

**WE ARE COMING, BUT ARE WE STAYING**  
**A Devotional Meditation from**  
**1 Samuel 13:14, 24:1-7; Matthew 13:1-23; Galatians 6:1-10; James 5:7-11**  
**Albert J. McCarn**  
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In July 1862, President Abraham Lincoln issued a call for 300,000 volunteers to deal with the rebellion of the Confederate states. More than a year of war had brought a series of battlefield reverses to the Union. Although there had been some significant victories, the Confederate heartland remained untouched, and the South's ability to make war against the Union had not been noticeably hindered. Lincoln's administration faced a grim reality of physics: namely, that it takes time, blood, and treasure to build an effective army.

Many of those who answered Lincoln's call in 1862, like those who had come at the onset of war a year earlier, would fall by the wayside. Thousands fell in battle. Thousands more fell to disease. Others succumbed to despair and deserted their posts. Yet there were those who endured to the end, remaining true even through hunger, thirst, sickness, injury, cold, heat, loneliness, despair, and all manner of opposition. Their endurance transformed them into the seasoned warriors who overcame humiliating defeats at Manassas, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, Chickamauga, and Cold Harbor to become the triumphant veterans of Vicksburg, Gettysburg, Atlanta, Wilderness, and Appomattox. Because they held firm, the Union was saved, millions held in bondage were freed, and government of the people, by the people, and for the people did not perish from this earth.



Dress On The Colors, [US Army Center of Military History](#).

The process of saving the American Union is much like the process of restoring our Creator's Kingdom on this earth. The enemy of our souls has tremendous power to wage war, achieving stunning victories that dishearten God's people and make us fearful to venture into the fight. Those who do usually have a vision of the promises our God has given to free His people from the oppression of this world. What often happens, though, is that we lose sight of the goal as we try to achieve it in our own strength and understanding. As a young warrior, David faced the same temptation. God promised he would replace Saul as king of Israel, but as Saul proved himself a power-mad tyrant, those promises seemed hollow and far away. And then, just as David was doing all he could to stay alive and out of Saul's reach, a miracle happened:

Now when Saul returned from pursuing the Philistines, they told him saying, "Look, David is in the wilderness of En-gedi." So Saul took 3,000 chosen men from all Israel and went to search for David and his men near the rocks of the mountain goats. When he came across the sheepfolds along the way where there was a cave, Saul went in to relieve himself. Now David and his men were already sitting in the innermost parts of the cave. So David's men said to him, "Look, it's the day ADONAI spoke to you about, 'Behold, I will deliver your enemy into your hand, so

you may do to him as seems good in your eyes.” Then David crept and cut off the corner of Saul’s robe stealthily. But afterward, David’s conscience bothered him for cutting off the edge of Saul’s robe. So he said to his fellow men, “*ADONAI* forbid that I should do such a thing to my lord, *ADONAI*’s anointed, stretching out my hand against him—for he is *ADONAI*’s anointed.” So David persuaded his fellow men with these words and did not let them rise against Saul. Then Saul left the cave and went on his way. (1 Samuel 24:1-7 TLV)

This was one of many trials that refined David’s character and prepared him for kingship. In this particular test, he could have seized what was promised to him by killing Saul, but that would prove him to be a power-hungry tyrant just like Saul. Instead, David chose to wait on God, and in that way became the king who willingly abandoned Jerusalem to his rebellious son, Absalom, rather than see the city and the nation destroyed. His reliance on God, no matter how difficult and counterintuitive the Almighty’s methods and timing might be, brought David back to the throne in due season. His humble, contrite attitude tempered the strong will that made him a great leader, but also made him prone to abuse his power. David remained open to correction, and humbly received correction many times when the Lord confronted him about his sins. That is why the Bible describes him as a man after God’s own heart.

David became a godly king by the same process Yeshua used to develop His disciples into world-changing apostles. We might wonder why He would choose those particular men. They were far from ideal candidates, and ordinarily would not have associated with each other. Matthew the tax collector, for instance, made a living from the Roman occupation, but Simon the Zealot was a revolutionary who sought to overthrow both the Romans and their Jewish collaborators. You can imagine the arguments those two had – once they had condescended to speak to one another, that is. Most of the rest, such as the fishermen Peter, Andrew, John, and James, simply wanted to avoid trouble from the Romans and stay away from the Zealots while they earned a living for their families.

And then there was Judas Iscariot, the pragmatist. He, like the rest, believed that Messiah would come and deliver Israel from foreign oppression, and that His Kingdom would have no end. But with Judas it was different. Somehow the others came to terms with their expectations and learned to rely on each other through the trials of radical ministry. Judas, however, grew impatient and tried to seize the initiative by betraying his Master to the authorities. That, he believed, would compel Yeshua to act as he envisioned the Messiah should. Only too late did Judas learn that he had chosen the way that seems right to a man, but that leads only to death.

What does this mean for us? It means we endure the hard, dry times as our churches, ministries, organizations, communities, and families suffer without visible reward. It means we stay at our post even when others fall away. It means we learn to get along with those whose opinions and ways cause us offense. That is how we put down deep roots capable of withstanding the harsh heat of the sun, just as James tells us:

So be patient, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient for it until it receives the early and late rain. You also be patient. Strengthen your hearts because the coming of the Lord is near. Do not grumble against one another, brothers and

sisters, so that you may not be judged. Behold, the judge is standing at the doors. As an example of suffering and patience, brothers and sisters, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. Behold, we consider blessed those who showed endurance. You have heard of the endurance of Job, and you have seen the outcome of *ADONAI*—that *ADONAI* is full of compassion and mercy. (James 5:7-11 TLV)

Paul echoes this advice, saying –

So let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we don't give up. Therefore, whenever we have an opportunity, let us do good toward all—especially those who belong to the household of faith. (Galatians 6:9-10 TLV)

Our Lord will overcome and His Kingdom will be established in time. That is never in doubt. The question is, will we remain true to see and take part in that ultimate victory?