



Cross Currents International Ministries

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Our Dear Prayer Supporter,

This month's enclosed Article, *The Liberty Bell*, is more than a record of history, or the hope of every believer of the soon coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is a challenge for us to a total commitment of ourselves to forsake the trivial whenever it takes priority over the eternal.

Let us each ask ourselves the question that John Wesley urged upon his followers: "When did I last speak to somebody else with the object of leading that person to Christ?" Speaking of the prodigal son, Rudyard Kipling commented: "Probably the reason why the prodigal son ran away from home was his elder brother." One



cannot help but wonder as believers, if our lukewarm and socially acceptable testimonies are the root cause of such moral degeneracy throughout our nation.

"Liberty is not the freedom to do what I want, it is the power to do what I ought!"

Thank God, the Lord Jesus Christ commissioned: "Ye shall be My witnesses." And it is Jesus, Who through His indwelling life, becomes the dynamic of His own demands!

Your prayers and gifts make this ministry possible and we thank you deeply in Him.

Together in His Name,

DDD" Listener Response from French speaking Africa: *"Rendezvous with the Lord"*

* **Ivory Coast:** By listening today to, *"Rendezvous with the Lord,"* I realized how God had been so good to me by having led me to repentance and salvation. At the end of your message you shared from the Bible about the future great tribulation coming to this world, when God's wrath will be poured out. I realized His goodness and mercy to me and for mankind in this age of Grace, when a man found guilty to be condemned by his own works, is given the opportunity to take His stretched out hand of mercy, and be personally saved!

* **Nigeria:** I am a faithful regular listener of your program and want to encourage you by saying that this program is a blessing to me.

* **SMS (text):** I am from **Congo**. Your message on *"Merchandising"* has been a blessing for me.

* **Ivory Coast:** I have been spiritually built up by your program. Your message: *"The Redeemer and the Ransom,"* was very relevant as we are so addicted to our material possessions and comfort zone. Nevertheless, we are scared to death when we realize that we will leave everything behind us after we die. We are also afraid of death, even though Christ has redeemed us from death and delivered us from the fear of death. I am so very grateful in what I heard because I am reassured in a world where nearly all is nothing else but lies.

* **West Africa:** I listened to your message today: *"Power to Produce Fruit."* I realized that, by faith in Christ, we are free from sin. That means that I am free from animal sacrifices; from turning to our traditions and customs requirements and that we should not add these ancestral demands to our new-found faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. We are also free from totems or from things that we should not eat according to our traditional customs but have a testimony of someone who has new Life in Christ. A Christian recently shared how he was demanded to do what everybody in his village considered was necessary and, when arriving in his village for whatever the reason, according to their tribal custom, was to first go and greet the Chief before entering their huts.



There's a Crack in the Liberty Bell

-By Richard A. Bennett

Millions of liberty lovers from around the world have seen and touched the historic America's Liberty Bell. Some years ago Dorothy and I were among them. Our hands skimmed her surface and our fingers verified the crack was there! At that time we were fascinated to watch little boys, both black and white, tap their knuckles against the metal with the hope of hearing it ring again. But the old lady of liberty refused to sing!

On July 8, 1776, after the first public reading of the Declaration of Independence, this famous bell, now located in Independence Square, was enthusiastically rung to the citizens of Philadelphia. Fifty-nine years later she was silenced forever when a crack appeared on her surface. Later, attempts to restore her melody failed. The drilling of the hairline fracture to make it wider and then to weld in an identical alloy proved futile. Though robbed of her audible ring, today the Liberty Bell still heralds a mute but meaningful message. Eternal words of truth and hope are embossed in metal on the cone of the bell. They are quoted from the Word of God as found in Leviticus 25:10: "Proclaim liberty throughout all the Land and to all the inhabitants thereof."

For the Israelites, the Year of Jubilee, was celebrated every 50th year. At that time the injustices of the secular society were to be redressed: Slaves were to be set free; all debts were to be discharged; any lost inheritance was to be restored and, exiles were to return home. Surely, many people, who had been oppressed and bereft must have longed to hear the trumpet blow as it introduced the Year of Jubilee.

However, for the Israelites, the proclamation of liberty was preceded by God-given restraints. "Liberty" did not imply "license." The moral guidelines were: i) "*Thou shalt not uncover a woman to uncover her nakedness*" [playboy morality] Leviticus 18:19. ii). "*Thou shalt not lie carnally with thy neighbor's wife*" [adultery] Leviticus 18:10. iii) "*Thou shalt not let any of thy seed pass through the*

fire to Molech, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I AM the Lord" [abortion and blasphemy] Leviticus 22:21. iv.) "*Thou shalt not lie with mankind as with womankind*" [homosexuality] Leviticus 18:22, 23, and etc.

Though by God's grace, liberty was announced to the Israelites, God clarified that to break His prescribed prohibition would result in inevitable judgment. This is still true of nations as well as of individuals.

Sadly, the moral climate in America today reflects the very sins that God prohibits in any generation or in any nation. Surely, "*Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people*" Proverbs 14:34. Yes, there is a crack in the Liberty Bell both literally and metaphorically! Just as in the New Testament grace does not free me to do what I want without moral restraint, so in the Old Testament, Law does not spell condemnation to those who truly repent. To think otherwise would deny the consistency of the character of God Himself!

In our democratic society, differences of opinion can be expressed. And in America today, we sadly witness many people seeking to remove God from our public arena. A well-known atheist coined the slogan: "There is no God, so enjoy yourselves!" This slogan was emblazoned on buses in several cities in the free world! However, as we delve deeper into the cause of our moral and economic crises, we must ask: "Just who is it that seeks to remove the mention of our Lord Jesus Christ from our public forums and educational institutions?" The answer of course is "Satan!" That "Old Serpent's" agenda is to deceive and manipulate nations. In so doing, his goal is to become god of this world's political system. So, our ultimate conflict is with the foul agenda of Satan. He hates the One Who will ultimately rule this world—our Lord Jesus.

But for now: "*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*" Ephesians 6:12. As Satan continues his nasty work we are told that, in America, suicide is the third major cause of death for 15 to 19 year-olds. Sex, drugs,

alcohol and the base entertainment media are considered sociably acceptable. At the same time, prayer, and the mention of the Lord Jesus, is forbidden in schools and in the public arena. Little wonder that our Liberty Bell is mute!

Though some may consider the following quotation from Brannon Howse pessimistic, others might think it realistic: *“We’ve lost the culture war. I wish I could tell you otherwise and go happily along with the many Christians who still think we can recapture America, return to our moral and spiritual roots, and revitalize our wayward institutions. But I can’t, and someone needs to tell you— loudly and clearly ... We are not going to reclaim the culture in America and return to the days of June and Ward Cleaver... The heaviest fighting is yet to come. In the midst of a lost culture, we must stand up for righteousness ... We must accept that we are past the point of restoring our culture ... We must evangelize, disciple, and raise up those who can lead the remnant.”*— The Berean Call 2/10.

In this connection, the Bible warns, *“Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ”* Colossians 2:8.



In Exodus 28:33,34, we read that liberty is depicted by an understanding of the golden bells which were attached to the high priest’s robe. Yes, though the Liberty Bell is forever quiet, praise God, other bells ring loud and clear!

Golden Bells—Good News

Golden bells were interspersed with pomegranates around the hem of the garment of the high priest. The high priest is a picture of our Great High Priest—the Lord Jesus Christ. Pomegranates portray His fruitfulness on our behalf. Golden bells ring with the glad news that atonement for sin has been accomplished. While atonement for sin in the Old Testament meant sin was covered for another year, in the New Testament it means sin is removed forever. *Telestia—It is finished!*

Once every year, clothed in his robe, the high priest entered the Holy of Holies: *“And it shall be upon Aaron to minister: and his sound shall be heard when he goeth in unto the holy place before the Lord, and when he cometh out, that he die not”* Exodus 28:35.

Outside the Tabernacle, the people waited with bated

breath. They heard the golden bells ring when the high priest, with the blood of the sacrifice, entered into the Holy of Holies. There, he encountered the fearsome holiness and glory of God. Such was His awesome holiness that the high priest would die if God did not accept the Blood sacrifice as an atonement for sin. Understandably then, there was great excitement when eventually the high priest emerged. Gladly they heard the golden bells ring. The blood had been accepted on the Mercy Seat and their sin had been covered for another year!

Later, it was our Great High Priest—the Lord Jesus Christ—Who shed His Precious Blood. He conquered death, and ascended to the Holiest of Holies in Heaven! Was His Precious Blood accepted by the Father? Yes, a thousand times yes!

Today, true liberty is found in the indwelling reality of the risen Lord Jesus Christ Who becomes the dynamic of His own demands. The Apostle Paul wrote: *“Because the creature itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God”* Romans 8:21.

Jesus, as Perfect Man, returned to the Holiest of Holies in Heaven and there His Blood was accepted by the Father as full atonement for your sin and mine. Accordingly, on the Day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit was released from Heaven: *“There came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind”* Acts 2:2. So, the Holy Spirit commenced His ministry on earth in a new way to reproduce the life of Christ in the heart of every Blood-bought child of God!

Even in the darkest hour His purposes of blessing continue to be outworked through available believers. Soon, we pray, the Church will be complete and we eagerly anticipate the Golden Bells at His soon return when we will meet Him in the air.

*Thou art coming, O my Saviour,
Thou are coming, O my King;
In Thy beauty all-resplendent,
In Thy glory all-transcendent;
Well may we rejoice and sing.
Coming! In the opening east
Herald brightness slowly swells;
Coming! O my glorious Priest,
Hear we not Thy golden bells?*



—Francis Ridley Havergall, 1836-79