

# WAR =

## The dead, the wounded, the prisoners

In the United States of America, it remains a given fact: any soldier killed on the battlefield, even if his body is scattered and torn apart, must be gathered up and returned to his homeland. The wounded are entitled to the best available care. Everything under the sun will be done to trace and locate a prisoner of war.

The army of Christian believers is the only one who allows itself to abandon its dead, its wounded and its prisoners, leaving them to care for themselves. The most unbelievable part of this human drama is: they are stepped on, ridiculed, despised, or simply totally abandoned. If they are wounded, we finish them off.

There remains however a very small group of intercessors. Those who have not forgotten a brother who is dead, wounded or made a prisoner.

In the eyes of the majority, however, they have become backsliders, rejects, forever condemned to the judgement and the eternal fire. These Pharisees have already preceded the Lord and the verdict is final – judgement has been pronounced.

After seeking all over the Scriptures, not once did I find the word BACKSLIDER. I prefer the English version where it says that these are people who have gone astray along the way, lost their way while on the road and are often unable to find the road leading home. As far as I am concerned, the Lord through His Holy Spirit, has told me: THEY ARE SIMPLY VICTIMS. Victims of war! The Christian is a soldier in the army of the living God. We are a large family whose narrow ties must not be broken.

A victim is a lost sheep, so loved by the Risen Lord that He leaves the ninety nine others to retrieve that one precious lost sheep.

## Who is this lost sheep?

**It is the former Sunday school teacher.**

**It is the person who once led the praise and worship service at your church.**

**This little man who, as a volunteer and without making a sound, cleaned the building.**

**It is this girl who used to sing one or two songs, making hearts vibrate.**

**You probably remember the pianist, if not a maestro, faithfully played for the Lord.**

**This brother who played the guitar, the other one who knew how to handle a trumpet, or the third who played the cymbals.**

**This assistant pastor, known as the second fiddle, we sure loved him... always saying: I will certainly do my best.**

**These young girls who prophesied, those who, under the anointing of the Spirit, danced as David of old before the Ark of the Lord.**

**This pastor who sometimes put in as much as 15 hours of work per day with only one goal: to see souls come to Christ.**

**They have left, wounded, snatched away, disappeared, dead. Judged, condemned, rejected, stoned, placed in front of a firing squad. VICTIMS! Hundreds, thousands! They have wandered astray while on their journey, wounded while on the road. Unsure of themselves, ignoring the fact that a road to recovery does exist.**

**I know what I am talking about, having been a victim myself, fallen in combat, without hope. I remember the answer I gave this well-intentioned brother who had come to visit me, letting me know that: "I was lost and condemned to the eternal fire." I told him how surprised I was to hear this since Jesus Himself had said (praying**

**to His Father): Of all those You have given Me, not a one did I lose.”**

He has shown mercy to me and has killed the fatted calf for me without asking permission to any committee, any Pharisee. My Heavenly Father saw me coming from afar. He ran towards me, wrapped me in His arms, He embraced me, He has placed a new garment over me and had put new shoes on my feet so that I can, once again, walk the pathway that leads to life. He has killed the fatted calf and He has invited me to the celebration feast. **THE ENTIRE HEAVENLY HOST CELEBRATED.** And great rejoicing amongst all the celestial creatures. Music, songs, dances... for a son who was dead had come back to life!

Allow me to tell you who are these dead, wounded, captured, prisoners of war: As a whole, they are: God’s beloved sheep.

The one for whom Jesus left all 99 others in order to save. The one the Master asks us to snatch away from the enemy’s grasp. If for any reason you have lost your way, please be aware that Jesus is out searching for you. **HE LOVES YOU!**

## **WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ON THIS SUBJECT?**

**ROMANS 14:4 – Who art THOU that judgest another man’s servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.**

The Pharisee often acts like a tyrant who imposes his law without pity, without compassion, without love. He refuses to let his brother have what he partakes of himself. Under his own authority, he tramples a victim, finishing him off and if there is still a flicker of life left, he kills the victim.

**I have good news for all victims: Jesus raises the dead, He heals the wounded and He delivers the prisoners! My brothers, do you know who I am?**

Allow me to recall... I come from afar, I was abandoned on the battlefield. I was not aware so many publicans were praying for me.

## **THERE IS HOPE FOR THOSE WHO HAVE FALLEN ON THE BATTLEFIELD!**

If you are a victim, the devil, the serpent of old, the father of lies will tell you: Forget all of this, it's all in the past, make a new life for yourself. No church will be interested in you any longer. No one will ever have faith in you again. There simply is no way back.

**The devil will utilize the same verses to prove to you that you are done.**

He will tell you that you no longer have this Divine unction like you had in the past. Gone are the blessings that caused your soul to flutter with joy and happiness. Even now, should you return, you will be like a zombie. Admit that you are a loser, a deserter. You have fooled your brothers, you have denied your faith. You are rejected by God Himself and by men.

**Listen to me, you, faithful Christian, you since the first day of your conversion has never once cheated your wife; you, the perfect one or almost perfect. You who points an accusing finger on your brother fallen while on the battlefield. While you pride yourself as being the only one keeping step in God's army, I will ask you a few questions:**

Do you ever think of someone like me, straying alone on a pathway that was not of my own choosing? you aware that I have become an outlaw in the eyes of those who think like you? While you may be a son of the kingdom of God, my kingdom has become uncertain and anonymous. You are not allowed to entertain or befriend people like me – which I fully understand – but nature shows us that the thistles mingle with the roses.

Have you ever stopped to consider that I too can know pain, joy, feelings and that I often think of that moment when I did fall on the battlefield?

I walk in a world that is not my own, like Jesus and His companions once did. However, they were holy whereas I have become a poor beggar, seeking happiness.

I am well aware that, like you, I have a date with eternity.

Is it possible that Jesus, without consulting anybody, looks at me, speaks to me? As strange as it may be, I sometimes feel a stirring in my soul. Like a fire burning in me; it seems I can hear music, an old hymn, a melody, sweets memories of the past. The other day, words of the Master which I had forgotten returned to my spirit.

**For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me... Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. (Matt. 25: 35-36, 40).**

My Lord, my King, is it Thou speaking to me? Is this Thy voice I hear? Thou hast not forgotten me? I hear Thy voice, saying: "Would a mother abandon her offspring? Even so, never would I leave you!"

**Allow me to tell you who I am: The answer is found in the 15<sup>th</sup> chapter of St. Luke's gospel.**

I am the sheep that was found, the piece of silver that had been lost, the prodigal son who, though dead, was brought back to life.

The Man who did find the lost sheep, it's the Shepherd – **JESUS!**

The woman who rejoiced after finding that lost piece of silver, causing her to call her friends and neighbours together, saying: "Rejoice with me, for I have found the piece which I had lost", it's **the Church – the Bride!** "Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth (Luke 15: 10).

There is hope! When you agreed to go out on the battlefield, the Lord knew that you would be wounded or even made prisoner, He knew that you would be KILLED. Yet, never once did He abandon you, simply because He does not see as man sees. He tries the hearts and reins. Men see the lack of faith, doubt. Jesus sees beyond your doubts, your soul's search to find its way back. He sees your wounds and sees that you need the work of resurrection. You would like to forget your past and begin anew and return to the battlefield?

He knocks at your door so that you may open it. Do you know the extent of God's love for those who are dead spiritually, are wounded or made prisoners? Does His mercy know any limit? His grace, does it know any boundary? He is able to raise the dead, He heals the wounded, He liberates the captives.

**"To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one falleth (Isaiah 40: 25-26)."**

**WAR VICTIM – ARISE! The Master knows your name! He calls you!**

**"Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest (Matt. 11: 28)."** "Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the

Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? There is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength (Is. 40: 28-29)."

**WE ARE AT WAR**

**For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places (Eph. 6:12).**

As a soldier in the army of the living Christ, what shall I do when one of my brothers or sisters shall become a victim? I will do as David of old: I will wrestle to snatch this prey away from the lion's mouth or the bear's paw. I will prophesy, I will pray, I will combat, I will support that victim and, above all else, I will love, I will welcome that person as a war hero who has done his or her part by fighting at my side. I will rejoice in welcoming him back again.

### **CAN THESE DRY BONES LIVE AGAIN?**

The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones. And caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry. And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? (Eze. 37: 1-3).

*Do you know of any victims who are in that valley?*

*Ezekiel was a man, just like you and me.*

*We can see these dry bones, all VICTIMS of this spiritual war.*

*These abandoned dry bones without any sepulchre were probably valiant heroes of a lost war.*

*Long-forgotten victims.*

*Do you know any? God challenges you with this question: "Can these bones live?"*

*Perhaps will you say as Ezekiel did: "O Lord God, Thou knowest". Or shall you say: "Let them remain dry – they have harvested what they deserved".*

## THE POWER OF PROPHECY

Prophecy, an act of faith, was not entrusted to angels, but to man. Its field of activity is tremendous: it can become a prayer of faith, an exhortation, a sermon, a word of encouragement, an act of obedience, but always under the anunction of the Holy Spirit.

Here, God tells Ezekiel: **Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them: O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones; behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live. (Eze. 37: 4-5).**

**God could very easily have done it Himself, but in this verse He shows us that He desires to use man. He tells him: PROPHECY!**

Do you not believe that, by faith and under the unction of the Spirit, the time has come for us to prophesy? Only then shall we see victims raised up, the wounded healed and the prisoners set free.

Recently, Satan struck the shepherd of a congregation and the members of a church were dispersed. Many prayed and prophesied for this victim's return. Possibilities seemed hopeless but, by faith, we were able to snatch this prey from the enemy's grasp and recently, he preached the WORD among the poor, the miserable ones, those abandoned by society, in a place where food and drink are offered to those who have nothing. Among the hundred or so present, eight people raised their hands to indicate they wanted to give their lives to the Lord. Jesus assures us that a simple glass of water given in His name will not remain without reward. None of this would have taken place had we abandoned that victim, leaving him in the hands of the enemy.

Most every great man of God mentioned in the Bible have fallen on the battlefield of life but they were restored to become giants, twice more effective.

**So I prophesied as he commandeth me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army (Ez.37:10).**

**What if those who died on the battlefield, the wounded and the prisoners were more in number than those who remain standing?**

**WILL WE CEASE TO CALL THEM BACKSLIDERS?**

**Our way of thinking is not what is worse – it's our attitude!**

**May the Lord always grant me to have the same attitude as the Good Shepherd! AMEN!**

Evangelist Marcel Favreau