

where shall we go today. perhaps to a subject most of would rather not want to entertain. it is trials and tribulations. i may perhaps use wordly quotes from time to time, but truth is inspired even if it is not scripture quoting them. truth is truth, and only truth can set us free. amen!

there's only one way to build up muscles. that is to use them. i didn't realize the truth of that lies in scripture. "for whoever has, to him more shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him." matt 13:12 in other words "use it or lose it". i never saw the correlation between the two until now. the same way someone builds up their muscles, they also build up their faith. "those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." heb 5:14

yes, there is a discerning between good and evil. none of us can know what lies behind a person's façade they present to the world, without discernment. their intentions may be good or evil. our discernment is built up just as our muscles are. so likewise is our faith.

"beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you." i pet 4:12 God allows these times to pass through our lives to build our faith. it was winston churchill that said, "if you're going through hell, keep going". know that this too shall pass. "weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning." psa 30:5

God allowed job to be tested, almost beyond measure. after the horrible things he suffered, he then endured chastisement by his "friends". he endured by confessing, "though He slay me, yet will i trust Him." job 13:15 there was a test of faith by elijah as he stood against the prophets of baal in 1 kings. he severely drenched the wood before it was lit to burn the offering. he did not just risk ridicule if his arrogance failed. he was risking death if God did not come through. his arrogance was not in self, but in God.

none of us yet fully comprehend the richness and power of our faith. in heb 11:35 we are told: "women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection". faith to believe and faith to receive. the power was there to receive and yet there were those who would not receive their deliverance. perhaps it was like the apostle paul pontificated. "for i am hard-pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better." phil 1:23

fellow believers, there may be things you are going through; perhaps a loved one, you are going through it with. and yes, the outcome may not be as we wanted. will you still stand and confess as job did? will you believe that He will turn around everything for our good and His glory. (can He get anything out of this (my) worthless life and suffering? i believe He has and He will yet.)

can you lay it all on the altar and sacrifice it to God? you have to be willing not just to lay it on the altar, but also to light the fire. it may be accepted or refused as abraham's sacrifice of isaac was refused. is there anything standing between you and God; anything you are not willing to give up? God requires we desire nothing more than Him. "whom have i in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that i desire beside Thee." psa 73:25

our God is raising us up, even as a parent raises a child. there is a time for milk and there is a time for solid food. He does not want babes but a bride. the one who refuses to partake of the solid food, will not grow to become His bride.

He is coming for a bride who has warred beside Him. we fight not with worldly weapons but spiritual ones. even now there are many who are preparing themselves for this great battle. they have feasted on the word of God and now they fight alongside those who once fed them. are you ready for the battle? edmund burke said, "all that is required for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing."

this last generation shall be fully equipped and armored. "Your people shall be volunteers in the day of Your power." psa 110:3 His church shall be clothed in holiness and righteousness and power. a bride that has been through the fire and still stands full of faith. "that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire." 1 pet 1:7

this is a glorious time we are living in. perhaps second only to His first coming. you know, in 1963 there was an epic movie about the true story of a mass escape of allied prisoners in world war two. it was called "the great escape". it starred steve mcqueen, among others. he was often referred to as "the king of cool". he became the "coolest" one can be at the end of his life when he finally received Jesus. it is said he died with billy graham's bible on his chest.

he had a platform he could have used all his life to reach a multitude of others if he had not let his time escape. each one of us has a platform also. maybe not a multitude, but everyone has a ring of friends and family they have access to. i like to call it a "realm". the point is to use what God has set before you. He asks nothing more, nothing less. i pray we all may be ready for "the great escape" that lies on the horizon before us.

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