

What Hath God Wrought

When Samuel Morse sent the first long distance telegraph message on May 24, 1844, he chose to send the words, *"What hath God wrought."* Those words were taken from Numbers 23:23, using the King James Version of the Bible. The phrase was suggested by Annie Ellsworth, the daughter of a friend, and Morse chose it to reflect both spiritual reverence and the monumental breakthrough in technology. It's hard to imagine a world without instantaneous communication as so many advancements in technology have taken place since the telegraph.

The full context is found in Numbers 23:18-24 in which Balaam spoke the words above to Balak, telling him nothing could stop God's very great blessings. Newer versions read Numbers 23:23 this way, "...And to Israel, what God has done!" The words are a powerful exclamation as to the work of God for his people.

For the people of God today, we too can and should exclaim, "what God has done!"

- **Ultimate love was demonstrated when Jesus laid down his life for you.** *"By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us."* (1 John 3:16)
- **God's precious and unmatched grace has been shown to us.** *"To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ"* (Ephesians 3:8)
- **Through Jesus, we can be accepted as God's people.** *"to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved."* (Ephesians 1:6)
- **We can be joint heirs with Christ of an inheritance that transcends all earthly comparisons.** *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you"* (1 Peter 1:3-4)

When you think about all that God has made possible for us, our thought should truly be: "What hath God wrought!" God has done his part, but will you do what He has instructed for you to do? If you will, then you can enjoy all the blessings that he has promised us today.

- by Josh McCord

The Disease of Naaman

Most Bible students are familiar with Naaman. He was the man who, upon being told how to cleanse his leprosy, became "wroth, and went away, and said, Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper" (2 Kings 5:11).

Many folks today are suffering with the disease of Naaman. No, not his leprosy, but rather his "behold, I thought" malady. It's like the "Christian Church Elder" I heard of who was conducting a funeral service on a Saturday morning and stating that the daughter of the deceased had asked that they observe the Lord's Supper. Before serving it, the man said, "my initial reaction was, I've never heard of that before - but then I thought, why not?" Why not?! How about the fact there's no Bible authority for such. In the Bible, the church assembled to "break bread (partake of the Lord's Supper) upon the first day of the week" (Acts 20:7).

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord" (Isa. 55:8). Don't let the "behold, I thought" epidemic get you.

- by David McPherson

Stuck On Self

Peruse the catalog of almost any religious publisher or walk down the aisle of the Christian Booksellers Association convention and you will quickly discover what's hot and what's not: what's hot is the counsel of psychologists about anxiety and addiction, depression and dependency, self-esteem and sexuality, parenting and personality disorders; what's not is the call of Jesus to deny ourselves, take up our crosses, and follow Him in the way of servanthood. Our obsession with self has led us astray into the temple of idols.

- by Donald McCullough

Where I Will Take My Stand

There comes a time when every person must decide where he will take his stand. The world is full of people who “go along to get along.” They don’t want to offend anyone or be viewed as different, so they simply drift with the crowd. But faithful Christians cannot do that. Our Lord said, “He that is not with me is against me” (Matthew 12:30). There is no middle ground.

In every generation, God’s people have had to stand up for truth, often in the face of ridicule or persecution. Noah stood alone in a corrupt world (Genesis 6). Daniel stood firm in Babylon (Daniel 6). Peter and John stood before hostile rulers and declared, “We ought to obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29). The apostle Paul took his stand firmly for the Lord. He wrote, “I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation” (Romans 1:16).

We, too, must decide where we will stand. Will we stand with the Bible — even when it condemns popular practices? Will we stand for moral purity when the world laughs at decency? Will we stand with faithful brethren, even when some others grow weary and fall away?

Taking a stand for truth is not always comfortable, but it is always right. Paul urged, “Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong” (1 Corinthians 16:13). The Lord needs men and women of conviction — people who will not be swayed by convenience, pressure, or fear.

Let each of us resolve: *‘This is where I will take my stand — with God, with His Word, and with His people. No matter what the world does, no matter who else may compromise, I will stand with the Lord.’*

- by Greg Gwin