

Perry's Scope 9 Give Sin No Quarter

For years I have heard Christians are to draw a parallel to heaven with the Hebrews' entrance into Canaan. Songs like "*On Jordan's Stormy Banks I Stand*" reinforce this idea. The first stanza of the song reads:

**On Jordan's stormy banks I stand,
and cast a wishful eye
to Canaan's fair and happy land,
where my possessions lie.**

One of my college teachers used to draw a timeline on the board to help us understand lessons in the Old Testament. He described the Hebrews leaving Egypt as a shadow of Christians leaving sin by the sacrifice of the Passover lambs and the application of their blood. He pointed out their passage through the Red Sea as a type of New Testament baptism, as Paul points out in **1 Corinthians 10:2**. My teacher talked about the "wilderness wanderings" as our time on earth and their entrance into the Promised Land as heaven.

Let me point out that the Hebrews may have felt like they wandered in the desert for forty years, but God led them in that place until the sinful generation died off. They had witnessed His presence and received His law at Sinai yet refused to enter Canaan for fear of the giants. The next generation returned to the border of the Promised Land, lacking the memory of God's dramatic deliverance of Israel from Egypt as this generation was born in the desert or had been young children there. Moses presented his "farewell address" to them in the form of the book of **Deuteronomy**, where he reviewed the history of Israel and God's law. Then he climbed Mt. Nebo to witness the Hebrews' entrance into Canaan, after which he died, and God buried his body.

Living in the Promised Land was not a life of ease for the Hebrews as the "Sabbath rest" we expect heaven to be. Joshua led the Hebrews into the Land to subdue it and remove the wicked inhabitants. Living in Canaan sounds like the life we live now, where our "*Joshua*" or *Jesus* leads us to conquer the sinfulness of our lives and time. While there is a loose comparison to heaven, it is more accurate to see this as life following the Son of God.

As the Hebrews conquered the land of Canaan, the tribe of Joseph complained to Joshua about their allotment. Let's focus on driving out the Canaanites in Joshua's declaration, **Joshua 17:18** (NKJV):

⁸ but the mountain country shall be yours. Although it is wooded, you shall cut it down, and its farthest extent shall be yours; for you shall drive out the Canaanites, though they have iron chariots and are strong."

While Joshua is describing sinful people and their powerful weapons, we can make an application. God charges us with driving out the sins of our lives. In a way, Canaan represents our walk with God. The Hebrews represent those who follow God and the Canaanites embody those who do not. As God's people, we applied the lamb's blood to our lives through obedient faith. We gain the forgiveness of sin as entrance into the Land, but there is yet much to conquer. Our sinful nature does not magically disappear; we must fight and subdue it. We must drive sin out of our lives like the Israelis drove out the Canaanites, the epitome of evil. Regardless of their superior iron chariots, they had to go.

The Hebrew nation conquered much of the Land but not all. God had intended for the borders of His Land to be much larger, including wherever the Hebrews walked (see **Joshua 14:9**). Over time, the people wearied of the fighting and became satisfied with what they had accomplished so that they stopped fighting their enemies.

We tend to hang on to our sins, especially our "pet sins" or the tenacious ones. We become satisfied with our progress, tire of the battle, and stop. Some sins we readily remove, and we don't miss them that much,

and they are relatively easy to conquer. However, some sins are not so easy to dismiss, and we make excuses for ourselves like, “It’s just how I am,” or “I’m human!” So, we let them ride in our lives like a parasite sucking the life out of us.

God wants us to fight this internal spiritual war as well as the external. There are spiritual enemies all around us as we have become increasingly aware. The most brutal battle is within. It is easy for me to remove the speck from your eye and neglect the log in my eye. The lust of our eyes, flesh, and pride adversely affect us. We must fight to remain pure in a world filled with temptations to impurity.

Temptations never announce their arrival ahead of time, but as the thief, they strike when we least expect them and our guard is down. How we react to our temptations is critical. **James 1:2-5** (NKJV) reads:

²My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, ³knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience [or *endurance/perseverance*]. ⁴But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect [*mature*] and complete, lacking nothing. ⁵If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

God tests us, but not to do evil. His trials have a marvelous effect on us, for we learn to gain the strength we need to resist evil and subdue our sins. Without challenges, we would be like the weight-lifter who watches videos and does not train for his sport. He understands the weight-lifting process but never strengthens his body by making the necessary effort. He is as weak after watching his videos as before. He knows how to lift but cannot compete. Lifting the weights will strengthen his muscles, and there is no substitute for action.

When we fail to engage and defeat our sins, we empower them to control and conquer us. They become “chariots of iron” that are well-protected and difficult to fight. We tend to give up and live with our sins as the Hebrews who stopped their war against the wicked and idolatrous Canaanites.

Anger may be a hard-to-defeat sin that controls us when unexpected incidents occur. We may lash out, excusing ourselves in the process, unable to control its influence. Maybe we have hidden sexual lust or some perversion that is prevalent today. God says we can conquer whatever sin confronts us. Paul spoke to the most immature church in Corinth and observed some of their achievements when he stated in **1 Corinthians 6:9-11** (NKJV, emphasis added):

⁹Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor—homosexuals, nor sodomites, ¹⁰nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

While the Corinthians were far from mature in Christ, they had conquered their significant sins, even homosexuality! They did not turn a blind eye to sin but challenged it. The American church is not that different than Corinth, filled with immature believers who prefer to coast in their Christian walk than make an effort to grow in the Lord’s grace and knowledge. Yet, the inadequate church in Corinth provides a sampling of what we can do in our lives.

We fight to subdue the parts of us that want to continue controlling us so that God can direct our steps and we can become more like Him. The Hebrews should have confronted all of the idolaters in the Land. The undefeated Canaanites gave Israel trouble over the years, as in the case of Haman in the book of **Esther**. Haman hated the Jews and almost destroyed them in their captivity. If King Saul had done as God commanded him and destroyed all Amalekites, there would have been no bloodline for Haman to be born, yet Saul did not “utterly destroy them.” Our uncontrolled sins do the same to us.

John Adams dreamed of a nation that allowed God to rule it through His word. You may remember his famous quote:

Suppose a nation in some distant region should take the Bible for their only law book, and every member should regulate his conduct by the precepts there exhibited. . . . What a Eutopia – what a Paradise would this region be!

What would it be like to live in a country that takes the word of God to heart and its citizens lived it out? Removing sin in our lives is a little-by-little and person-by-person process. The presence or absence of evil in the individual impacts the whole nation. If the country is “good,” the people have decided to live without sin dominating their lives. As a people, we have been tolerant of sin in our society for generations. Now we can see the fruit of our ancestors’ neglect and our ignorance. We see these major sins and more:

- Regarding innocent children – pedophilia, child trafficking, and abuse – a recent homosexual couple who had adopted two little boys was arrested for sexually abusing them and even offering them up to other adult homosexuals. They did not think about how this abuse would impact the children; they only thought of satisfying their perverse desires. They will receive justice for what they have done.
- The homosexual perversions of drag queens and the transgendered have come to the forefront in recent months. Who would have thought we would have homosexual drag queens reading stories of perversion to our children or that people would go through the mutilation of changing their genders as a rebellion against God’s handiwork?
- Homosexuality is not the only or worst sin. Heterosexual sin is prominent and accepted, but now bestiality is finding acceptance within our society.
- The people’s unrepented sins worsen, finding acceptance and the presumption of normalcy as the book, *The Naked Communist* predicted decades ago.
- Political corruption is on every level in America, as well as a two-tiered justice system that rapidly punishes some (like the J-6 Capitol trespassers) and ignores others like the crimes of Obama, the Clintons, and now Joe Biden’s felonious activities with classified documents.

We can drive sin from our lives no matter how hard it may appear as we make an effort to rely on God’s resources to accomplish this feat. In **Matthew 17**, the disciples were unable to exorcise a demon, and Jesus stepped in, cast out the evil spirit, and in **verses 20-21** (NKJV), told His twelve:

²⁰ So Jesus said to them, “Because of your-unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you. ²¹ However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.”

When was the last time we fasted and prayed about anything? Our forefathers often fasted and prayed to connect with Divine Providence. Connecticut Governor **Jonathan Trumbull** stated:

The examples of holy men teach us that we should seek Him with fasting and prayer, with penitent confession of our sins, and hope in His mercy through Jesus Christ the Great Redeemer.

George Washington wrote in his diary on June 1, 1774: “Went to church, fasted all day.”

On April 15, 1775, four days before the **Battles of Lexington and Concord**, the Massachusetts Provincial Congress, led by **John Hancock**, proclaimed:

“In circumstances dark as these, it becomes us, as men and Christians, to reflect that, whilst every prudent measure should be taken to ward off the impending judgments, the 11th of May next be set apart as a Day of Public Humiliation, Fasting, and Prayer to confess their sins to implore the Forgiveness of all our Transgression.”

Our ancestors knew that defending our unalienable right to liberty was greater than military skill and strength. They needed to connect to the presence and providence of the almighty God, and the Lord promised the same for the conquest of Canaan. Notice these verses (emphasis added):

- **Exodus 23:30 (NKJV)**
³⁰ **Little by little I will drive them out from before you, until you have increased, and you inherit the land.**
- **Deuteronomy 7:22 (NKJV)**
²² **And the LORD your God will drive out those nations before you little by little; you will be unable to destroy them at once, lest the beasts of the field become *too* numerous for you.**
- **Joshua 3:10 (NKJV)**
¹⁰ **And Joshua said, “By this you shall know that the living God *is* among you, and *that* He will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Hivites and the Perizzites and the Gergashites and the Amorites and the Jebusites:**

God does the “heavy lifting” for us. He drove out the Canaanites through His power and the cooperation of Israel. He does not do everything for us but does all things with us. According to **Exodus 33:2**, God even used His angels in the process.

We need God to help us drive out our sins, especially the deeply rooted ones. God can drive these sins out, but we must cooperate. He makes us alive in Christ through supernatural intervention, in which He removes sin and raises us to new heights. Listen to **Ephesians 2:1-10 (NKJV)**:

And you *He made alive*, who were dead in trespasses and sins, ²in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, ³among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. ⁴But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), ⁶and raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus, ⁷that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in *His* kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, ⁹not of works, lest anyone should boast. ¹⁰For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

The Hebrews had ample proof that God was with them and would fight for them as He led them out of Egypt at the first Passover and to the Red Sea. He parted the waters for them but drowned the pursuing Egyptian army. God brought them to the supernatural spectacle of Mt. Sinai to equip them with the Law of Moses and then brought them to the border of the Promised Land, giving them food and water along the way. Joshua and Caleb trusted God to deliver the Land to them, but the ten spies turned the people away, and they returned to the wilderness for about forty years. Finally, under the leadership of Moses' replacement, Joshua, Israel entered the Land to conquer and drive out the wicked.

When the new spies made contact with Rahab, she told them about their reputation in **Joshua 2:9-11 (NKJV)**:

⁹ . . . **“I know that the LORD has given you the land, that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land are fainthearted because of you. ¹⁰For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who *were* on the other side of the Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. ¹¹And as soon as we heard *these things*, our hearts melted; neither did there remain any more courage in anyone because of you, for the LORD your God, He *is* God in heaven above and on earth beneath.**

The Hebrews had been afraid of the people of Canaan, especially the giants, but the spies discovered that the people were afraid of them, or more accurately, of their God. A contemporary Christian song sums up the topic for all of us: "*The things I fear are afraid of you*" (speaking to God).

The demons behind the sins of our personal and national lives fear God and tremble before Him. He can lead us to victory over whatever holds us back from an abundant life in Christ when He directs us, not the sins we protect.

Years ago, my friend, **Eddie Levick**, illustrated a sermon on the seriousness of sin with a story about a man and a tiger. The man raised the tiger from a cub and treated it as a pet. The tiger cub grew into a full-sized tiger, and his friends warned him not to keep the animal, as it was wild by nature and eventually would not restrain itself. The man ignored his friends and kept the tiger. Everything went along well until the day the man cut his hand. The tiger lapped the blood on the floor and then from the man's hand. Once the tiger tasted the blood, he could not restrain himself and attacked the man, killing and eating him. This story illustrates disregarding sin in our lives. We may ignore our pet sins or our formidable ones.

Maybe the Hebrews felt pity for the Canaanites and allowed them to live and remain in the Land. Perhaps the Israelis grew weary of the conquest and became satisfied with where they were instead of where God wanted them to be. Either way, Israel stopped their assault on the wicked.

We can give no quarter to our sins. We must nail ALL of our sins to the cross of Christ, even the ones we think are cute and silly. Unchecked, those sins will grow and devour us. The LORD will aid us in conquering the sins we perceive as too powerful for us to stop.

God wants us to become the people who reflect the person of Jesus in our lives. We must be active and prepared for this task. We must take the time, make the determination and effort, and incorporate the resources of God. The eighteenth-century "*Prince of Preachers*," **Charles Spurgeon**, once said:

The Bible is not the light of the world, it is the light of the Church. But the world does not read the Bible; it reads Christians! "You are the light of the world."

Christians who live uncompromised by sin are a breath of fresh air to those struggling to find God. These believers are "*epistles to be read by men*," according to **1 Corinthians 3:2-3**. We fight our spiritual battles for ourselves and those whom we may influence.

Jesus will present the church to Himself as glorious, without spot or wrinkle, holy and unblemished, according to **Ephesians 5:27**. It is not all "on Him" but includes our participation in becoming the people He intends. He has done His part in going to the cross to remove our sins and ascending to the Father to intercede for us. He has also sent the Holy Spirit to empower and comfort us.

As our Comforter, the Holy Spirit does not comfort us in sin; instead, He comforts us in Christ to lead us away from sin and its consequences and to sanctify us with God's presence. He conforms us to the image of His Son.

While He patiently works with us in His long-suffering, God does not expect us to pamper our sins. **Charles Finney**, the great evangelist of the *Second Great Awakening*, stated:

Sin is the most expensive thing in the universe. Nothing cost so much.

Finney hit the nail on the head. Sin cost the life of the Son of God on the tree in Jerusalem, and it cost our lives. We die to sin and rise to walk in the newness of life, as illustrated by baptism in **Romans 6:1-4**.

God removes our sin through our salvation, but sin returns, and we must fight to keep it away. If we are not careful, we can get lazy in our self-denial and self-discipline, so we allow familiar sins back in. These sins

can dominate our lives instead of God. The Holy Spirit can energize us so we can be zealous for good works, not evil ones.

Our silence in the face of national sins reflects the silence of our sins. We didn't push back when the Supreme Court outlawed prayer and Bible study in public schools because we weren't praying and studying, and these disciplines did not seem necessary. We did not speak up for the helpless babies in the womb because we have become powerless and passive. The fruits of our actions and inactions are before us in vivid displays.

The solution once again is GodNAmerica. We need God in the nation, but that begins with God in the heart of individual Americans. Restoring America to God begins when you and I take God at His word and make every effort to overthrow the bondage of sin. The holy gospel of Christ makes us consecrated people, and as each person takes on the responsibility of righteous living, the nation will become holy, one saint at a time.

You may have seen the road signs that display the speed limit. Some of these signs add, "*No Tolerance.*" Let us determine to give no tolerance when it comes to our personal and private sins, just like Israel refused to tolerate the sins of Canaan for a time. In the spirit of love and concern, let's rise and refuse to accept the sins of the once godly nation. The "good news" we share is freedom from the domination of sin and its condemnation.

Keep The Light of *No Quarter for Sin* Burning!

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