SOUND THE TRUMPET IN PRAYER

**And if you go to war in your land against the enemy that opresseth you, then ye shall blow an alarm with the trumpets; and ye shall be remembered before the Lord your God, and ye shall be saved from your enemies (Numbers 10:9).**

Unfaithful Wounds

There are proverbs that teach us that the wounds of a friend are faithful, and that iron sharpens iron, but oftentimes it seems that we think our friend is the person who is telling us what we want to hear most. It can be hard to hear the truth, even the truth that will make us free. Scripture bears out that sometimes the kind words of “so called” friends are not so faithful. Especially those “so called” friends who encourage us or pat us on the back when we do things that are wrong. One of the best accounts of this is found in the book of Ester. Haman’s friends and family encouraged him in his pride, jealousy, and bitterness against Mordecai, and it ended in his destruction. Haman’s main reason for hating Mordecai was that he wouldn’t bow down to him. Haman desired to see himself elevated above his current position. His friends and family should have discouraged him from this mindset, if they cared about him. We have all had people at one time or another, if we are fortunate, who have told us to let something go or forgive somebody when we are angry. At the time we may even feel hatred or anger toward the person telling us to do what is right, but instead, we should be thanking God for them. Bitterness is a root that leads other sin, when not addressed.

Bitterness is analogous to a type of gallows that keeps us hung up in the past. Other things can happen that have nothing to do with the past incident, but we are so hung up that we transfer a present incident to parallel the past, or vice versa. Haman was in this position when he came home bitter and angry because his current status in the kingdom meant nothing to him as long as he saw Mordecai. **“Then said Zeresh his wife and all his friends unto him, Let a gallows be made of fifty cubits high, and tomorrow speak thou unto the king that Mordecai may be hanged thereon: then go thou in merrily with the king unto the banquet. And the thing pleased Haman; and he caused the gallows to be made**” (Esther 5:14). What should Haman’s wife and friends have said to him? They should have encouraged him to be thankful for his position, for he did have a high position in the kingdom. It is a good thing to be content and thankful for whatever position we find ourselves in. There is peace and freedom in this. The council of Haman’s wife and friends was not good. What sounds good is not always a good or faithful saying.

In the days of Solomon, there was a proverb written by the king himself that said, “**He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed”** (Proverbs 13:20) Unfortunately, even though these words were written under the inspiration of God, Solomon, in his humanity, did not fully apply them to his life. His sin of idolatry, which resulted from his lust for foreign women, was visited on his son Rehoboam The end result was the split of Israel and Judah, and the kingdom being rent from his hand---as was prophesied to Jeroboam the son of Nebat. There is a parallel between Haman’s self idolatry and the sin of the Solomon, Rehoboam, and even Jeroboam in the worship of self and other things, which led to loss and destruction. Haman was literally hung on the thing created by his own hands. Both Haman and Rehoboam followed bad council to their own hurt.

Rehoboam was made king in his father’s stead. He did not seek God for council as David his father had in his lifetime. When all of Israel came to him saying, **“Thy father made our yoke grievous: now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee”** (1 Kings 12:4). The Bible says the Rehoboam told the people to return for his answer in three days. At no time did he consult God for council or consider the things that had already happened in his father’s day. There is no mention of him looking back on the lives of his father and grandfather for an example of how to rule the kingdom. Perhaps he was angry with God for the things that had happened in his father’s day and, the judgment that resulted from the sin of his father? There is no record of this, but it is evident that he did not consult God. Instead he sought the council of men. Jeroboam had returned from Egypt, where he had fled from Solomon; who wanted to kill him because it had been prophesied the kingdom would be given to him---with the contingency that he walked in God’s ways.

God’s heart could have been moved by Rehoboam if he had sought Him. This is evident elsewhere in scripture from other accounts where the prayers of men changed the heart of God. But he did not, and Jeroboam was waiting to take his place. It is a mistake for anyone to think that they are “all that”. God has a special call for everybody, but He is also capable of finding a replacement to accomplish His will. This is not God’s choice, but His word will be fulfilled regardless of man’s bad choices.

So Rehoboam initially consulted the old men who stood before his father. They counseled him to speak kindly to the people and be a servant unto them, and the end result would be that they would be his servants forever (see I Kings 12:7). Obviously the thought of humbling himself before the people did not appeal to him. Since this council, although wise and good, was not what he wanted to hear; he went to his “so called” friends---the young men he had grown up with. They told him to make things even harsher for the people than his father had. Rehoboam liked what his friends had to say. It agreed with his prideful spirit. Therefore, when the people returned he spoke harshly to them, forsaking the council of his elders, which resulted in division and the kingdom being taken from him. It is important that we seek Godly companions. Even if we feel convicted by what they say and how they live. Their example, advice, and lifestyle are what we should follow, even if it means we feel we are walking alone. Sometimes it is necessary to cut ourselves off from people from our past. It is not easy, but necessary because the unfaithful wounds of a friend lead to death. BMR

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**THE ROSE MEMORIAL FUND**

Rose Golden believed that every inmate should receive a card or newsletter. Upon learning of her passing, an inmate requested a memorial in her honor. All funds go to mailing the monthly newsletter or sending a card to an inmate who has lost a loved one. Please make funds payable to International Christian Fellowship. For more information about the Rose Memorial Fund, The Illinois Prison System, Life Catalyst, Hospitality House; or if you would like to receive the newsletter by email please visit [**http://www.inspirationalwordsforinmatesandtheirfamilies.yolasite.com/**](http://www.inspirationalwordsforinmatesandtheirfamilies.yolasite.com/)

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WORDS FROM BEHIND THE WALL

NEEDS OF THE INDIVIDUAL

People are different, needing different kinds of help. As we come across those in need, we will find that some grow through patience, while others have a need for a drastic rescue. Someone, such as myself, has to take time to study. To do so doesn’t come easy, but it will come. Approaching people the wrong way as Christians can cause those who we are to teach to fall backwards. We should pray for the Spirit of discernment before helping a brother or sister out, and be very patient towards their needs. With caution and prayer, we can discern their spiritual needs acting by the Spirit, not by our own understanding. This will enable us to be gentle and not blunt (Jude 22-23).  **William Moctezuma**

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POEM

The voice of my lover is over the blue waters,

The voice of my lover devours the flames of fire,

The voice of my lover shakes the wilderness,

The voice of my lover makes the deer give birth,

strips the forest bare, and in her heart I am at peace,

I will see your face when I sleep, but I shall be satisfied when I awake in your arms, open my lips and my mouth

I shall deliver a kiss most wonderful to be praised by all the queens in gold; you are the perfection of beauty,

you age better with time, now the voice of my lover calls me, her heart will forever shine.

*The Voice*

**Jamie Alexander**

GETTING STUCK IN THE PAST

I will turn your mourning into joy

Jeremiah 31:13

I have been deeply depressed following the deaths in my family, first my beloved Grandfather, Claude Holmes SR. Then my beautiful grandmother, Mary Pitman Holmes, and then my baby girl, Precious Lazina Coleman, and then my best friend, Nancy “Nana” Cole---since I’ve been on death row these seven years---it took a lot to stay sane, and focus life’s pathway. If it wasn’t for my dear friend Antoinette’s patience and gentle ways, I would have been turned from God, and lost myself. Antoinette asked me one day, “Brandy, if the situation was reversed, and you had died before some of your family, what would they want you to do”? I recall replying, “To go on and enjoy my life.” The moment I verbalized it; the lights came on, and I exclaimed, “I have been feeling sorry for myself too long.” And I hate it when people do that. So I reconnected, and found fresh purpose, and picked back up my life, and stepped back out on my faith. I rebuilt my life, the pain is still there, but I started to transcend it by taking action. The subconscious mind could be freed from painful memories by psychoanalysis, but one’s premise is faulty because memories, good and bad, remain a part of you. Plus people with those theories lead you to believe that problems can be talked to death without you ever having to do anything about them, and that’s not the case for everyone. God said: “I will turn their mourning into joy, and exchange sorrow for rejoicing”. Don’t stay so long in the past that the future’s gone before you get there! Ask God to reframe your past, and give it new meaning. He can help you to look back with gratitude and forward with confidence by transforming the most painful memories into powerful motivators, and sources of future wisdom. All you have to do is ask Him! That’s what I did! **Brandy Holmes**

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**FROM THE DESK OF THE EDITOR**

I want to wish those who have September/October birthdays---Happy Birthday! Please remember Oscar Falcon who has paroled after a 15 year sentence. Pray that he can make a good transition back into society, and that he will always encourage himself in the Lord as we all must do. Also pray for healing for his health issues. Thank you for caring about our fellow brother. **Beth Marie Evans**

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**Inmates, please submit your inspirational thoughts for Words from Behind the Wall to Beth Marie Evans, C/O International Christian Fellowship, 9146 Lincoln Avenue, Brookfield IL 60513. Office Phone: 708-387-9009.**