you were afraid of. It was not one elder you were afraid of. It was not the liberal faction in the congregation you were afraid of. It was **MOVING!** And, "moving" should be, must be, one of the smallest and insignificant enemies of the Gospel Preacher.

I leave you with these words: "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." (Psalm 37:25)

807 Mockingbird Ln Okmulgee, Okla. 74447

EDITORIAL:**THE LAST ISSUE OF THE BIBLE WAY?**

This appears to be the last issue of this paper. For about 3 years we have operated on a budget of \$550.00 a month (this is hardly bare minimum). This support has come from Christians mainly of the Blackwater and Liberty congregations in Alabama. We were informed this month that \$325.00 of this was discontinued as of October 1. As you can see, we cannot continue printing the paper. We have a circulation of some 6,000 per month. The only way we were able to print, mail, ship, pay for the set up, etc. was because my brother-in-law did the printing for us at nearly cost. His name is Buster Hughes and he lives in Oxford, Alabama. I want to thank each one for the interest shown in this paper. We tried to use the paper to the honor and glory to God. We desired to speak only the language of the Word. Hundreds of letters have poured in from across the country and even foreign countries. The paper has been used for Bible material personal work, preaching material, hospital material, etc. We have letters to state that persons were baptized because of a study of the paper. Brethren, I am trying to say that the paper did some good. Gary and I are proud of the paper and are not ashamed to say so. An account was set up in the name of the paper and every dollar can be accounted for. We have been blessed for having become acquainted with so many good brethren.

So, this appears to be the last issue unless some good brother, sister and/or congregation, who wants to see the paper continued, commits monthly support for this effort. If there be such brethren, please let me know within the next 2 weeks. The support that was dropped was a total surprise and we certainly did not expect it. The support dropped **was not** due to the soundness or content of The Bible Way! Perhaps there are some who wish to make a one time contribution to defer the expense of the last two issues. Please let us know.

The Bible Way
P.O. Box 714
Dresden, TN 38225

For the editors,
Ken Butterworth

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from natural causes. The Israelites made no attempt to take the city themselves. The marching, the ram's horns, or the shouts did not make the walls fall. They fell as a result of God's power. The children of Israel had confidence and faith in the God of heaven, and that led them to obey Him. Therefore, God rewarded them by being faithful and true to His promise to them (Heb. 11:6) Israel, led by Joshua, obeyed God, and won the victory. Spiritual Israel, the church, led by Jesus Christ, must obey God to win the victory (Mt. 7:21-23; Heb. 5:8-9; I Jno. 5:3-4).

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Editors Ken Butterworth & John Shaver