

# THE REDTHREAD

## THE GIFT OF SALVATION

Acknowledge to yourself and to God that you have sinned (Romans 3:23).

In sorrow for your sins, turn from them to God and ask His forgiveness (Isaiah 55:7).

By faith receive the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior, believing that He died in your place on the cross (John 3:16).

## WHY & HOW

THE RED THREAD exists to be an encouragement to the men and women currently separated from family and friends in correctional institutions. It is published on the 15th of each month by **Crimson House Ministries** at **1616 North Robberson, Springfield, Missouri, 65803**. Please send all correspondence to that address. Subscription information is available online at: <http://readingroom.crimsonhouseministries.org/>

## ABSOLUTE SURRENDER

AN EXCERPT FROM THE  
ANDREW MURRAY CLASSIC

"And Ben-hadad the king of Syria gathered all his host together: and there were thirty and two kings with him, and horses, and chariots: and he went up and besieged Samaria, and warred against it. And he sent messengers to Ahab king of Israel into the city, and said unto him, Thus saith Ben-hadad, Thy silver and thy gold is mine; thy wives also and thy children, even the goodliest, are mine. And the king of Israel answered and said, My lord, O king, according to thy saying, I am thine and all that I have" (1 Ki. 20:1-4).

What Ben-Hadad asked was absolute surrender; and what Ahab gave was what was asked of him--absolute surrender. I want to use these words: "My lord, O king, according to thy saying, I am thine, and all that I have," as the words of absolute surrender with which every child of God ought to yield himself to his Father. We have heard it before, but we need to hear it very definitely--the condition of God's blessing is absolute surrender of all into His hands.

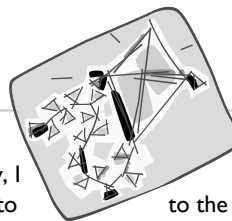
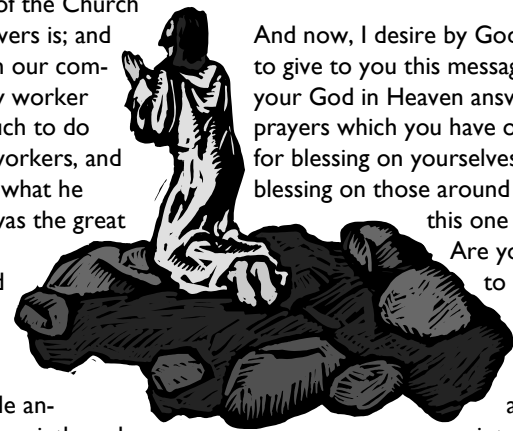
Praise God! If our hearts are willing for that, there is no end to what God will do for us, and to the blessing God will bestow.

Absolute surrender--let me tell you where I got those words. I used them myself often, and you have heard them numberless times. But in Scotland once I was in a company where we were talking about the condition of Christ's Church, and what the great need of the Church and of believers is; and there was in our company a godly worker who has much to do in training workers, and I asked him what he would say was the great need of the Church, and the message that ought to be preached. He answered very quietly and simply and determinedly: "Absolute surrender to God is the one thing."

The words struck me as never before. And that man began to tell how, in the workers with whom he had to deal, he finds that if they are sound on that point, even though they be backward, they are willing to be taught and helped, and they always improve; whereas others who are not sound there very often go back and leave the work. The condition for obtaining God's full blessing is absolute surrender to Him.

And now, I desire by God's grace to give to you this message--that your God in Heaven answers the prayers which you have offered for blessing on yourselves and for blessing on those around you by this one demand: Are you willing to surrender yourselves absolutely into His hands? What is our answer to be? God knows there are hundreds of hearts who have said it, and there

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 2...)



## THE KITE

While walking in the park one day, I noticed a mother trying to teach her small daughter how to fly a kite. It was a good day for flying kites. The wind was steady with occasional gusts. The key to flying a kite is to not give too much slack in the string. As long as that tension exists, the kite will fly.

From the perspective of the kite, the string must be a real nuisance. The kite would love to soar as the birds, without anything binding it to the earth, free to choose its own

direction. But the string is forever there, tying it to the ground.

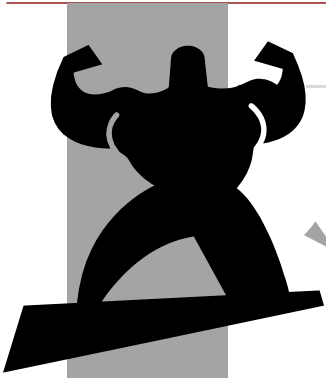
Ephesians 4:14-15 teaches us that "we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ."

Sometimes I feel like that kite. When my time in God's Word

slackens, I inevitably become carried away into doctrinal extremes and into sin. I need that grounding and that tension. Without God's Word keeping that tension alive, I can only nosedive into error.

When I am faithful to speak truth in love, to spend time knowing truth, and to reflect truth in my lifestyle, I can depend on the string to hold me firmly on course. I am free to enjoy the thrill of flying.

—Faihe Thomas



## THE STRONG MAN, PT. 1

*This is part one of a two-part sermon by Red Thread publisher and pastor John Pace of Springfield, Missouri. It will be concluded in next month's edition.*

Seven times Moses, the spokesman of the almighty God, asked Pharaoh, a god of Egypt, to let His people go. And for over 100 days Pharaoh kept God's people in bondage through plague after plague and judgment after judgment. However Pharaoh's first response: "Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice and let Israel go? I do not know the LORD, and moreover, I will not let Israel go" ultimately became "Up, go out from among my people, both you and the people of Israel; and go, serve the LORD, as you have said. Take your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and be gone, and bless me also!" Thus the decades of generational bondage was defeated and the chains of individual slavery broken, as

Israel plundered Egypt and left with a high hand.

Paul, in his letter to the Corinthians reference Israel's experience in the wilderness by saying, "Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction..." (1 Corinthians 10:11) as he cited the sins of lust, idolatry, fornication, testing Christ, and murmuring, we are to avoid. But the examples I will be using today will not focus on the sins in the wilderness; rather, on the first part of the tenth chapter of First Corinthians, that is, the power of God. The power which is the authority in the cloud, that parted the sea, the spiritual meat, the spiritual drink, the spiritual Rock—that set God's people free!

### THE PRINCIPLE

"When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are safe; but when one stronger than he attacks him and overcomes him, he takes away his armor in which

he trusted and divides his spoil."

### IN EGYPT

In Egypt, there was none stronger than Pharaoh, to the people he was more than a man—he was a god; his army undefeated and powerful. His palace was well-guarded, not only with the military's arm of flesh, but "spiritually" as well in idols and magicians. In Pharaoh's mind his goods (the Hebrew slaves) were safe and he at peace. But Pharaoh *reckoned* outside of the biblical principle, for a stronger than he was there!

Initially the stronger may not have looked like much: an 80 year old man with a stick in his hand, whose brother did most of the talking. But as Paul later wrote, "For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds." Just as the unassuming weapons Jael's tent peg, Gideon's pitchers and torches, and David's sling, became mighty through the

power of God, so too did the shepherd's staff and Moses' words attacked the strong man and overtook him.

Unlike the other gospel writer's account of this principle, Luke describes exactly how the stronger one "binds" the strong man: he takes away the armor in which the strong man trusts and then he takes (divides) the strong man's goods.

The strong man Pharaoh trusted in his armor forged together with the three iron plates of his gods, his magicians, and himself and leader of an army. But God, through a man changed in wilderness solitude, systematically removed every iron plate in Pharaoh's trusted armor.

After a few tricks done by secret arts to mimic Moses signs, Pharaoh's magicians could no longer mime the miracles of Yahweh and conceded, "This is the finger of God."

*(CONTINUED ON PAGE 3...)*

## ABSOLUTE SURRENDER CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

are hundreds more who long to say it but hardly dare to do so. And there are hearts who have said it, but who have yet miserably failed, and who feel themselves condemned because they did not find the secret of the power to live that life. May God have a word for all!

Let me say, first of all, that God claims it from us.

### GOD EXPECTS YOUR SURRENDER

Yes, it has its foundation in the very nature of God. God cannot do otherwise. Who is God? He is the Fountain of life, the only Source of existence and power and goodness, and throughout the universe there is nothing good but what God works. God has created the sun, and the moon, and the stars, and the flowers, and the trees, and the grass; and are they not all absolutely surrendered to God? Do they not allow God to

work in them just what He pleases? When God clothes the lily with its beauty, is it not yielded up, surrendered, given over to God as He works in its beauty? And God's redeemed children, oh, can you think that God can work His work if there is only half or a part of them surrendered? God cannot do it. God is life, and love, and blessing, and power, and infinite beauty, and God delights to communicate Himself to every child who is prepared to receive Him; but ah! this one lack of absolute surrender is just the thing that hinders God. And now He comes, and as God, He claims it.

You know in daily life what absolute surrender is. You know that everything has to be given up to its special, definite object and service. I have a pen in my pocket, and that pen is absolutely surrendered to the one work of writing, and that pen must be absolutely surrendered to my hand if I am to

write properly with it. If another holds it partly, I cannot write properly. This coat is absolutely given up to me to cover my body. This building is entirely given up to religious services. And now, do you expect that in your immortal being, in the divine nature that you have received by regeneration, God can work His work, every day and every hour, unless you are entirely given up to Him? God cannot. The Temple of Solomon was absolutely surrendered to God when it was dedicated to Him. And every one of us is a temple of God, in which God will dwell and work mightily on one condition--absolute surrender to Him. God claims it, God is worthy of it, and without it God cannot work His blessed work in us.

God not only claims it, but God will work it Himself. ▪

**YOU SAID IT!** *We love hearing from you and so do our readers. Please send your articles, poems, praise reports, testimonies, etc..., to The Red Thread, Crimson House Ministries, 1616 North Robberson, Springfield, MO, 65803.*



**HEAVENBOUND**

Like a freight train surging nonstop on its tracks  
 I'm gonna move forward and not gonna look back  
 To the past, the days I kept living in sin  
 Instead, I'll stand tall, lift my head up and grin  
 'Cause I know Satan's hold isn't really that strong  
 When Christ's on my side nothing can go wrong  
 And so I pray night and day for God's Spirit to guide me  
 To forever and always find his place inside me.

Lord, please protect me from the fiery darts of hell  
 And lead me toward Your life giving well  
 Though there will be times that I trip and fall  
 Like Jack and Jill or that egg on the wall

But instead of hiding in shame or admitting regret  
 I'll get up, dust off, move on and forget  
 I'll ask forgiveness from the wrongs that I've done  
 And give my broken heart to the Father and the Son  
 I'll pray their Spirit live and abide in me  
 From now on and into eternity.

Lord, help me move forward  
 Where I won't have to look back  
 And be my Heavenly freight train  
 On its Heaven bound track.

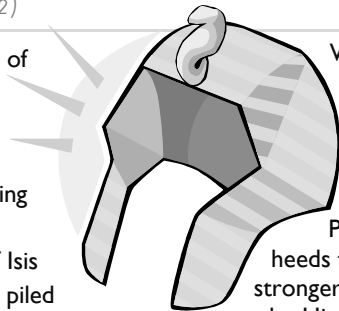
—Kyle Baylor, inmate  
 Missouri

**THE STRONG MAN, PT. 1**

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2)

Each plague was against a god of Egypt as the Lord God Almighty destroyed Pharaoh's trust in

1. The life of the Nile by turning it into blood;
2. The fertility and new life of Isis by an abundance of frogs that piled up in death;
3. His earth god with lice;
4. Beelzebub with flies;
5. His sacred bull with the death of livestock;
6. His medical shamans with boils on the people;
7. His weather shamans with hail;
8. His agriculture shamans with locusts;
9. Ra, his sun god, with darkness;
10. The first part of Pharaoh himself with the death of the first born.



With two-thirds of his armor destroyed Pharaoh heeds the stronger man's request to let His people go and Yahweh begins to divide the strong man's spoil. But there is still one piece of armor Pharaoh trusts, even after his spoil was divided—himself and his army. And Pharaoh gave chase to regain his goods. But again, the stronger man prevailed as the delivered slaves stood still and saw the salvation of the Lord as he destroyed Pharaoh and his army in the Red Sea. Then the dirges of slavery, sung under oppression, became joyous songs of deliverance as those in liberty sang,

*“The LORD is my strength and my song,  
 and he has become my salvation;  
 this is my God, and I will praise him,  
 my father's God, and I will exalt him.  
 The LORD is a man of war;  
 the LORD is his name.”* ■

**INCARCERATED**

From the street to a building of steel and concrete  
 Incarcerated, that word in my head reverberated  
 Day and night, a week then two  
 How long was I supposed to be here?  
 I asked but no one knew.

How did I get here? What's the problem with me?  
 I suddenly wished in my mind, heart and soul I could see  
 Now came the time, the day to be arraigned  
 From this day I would have liked to refrain  
 Now I know how long it will be  
 Until I walk out of this place set free  
 Thirteen years is what the Judge said  
 As his gavel abruptly lowered  
 I solemnly lowered my head.

Thirteen years at eighty-five percent  
 Just under ten to go as just over one I've spent  
 These numbers are true with the exception of one thing  
 Probation and parole have not entered the scene  
 Once again I must wait and see  
 How long it could be before I'm set free.

--Robert Siebert, inmate  
 Fulton, MO

*'The Strong Man' will conclude in the following edition.*



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## FEEL THE FEAR AND DO IT ANYWAY

The Old Testament saints were commended by God for having great faith. These members of the "Great Faith Hall of Fame" simply believed God and obeyed.

Were they ever afraid? I'm sure they were. Possibly terrified, feeling insecure, and maybe foolish. Not unlike how we may feel today when confronted with a situation where we must step out in faith. Face it, if God doesn't provide sure footing, we will fall, we will fail and we will look foolish. But usually, looking foolish is the least of our problems.

I don't recall God criticizing these saints on feeling fearful as long as their fear was accompanied by a heart set on obedience. He actually commended them for their actions and ignored the series of emotions they journeyed through before setting their sights on the goal and "going for it."

They felt the fear and did it anyway.



I'm coming to believe that this is a natural process. Something God expects when He pushes us to do something outside our

comfort zone. If we would

simply consider trepidation to be part of the package, something we must factor into the process, I believe we would become more comfortable with the entire procedure. Then we could more readily come to peace with our decisions of faith.

Some people view the fear in their lives as the deciding factor as to whether or not they should attempt certain things. When they feel fearful they decide it must not be God urging them on. This belief allows them to justify backing off from the project, dream or action.

God doesn't ask us to do foolish things but sometimes, to us, they may appear to be foolish. And certainly, more often than not, they are

difficult or uncomfortable. Why then should we expect to feel comfortable about doing the uncomfortable, difficult or seemingly foolish? At least a moment of fear must be normal.

But scripture says that without faith it is impossible to please God. So, at some point, faith must replace the fear.

For this to happen, we must CHOOSE to step out in faith. We must logically decide to follow what we trust the Lord is urging us to do. I believe when we do this, Jesus is standing on the other side of that decision with the peace to calm our sea of emotions.

As it has been said, "The journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step." So, feel free to feel the fear. But then take that step anyway.

A friend of mine who is a mountain guide once explained to me, "When climbing, you concentrate on the next step. You don't look down. If

you do, you get disoriented and dizzy. Just take it one step at a time. Trust your guide. Trust your gear. Trust your training."

Peter was able to walk on the water when he kept his eyes on Jesus and just did what he was called to do. He began to sink when he took his eyes off Jesus. He began to sink when he considered the circumstances without seeing Jesus in them.

When Jesus calls us to walk out in faith He calls us to obey, not analyze the circumstances. He is Lord of the circumstances. He can transform situations around us when we are obedient. All He asks us to do is to be obedient in taking the step in front of us.

Feel the fear and do it anyway. One step at a time.



—Shari Weigerstorfer  
<http://www.faithwriters.com/>