

THE GOSPEL MESSAGE

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To Be a Man Like Hur

Flint Fenton

At the “place of rest” (Rephidim), a battle and a feat of endurance ironically took place. The enemies of God’s people engaged in cowardly guerrilla warfare, targeting the stragglers of the Israelite hoard. The weak and the tired became victims of Amalek, who did not fear God (see **Deuteronomy 25:17-19**). The faithful general Joshua, with the chosen men of Israel, fought the Amalekites in the valley, while Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to a mountain. When Moses held up his hands (perhaps in prayer; see **2 Timothy 2:8**), Joshua prevailed. However, when his hands became weary and drooped, the Amalekites prevailed. At Rephidim, the yet-to-be battle-tested Israelites saw a visual representation of a spiritual truth. When God was with them, they would prevail. When God was not with them, they would fail. The toll of isometric (holding steady) muscular action is a formidable task that pushed Moses to his physical limit. At first standing, then seated on a rock, and finally with the support of Aaron under one arm and Hur under the other, his hands remained steady until the going down of the sun. At the conclusion of the battle, the Lord sent forth a powerful promise that Amalek would be utterly blotted out (which was nearly botched by King Saul in **1 Samuel 15**), and Moses commemorated an altar named “The LORD is My Banner.” At Rephidim, we learn a lesson applicable to all ages: victory in the valley is secured on the Mountain (see **Ephesians 6:10-13**).

To call Hur a minor Old Testament character may overstate the role he plays in the narrative of the Pentateuch; yet, in a few brief mentions, we find him with the rulers of the early Israelite nation. Other than supporting Moses’s arms during the battle of Rephidim, Hur also appears in the narrative at Sinai. This time, instead of being on the mountain, he is left in the valley. Moses went up the mountain to receive the law written on tablets of stone. Aaron and Hur are left as leaders of the people

with the instruction to “wait” (see **Exodus 24:13-14**).

Waiting is difficult for humans. Peter, James, and John struggled to wait on the praying savior (see **Matthew 26:36-46**). In **Psalms 27**, David is waiting on the Lord during some distress (perhaps in a mortal struggle with Saul, the Lord’s anointed, whom David would not harm; this feeling was not mutual, see **2 Samuel 19:10-12**). Through all this, David waited on the Lord. At Sinai, God’s people failed to simply wait on the Lord.

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After a duration of 40 days (see **Deuteronomy 9:9**), they became impatient and demanded that Aaron make gods “to go before them.” Their rejection of the Lord as God here is eerily similar to their rejection of him as king (see **1 Samuel 8:19-20**). In both these cases, the people preferred a physical figurehead to the Spirit of God (see **John 4:24**). Aaron gave in to the people’s demand and created for them a calf of gold, a sin to later be copied and multiplied by Jeroboam in the false worship set up at Bethel and Dan.

Where is Hur? Aaron is held responsible for the actions of the people under his leadership, although he greatly downplayed

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his personal role, as “the calf came out of the fire” (rather than him crafting it). Would not Hur be equally culpable as a leader of the people? The divine narrative makes no more mention of him (except in chronologies), and so officially, the mystery remains unresolved. Interestingly, the Talmud (which is of admittedly dubious reputation) states that Hur was killed for opposing the creation of the calf. Although we can not be sure about the veracity of this claim, it does resolve some of the questions in the text. It would give us a possible reason for Aaron’s willingness to submit to the people, and it would explain why Hur disappears from the text in **Exodus 24** and why he is not held responsible for the people’s disobedience. In any event, the courage of a true follower of God to stand up before deadly force is woven throughout the pages of our Bible. This godly courage takes us into the fires of a pagan king (see **Daniel 3**), to the sword of a nominal Israelite king (see **Jeremiah 26:20-23**), to hurled stones of mob violence (see **Acts 7**), noting only the bravery of a few. They serve as a beautiful example that we all must pass through persecutions of varying intensity on the way to the reward (see **2 Timothy 3:12**).

There is yet one more lesson we can learn from the life of Hur. Hur was the grandfather of Bezalel, who God divinely inspired to craft the instruments of the temple (see **Exodus 31:2, 35:30, 38:22; 1 Chronicles 2:19**). It seems certain that Hur was alive during Bezalel’s youth. After all, Hur’s last mention is **Exodus 24**, and Bezalel is apparently old enough for this service by **Exodus 31**. Grandparents should not neglect the opportunity God has given them to inspire first their children and later their grandchildren. Paul, when seeing the faith of the evangelist Timothy, saw the faith as originating in his grandmother Lois, then passing through Eunice before reaching him (see **2 Timothy 1:5**). Perhaps we have something similar here: faith passing from Hur to his son Uri, and finally to his grandson Bezalel. Why did Paul see the faith first in Lois? Was her mother not faithful? Perhaps, but just as likely, Lois was the oldest member in the line who had ample opportunity to instill virtue upon Timothy.

When God grants the blessing of many days, and you have the opportunity to see your grandchildren, do not discount the

influence you may have on them. The Old Law hints at this: the generation preparing to enter the promised land is commanded to make the works of the Lord known to their children and their children’s children (see **Deuteronomy 4:9**). The raising of godly descendants is one the Bible consistently addresses, from creating standing stones, to open discourse of God’s mercy (see **Joshua 4:1-7**), to allegorizing offspring, to arrows directed by their parents and shot into the future (see **Psalms 127:3-5**). Grandparents who are godly examples to their progeny can be a valuable asset in this process.

While we know little about Hur, we know he was always listed among God’s chosen leaders, Moses and Aaron. You may not be a Moses or an Aaron (the New Testament reveals Jesus was the next Moses; see **Acts 3:22**), but God will always need “Hurs” to stand beside his leaders, holding their hands steady. We also see Hur have a faithful grandchild and likely a faithful son. This indicates that he took care of his private life along with his public life. Men chosen to lead God’s people are first (and continue to be) invested in *their* homes (see **1 Timothy 3:4, Titus 1:6**). In every age and every place, God needs men like Hur. Will *you* be a man like Hur in your local congregation?

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This World is Not Our Home

Jay Graham

Last summer, I was assigned the topic of “The Wilderness” to present at the Eminence camp meeting. I was to discuss some of the many times when the Lord’s people entered a time of particular difficulty and temptation due to various circumstances. I noted how the apostles entered such a time at the beginning of the Lord’s church in Acts. They were threatened, beaten, and maligned by those who tried to force them to cease their preaching of Christ and His gospel. Fortunately, they persevered and continued their preaching, and, as a result, thousands were added to the newly formed body of Christ.

I am wondering if we Christians, in this twenty-first century, are entering such a time. No doubt you have noticed this continuing descent into spiritual darkness; our society has continued in a downward spiral. At first, these changes came slowly, but it seems they have gained speed and momentum over the past few decades at a rate that is unbelievable. We are seeing wickedness in a form that would have been unimaginable in regard to such basic things as how many genders we have or that marriage is between one man and one woman. Our children and grandchildren, as well as we adults, are being inundated with vile messages, pictures, and portrayals of things that are extremely ungodly and wicked. I am reminded of the prophecy in **Revelation 20:7-9** about a time when Satan will surround “the camp of the saints.”

With this said, I know many of you have sung the song “This World is Not My Home” probably many times over the years. This song has always been a favorite of many of us. But does it seem like it may have even more application in these vile times? I know it does to me. I seem to have come to a deeper appreciation of this truth much more than 40 years ago. This wicked world we live in has made me realize the more “comfortable” the Lord’s people are, the less prone they are to concentrate on the Lord and His ways. Certainly, this wickedness has made me much more “uncomfortable” in this world. However, the truth is, and has always been, that this world has never been our home! It was never intended to be. We should long for the “better land” the Lord promises His people after this life, and this wickedness has certainly made this longing much more acute.

When Jesus uttered the phrase “Oh, faithless and perverse generation,” I have no doubt He was referring to that generation He lived in. But I wonder if this could be said of all generations. Ours certainly is such a generation. These moral and spiritual issues and problems have made it so. Christians are being even more ostracized for their faith and for their willingness to stand on — and even preach and speak of — the Lord’s truths in contrast to what is being lifted as “right” by our society.

If we bravely speak of the Lord’s truths, we will have many things in common with those first-century saints. We are being called “names” as they were. It is my understanding the term

“Christian” was probably a type of “slur” the Romans called the Lord’s people — “You must be one of those ‘Christians!’” It is interesting to note the Romans did not care who Christians worshipped as long as they worshipped the Roman gods in addition. The world treats us this way today. The world does not care who we worship as long as we worship their gods in addition to the Lord, for they have their gods in the form of evolution, the earth, as well as other wicked philosophies. Yes, idolatry is certainly alive and well in this twenty-first century.

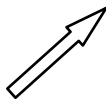
Consider all the vile stuff the world is attempting to “stuff down our throats” in the form of television commercials. The only TV I watch anymore are some sporting events because I do not wish to see the commercials! Some of you may know I have always been a *Star Trek* fan, for I have always enjoyed the various *Star Treks*. However, there is a new series that I refuse to watch due to the wicked marriage relationships they are trying to show as good and even mainstream.

Another tactic that is beginning to be used is Christians are encouraged to keep our beliefs and messages in our “church buildings.” It is noteworthy that the Jewish leaders of the first century did not care what Christians believed. They did not seem to care about what they preached as long as they kept their messages in their meeting places. They just did not want it preached to Jewish people! In **Acts** chapters 4 and 5, the apostles were told they must not preach the gospel, or they would face severe persecution. Preaching for the need to repent is considered “hate speech” by many today.

Christians are beginning to be considered a “detriment” to our society. There are voices that are growing louder that would like to pressure Christian parents to not be allowed to teach their children about the Lord creating the universe in six literal days. Christians are being criticized that our “hope” is in “Christ and Him crucified” rather than placing our hope in the earth and other things.

I can go on and on, but I need to draw this article to a close. I am not writing of these things to make you afraid. We can still see the “hope” the Lord provides through His Word and His gospel. The darker it gets, the more easily those in the world who are looking for something better can find it. We, as the

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Lord's people, have something much better!

Let us not be ashamed nor afraid to speak the Lord's truths to our children, our grandchildren, our families, and our neighbors. Let us be like those Christians in **Acts 4**, who, in response to threats, prayed for boldness in order to better preach the gospel.

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Here and There

Calvin Spencer, an elder of the church in **Lawrence, KS**, recently visited a church in Georgia. The four elders of the congregation guided the transition from hiring a preacher to the brothers sharing in the preaching and teaching. Calvin spoke extensively with one of the elders and assured him that they were not the only congregation that had adopted this approach. If you are in Georgia and looking for a congregation to worship with, please consider visiting:

Williams Rd. Church of Christ

110 Williams Rd.
Americus, GA 31709
229-924-2943
wrcocl@gmail.com
Sunday: Worship 9:30AM; Study 10:30 AM

Special Meetings

For more information about meetings across the brotherhood, please consult www.gospelmessage.net/meetings. The QR code to the right can be used to navigate to the website with your tablet or phone camera.



2025 Special Meetings

June 30-July 4.....Midwest Bible Campout, Eminence, MO
hosted by the **Prince Road COC, Alton, IL**
July 19.....Family VBS
hosted by the **Old Lamine COC, rural Blackwater, MO**
August 24.....White Oak, rural Ethel, MO
August 30-31.....Labor Day Meeting, Pleasant Hill, IA
October 3-5.....Fall Campout, Unionville, MO
hosted by the **Grant Street COC and Martinstown COC**
October 18-19.....Weekend Meeting, Ozark, MO

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