

The King's Highway

An Advocate of Scriptural Holiness

VOL. XXXVIII.

MONCTON, N. B., FEBRUARY 15th, 1944

No. 98

WHY DOESN'T GOD FIGHT?

He slipped into the chaplain's tent quietly, almost without waiting for an invitation. When the chaplain looked up this soldier was studying him with thought-clouded eyes.

"Sit down," invited the chaplain kindly.

"Sir, I have a question I must ask you. Perhaps you can't answer it. Perhaps no one can answer it."

"I can try." The chaplain's voice was quiet.

"You went with us through the battle of Salerno, sir. You know what it was. You've been with us ever since we came over, ever since we began to learn what war really is."

The chaplain nodded, with a smile of encouragement to try to relieve the look in the soldier's eyes.

A Soldier's Question

"Yesterday our unit took a position in a little farmyard. We set up our guns in the blackened stone shell of what had been a barn. Then the enemy counter attacked. It was a crazy thing for them to do. We met them with everything we had and mowed them down as they came on, but several got through. I fired at one, but didn't stop him." The voice ceased. The soldier's head was bent, his hands hiding his face in the dim shadows. At last the voice spoke again:

"I had to use my bayonet."

Then abruptly the soldier looked up, eyes and voice steady with a tense control. "Why does it go on, sir? I believe in God. I know He has the last word. If I doubted Him at home, I believe in Him now. Why doesn't He fight for us and with us? Why doesn't He help us to get it over quickly? It would not just be easier for us, but for them." And the soldier raised his eyes toward the north, sweeping Germany and Poland and Czechoslovakia and France and Russia and all of suffering Europe.

The chaplain paused. "Why doesn't God fight?" he repeated slowly, while his tired mind grappled once more with a question that is the longing and the bewildered anguished prayer of millions of hearts. When he spoke again the thoughts on which he drew were tried and familiar, but deep.

God is a Just Judge

Our God is just and fair. He has not promised to favor us more than we deserve. If all the right were on one side and all the wrong on the other; if we were perfect in the eyes of God; we might ask Him to fight with us against our enemies. But we know that there is wrong on our side also. We know the selfishness of our nation in her pre-war isolationism, letting China pour out her blood while we sold materials to Japan; seeing the little countries of Europe snuffed out one by one, until England stood almost alone; and we disputed about whether we should help or not. We know also the pride of America, who likes to talk as if she were God's own country,

God's blue sky and His majestic hills, but leaves her churches half empty and has forgotten how to pray to God. And we know the hatred that Americans are being taught to feel for our enemies, especially in the Orient. We call it patriotism; but is it right in the eyes of God; is it a pure and noble thing that an American boy learns to spit on the name of a "Jap;" that a password among our people is the saying, "The only good Jap is a dead Jap?" When right is all on our side and only our enemies are wrong, then we may ask, in the name of His justice, "Why doesn't God fight for us?"

Yet our God is merciful and loving. With full justice He might hold back His hand and let us fight as best we may. But will not His pity for the world move Him to speak one almighty word, "Enough! There will be no more bloodshed, no more suffering and killing for a time"?

A Return to God

Suffering—it is the power that leads us to our God. We did not truly know Him until He came into our world, until He lived quietly among us and became a man marked out for lonely suffering, for agony and death. Then we understood God's love and pity, through the suffering of Jesus. And He knows that pain turns us to Him as pleasure never could. He knows that when the soul is stripped of its earthly security, left naked to loneliness, despair, and the harsh mockery of death, it learns a new sense of God, and faith is born. Eight men are not ashamed to hold a prayer meeting when they drift helplessly between the illimitable Pacific sky and sea.

God's love and mercy is not denied; it is fulfilled when He lets pain and suffering break into our lives. Look up then, soul, for the face of your Heavenly Father bends over you. Look up and hear the promise He is speaking: "Believe, and rise again. Beyond suffering, beyond death, there is eternal life."

"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us," wrote Paul (Romans 8:18). He had known suffering enough. He had known also that there is a fellowship of pain bringing the believing heart wonderfully close to the passion and agony of his Saviour. And he had known that as the Saviour in triumph has gone on ahead, He will receive us, following, through the gates of endless life.

That endless life gives perspective and meaning to it all. Then the agonies of these years shrink down. In the light streaming from that new and perfect world we can understand why God permits the present world agony. Out of these flames a great host is rising, a host of human souls who through pain and suffering have found their God. "These are they that have come out of great tribulation." Hallelujah!

The soldier went quietly to his place. A long

time he was staring up into the depths of the Italian sky. A man had met God, and it was worth the cost.—The Presbyterian.

THE ETHICS OF HOLINESS

Dr. H. E. Jessop

That it should be necessary to stress the thought of ethics in connection with the experience of holiness may to some seem strange indeed, yet it will do the cause of holiness no lasting service to ignore the fact that among those who have talked loudly about a Spirit-filled life, there have been persons who have appeared to enjoy some measure of soul ecstasy yet have not seemed to realize that the ultimate test of any experience is not its emotional thrill but its ethical results. Nowhere, in the entire range of his epistolary writings, does Paul exult more in the joy of Redemption blessings than in the epistle to the Ephesians, yet nowhere is he more careful to stress the ethical implications.

We are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. (Chapter 1:3). We have been chosen in Him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love. (Chapter 1:4). In Him also we have obtained an inheritance. (Chapter 1:11). We have been quickened with Christ, raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places. (Chapter 2:1-6). For Christ's people the apostle prays for heart enlightenment concerning the greatness of divine power which is to usward according to the working of that mighty power which took possession of the crucified Lord Jesus when God raised Him from the dead. (Chapter 1:17-23) Again he prays for their inward strengthening according to the riches of the divine glory, that they may be divinely indwelt, rooted and grounded in love; made to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge that they might be filled with all the fulness of God. (Chapter 3:14-21).

Then, after reveling in all these rich spiritual truths, he begins to talk about such commonplace things as truthfulness, everyday honesty, clean and chaste conversation, a circumspect walk, the care of our time, the need of a mutual submission the one to the other.

Commonplace things, are they? Very commonplace! They are things among which these deep spiritual verities are to be lived out and interpreted, the dead level on which the hilltop revelations are to be expressed, the laboratory in which the bestowments of grace are to be tested. In other words, the sanctified life not only has a sky, the upward reach of which is endless; it also has a floor on which we must walk, and walk as children of light.

Concerning this commonplace floor walk it

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Mrs. Fred Brown, Dec 48