

THE FLORAL HEIGHTS INFORMER

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The Sounds of Warfare

Leon Willis

While Moses stood atop the mountain of Sinai to receive the law by the hand of God, the Israelites, anxious about his return, and fearing him dead, turned to the idols of Egypt and fashioned for themselves a golden calf in rebellion to the commandments only recently given by God. Proclaiming a day of feasting, they worshiped the idol and indulged in reveling and song, praising the image for their deliverance from bondage. As the sounds of merriment drifted to the cliffs of Sinai, Joshua awaited the return of Moses. "And when Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said unto Moses, There is a noise of war in the camp. And he said, It is not the noise of them that shout for mastery, neither is it the voice of them that cry for being overcome, but the noise of them that sing do I hear" (Gen. 32:17, 18).

Joshua heard, or rather thought he heard, the clash of weapons and cries of war as the children of Israel battled a mighty foe; but, according to the old saw- "appearances are deceiving." That which seems to be is often that which is not. Knowing that the people had corrupted themselves, Moses pronounced that there was no battle, there were no victors, but the "noise of war" was the shouts of laughter and mirth as "the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play."

In the New Testament, the Christian metaphorically is described as a soldier of Christ, suggesting also that the church is an army, marching to war. With armor supplied (Eph. 6:10-17), and leadership sure (2 Tim. 2:3, 4), the man of God is furnished completely to "assault and entrench, to outwit and overreach, to confound and catch, never faltering nor flinching," totally committed to his work, knowing he is no longer his own man. Let

Local News:

Welcome to all our visitors. We pray that you will be edified by our service and that you will ask questions if things are not as you are accustomed to seeing. Please come back at your every opportunity.

Pam Husak had surgery this past Thursday and is doing fine. Pam is currently in room 309 recovering (At the time of this bulletin being printed).

Keep **Nina Gray** in your prayers too. Nina continues to be confined to her bed so that the swelling in her knees can go down.

Continue to pray for **Wayne and Jim Duty (brothers of Tolene Witherspoon)** as they battle cancer.

Continue to pray for our shut-ins:

Stella Davidson
696-1030 (Home)

Calvin York
692-0489 (Home).

Bessie Murphy
4600 Taft Blvd, Apt. 538

Satan unleash his most fearful weapons, it will be to no avail against the man so prepared, the church so fortified.

However, we are all familiar with the braggart soldier, the hypocrite, who garrulously describes his "old war injuries," umpteen medals, and great expectations in future excursions, while his weak and cowardly performance in the fray reveals his true character. So it was with the Israelites who sounded as if they were fighting a great battle for the Lord when, in actuality, they were flying in the face of His righteousness with their gross immoralities and drunken merrymaking.

So it can be with the church of God. Although there are many stalwart congregations, some literally outposts in the territory of Satan, who have fought by word and deed to spread the gospel, to strengthen the saints both physically and spiritually, and to put to silence false doctrine; there are other churches who simply blow great brass trumpets. They seemingly agree that in this age of indifference and declining moral values, there is more than ever a need to sow the seed. With many flourishes they proclaim that if they only had the time and ability, "great things" could happen, and perhaps in a feeble effort to bring to the neighborhood, tracts are given an attractive display at the door, an occasional gospel meeting is held, and the few visitors that come are awarded a handshake and "how do you do." Yet many of the members are unfaithful, new converts are nearly nonexistent, and they continue to exclaim "if we only had the ability." Why?

These are only the sounds of warfare. In reality, the members are worldly and uncommitted to doing the will of God, the teaching does not meet the spiritual needs of the members, and there is so little personal work being done that, in all probability, even the family living behind the meeting house has never heard the pure gospel. Where is the love for the souls of men, the caring for the eternal destiny of friends, relatives, even strangers? Just as the Israelites, they have forgotten the God that delivered them from bondage.

Our very lives depend upon our victory as soldiers of the cross. Are we dancing about an Egyptian calf of worldliness and indifference, while sustaining only the sounds of warfare? Remember the fearful words of the Christ, "So because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth."

Truth Magazine, XVIII:10, p. 13
January 9, 1974

