

# Strength in the Storm

- by Brother Yun

***This article is adapted from a message given by Brother Yun to Back to Jerusalem coworkers recently.***

Back to Jerusalem is a vision given by God to all the Chinese Church, and whenever God gives a vision the devil opposes it and does whatever he can to disrupt it. Satan does not care when Christians pursue their own visions and their own plans, but when His Spirit is in operation, putting the pieces together for a strategic conquest of souls for God's glory, Satan is worried and all kinds of troubles break out.

The last few years has seen an enormous amount of opposition come to the Back to Jerusalem missionary effort. Instead of causing us dismay, we should take heart that it is a vision from the heart of God, and what he starts he always completes!

There are always doubters who come along and mock a move of God. Like Sanballat and Tobiah (Nehemiah 2:10-20), there will be those who ridicule what they feel threatened by. There are others like the ten spies who could see nothing good in the Promised Land and looked on in bewilderment as Caleb reported to Moses, *"We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it. But the men who had gone up with him said, 'We can't attack those people; they are stronger than we are.' And they spread among the Israelites a bad report about the land they had explored"* (Numbers 13:30-32). God himself later gave this testimony of Caleb: *"Because my servant Caleb has a different spirit and follows me wholeheartedly, I will bring him into the land he went to, and his descendants will inherit it"* (Numbers 14:24).

I want to be like Caleb! I want to have a different spirit from the naysayers and critics who don't believe any good will happen unless they are directly involved. When it comes to serving God, we must never focus our attention on the size of the task, for it will squash our vision and enthusiasm. We should always place our eyes on the size of our Lord. What he says will happen, in his perfect timing, and nothing can stop his will from being done on earth or in heaven! *"My word that goes out from my mouth...will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it"* (Isaiah 55:11).



I have had a heavy burden for Back to Jerusalem recently. There are many good developments taking place, training being conducted, and more Chinese believers embracing the vision to preach the gospel to the giants of Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism. Yet at the same time I believe there is a kind of cancer among some of God's people today. It is a spiritual cancer of unbelief among many Christians. They can only see the giants and the difficulties, and are paralyzed with fear. We must press on! We must press on because Back to Jerusalem is God's vision, not ours. If it belonged to man, it would be condemned to failure, but it is God's, and we are consigned to victory! Nor is it a new vision. Back to Jerusalem has been a vision of Chinese believers for almost 70 years now, and many have already died a martyr's death because of their commitment to it.

I am always encouraged by David's example of perseverance and faithfulness. He had his focus firmly fixed on obeying God's will, and did not care about what others were doing or saying against him. In the book of 1 Samuel we have a remarkable account when David and his men came home to Ziklag to discover the Amalekites had set fire to the town and carried off all of the women. What was the response of these mighty warriors? Did they immediately pray together and set out to recover their wives and daughters? No! The Bible says, *"David and his men wept aloud until they had no strength left to weep"* (1 Samuel 30:4).

When Satan uses people to attack and slander us, let's not sit around feeling sorry for ourselves and weeping until we feel like giving up. That will never accomplish God's purposes in our generation. Let's move forward in a spirit of forgiveness and meekness, but also fire and determination. God's honor is at stake among the nations, and we must not be distracted from obeying our King.

After David's men had finished crying they started to think about their predicament and blamed David. This is the same David who had led them to victory after victory over the enemy. Yet when disillusionment set in, they quickly blamed David, even to the point of wanting to kill him! *"David was greatly distressed because the men were talking of stoning him; each one was bitter in spirit because of his sons and daughters."* (1 Samuel 30:6).

If you will let me share honestly, I can tell you that in recent times my family and I have sometimes felt like many among the church and mission establishment have grabbed large stones, and would love nothing better than to crush me and my family to death with their words and gossip. Herein lies the secret to following God and pushing through the obstacles that Satan throws in our way: David didn't sit around arguing and discussing the problem with his men, and he didn't try to convince them to change their mind. The Bible records:

***"But David found strength in the Lord his God"***

(1 Samuel 30:6).

The enemy had taken all of David and his mens' families and possessions. David asked God if they could recover these, and the Lord said, *"Pursue them.... You will certainly overtake them and succeed in the rescue"* (1 Samuel 30:8). When God gives such a word, no demon in hell will be able to stop it coming to pass. I have absolute confidence that God has given a word to the Church in China to preach the gospel and establish His kingdom among all the peoples of the Middle East, Central Asia, Southeast Asia and everywhere Christ has not yet been named. It will not be easy, for even in the chase, 200 of David's

men *"were too exhausted to cross the ravine"* (1 Samuel 30:10).

As you hear the Word of God today, I pray you will be encouraged to stand and advance for God in whatever circumstance he has called you to. Do not give up, and do not bow to opposition. It is merely there to test us and refine us so we can be a more effective weapon in the hand of God.

The Apostle Paul frequently had dual factors operating in his ministry: opposition and effectiveness. To the church in Corinth he wrote, *"A great door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many who oppose me"* (1 Corinthians 16:9). Without opposition we will not be as effective as God wants us to be. Without persecution there would not have been revival in China, and without a crucifixion there would not have been a resurrection.

God is always the way forward. He is always the light at the end of our tunnel and the tower of strength to withstand the worst storm that the devil can throw at us! It is IN HIM that we find inward strength, peace, and overwhelming joy! I have learned that it doesn't matter what is going on around us, or

what fiery darts are aimed at us. They can never touch the inner life of Jesus that dwells inside of us. That is why so many thousands of martyrs throughout history have died courageous deaths in spite of cruel tortures. There was a secret, hidden inner place that no man could touch, and no flames could burn.

Let's pray for a new determination and a fresh vision, while all the time *"Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart"* (Hebrews 12:2-3).

