

members? You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask ... Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands you sinners; and purify your hearts you double-minded ... Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up”.

War on a big scale begins with war in the heart of each of us. The root cause of every war of whatever scale is rebellion against God. Selfishness is the root of all conflicts. God created the world in perfect harmony, but when sin and lawlessness came in, conflict followed. Worldwide outbursts of evil are an explosion of the small-scale scandal of sin in each of us.

War and victory were seen 2000 years ago. Humanity's fight against God came to a head when Jesus was crucified. The savagery of the time was awful. People did their worst against Jesus who had come to seek and to save lost humanity. The brutality of the cross and the suffering endured were horrendous. All hell was let loose when Jesus was nailed to a cross at Calvary. There God took all the wickedness of the world, from the beginning of time to its end, and laid it on Jesus.

His physical suffering was intense. But, as He carried and paid for the sin of the world, His spiritual sufferings were immense. As He bore our sin in His own body on the cross He cried, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken Me?” He was forsaken by God so that we might be forgiven and never be forsaken by Him.

We rightly remember those who have given their lives for our freedom. We remember because people matter. It is right too to remember that Jesus died for us that we might know true freedom and forgiveness. Today, Jesus who rose from the dead is alive to welcome us and bring us into a friendship with God that lasts beyond time. God, in His ‘word’ to humanity, speaks of

heaven and hell. Heaven is not a reward for doing good, but a gift which Jesus purchased and offers to all. Hell is for those who reject God’s forgiveness and choose their own way. The Bible also speaks of a day when Jesus will return to reign in righteousness as Lord and King. In that day, we read, God “shall judge between nations, and shall rebuke many people; they shall beat their swords into ploughs, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore”.

As we commemorate VE Day, let us also thank God for coming into our world to pay the price of our warring against Him, and trust Him, surrendering to Him as Lord and Saviour.



To find out more about Jesus Christ please visit:
tell-me-more.org

Or email:
more@10ofthose.com

Written by Roger Carswell

10 Publishing DayOne
a division of 10 of those.com
www.10ofthose.com www.dayone.co.uk



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A VICTORY TO CELEBRATE

By Roger Carswell

Neither drizzle nor dull skies dampened the celebrations on 8th May, 1945. Victory in Europe had at last put an end to years of loss, suffering, separation and death. The war was over. Crowds, euphoric with joy, swarmed Buckingham Palace. There were hugs and kisses, smiles and laughter, dancing and singing. For the first time since war broke out in 1939 London's skies lit up with fireworks and floodlights. Queen Elizabeth II later reflected that "it was one of the most memorable nights of my life". The BBC had interrupted its programming to announce a public holiday. At 3pm Winston Churchill broadcasted on

national radio, and later King George VI also spoke to the nation. He and Queen Elizabeth made eight appearances on the Buckingham Palace balcony with Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret and Prime Minister Churchill.

Throughout every corner of the U.K. there were street parties and parades. Similar celebrations took place in Moscow, Rome, Paris, and throughout the British Empire. Bonfires were topped with effigies of Adolf Hitler. Red, white and blue material could be purchased without ration coupons so that bunting could brighten the streets. Pubs were full. St. Paul's Cathedral had ten consecutive services of thanksgiving each packed with thousands of worshippers. Churches across the land had congregations giving thanks to God.

But a war that had cost millions of lives, destroyed cities, families and homes meant that for many there were mixed emotions. Millions were pained by loss and sadness. **VE Day** for them was a time to reflect. News coming out of Europe was shocking the nation and reinforcing the rightness of confronting Hitler and the Nazis. General Eisenhower after seeing a concentration camp said, "The other day I

visited a German internment camp. I never dreamed that such cruelty, bestiality and savagery could really exist in this world. It was horrible". It would be several weeks before the war in the Far East and Pacific would be over.

VE Day was the culmination of an historic week. On 30th April allied troops had discovered the horrific truth of the Nazi concentration camps. Soviet, British and American soldiers had liberated Belsen, Treblinka and Auschwitz where political and religious 'undesirables' had been murdered and brutalised. On the same day Hitler, in a final act of cowardice, committed suicide. On 4th May in a tent in Luneburg Heath, south of Hamburg in Germany, Field Marshall Montgomery received the first surrender of German forces. Then, three days later, Germany surrendered unconditionally to the Allies at 2.41am in a little red schoolhouse in Reims in France. This was confirmed in Berlin on 8th May when the Russians were also present.

Now the years of war were past, families could reunite, and the work of rebuilding both a nation and a continent would commence. Wounds could begin to be

healed even if deep scars remained. The heart cry of the nation was that this must never happen again.

Yet a visit to the National Arboretum in Staffordshire is evidence that war and savagery did not end with VE Day. What is it about us that wars continue? The same question is asked and answered in the Bible: "Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your