

**General Topics :: War on the saints****War on the saints - posted by Truthspeaker (), on: 2006/5/24 1:38**

I just managed to get my hands on Jessie Penn-Lewis' book War on the Saints. (yes, the unedited, uncensored, complete version..)

Skimmed through it yesterday.. it's heavy. Most books on spiritual warfare barely scratch the surface, but this book does delve pretty deep in these matters..

Anyone else read the book? Any opinions?

Re: War on the saints - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2006/5/24 1:46

This is a very excellent book on spiritual warfare arguably one of the most concise yet controversial in christian history. It was written by Jesse Penn Lewis but was co-authored with Evan Roberts who was the key figure used in the Welsh revival in 1904 where the Holy Spirit was poured out mightly. The book was written somewhat in response to excesses and the moving of the devil amongst a true move of God. Sadly some of the same can be said of modern day movements.

I think even more solid book on spiritual warfare is: Complete Christian Armour by William Gurnall, this book was penned in the 1700's.

Re: - posted by Graftedbranch, on: 2006/5/26 12:25

The Christian in Complete Armour is an excellent book but is puritan and reflects the puritan view on Christian life and warfare.

I believe "War on the Saints" to be more 'up to date' reflecting the light on the Word given by God in subsequent generations from the puritan era.

In particular what is lacking in the puritan writings is man's tripartite being, and God's economy and purpose in despending Himself as Life into man typified by the Tree of Life in Genesis 2. Also seen in JPL's book is those aspects brought to light by G. H. Pember in "Earth's earliest ages" and I believe is more advanced in its scriptural understanding of the nature of the Christian Warfare.

Lewis draws heavily from these scriptural facts and brings a more "enlightened view regarding the spiritual warfare

Watchman Nee's "The Spiritual Man" and particularly volume 3 is also in line with War on the Saints and draws heavily from it.

Graftedbranch

Re: War on the saints - posted by Logic, on: 2006/5/26 13:03

Jesse Penn-Lewis was an interesting figure in religious history by any standard.

Many readers of [War on the Saints](#) and [Spiritual Warfare](#) by Jesse Penn-Lewis will not know the flawed thinking, excesses and errors in 5 major areas that underpin her theology.

Did you know that she believed the Great Tribulation began in 1906 with a great outpouring of demons on the church?

Did you know that she viewed her own writings as divinely inspired?

The information on Jesse Penn-Lewis is copiously documented from original sources.

The unfortunate thing is that her strange twist on Satan's domination of the Church led Penn-Lewis to teach that Christians could be inhabited by invading, indwelling demons — an error repeated by many today with Penn-Lewis as the so

urce. (See for example this author's articles, "Mark Bubeck and Spiritual Warfare — The Cloning of Jessie Penn-Lewis," The Quarterly Journal, July-Sept. 1996, pp. 1, 14-18 and "Demons")

Others in these times following the lead of some medieval mystics over-pressed identification to Christ to bizarre extremes, teaching that even the self was exterminated. Penn-Lewis reported a rather strange "vision" in which she merged into Christ:

"I went to God about 4 p.m. and, as I knelt, I was suddenly within the veil. It seemed as if I and the Lord were one. He stood before the Father holding out His pierced hands, but it was I who stood there, too, in Him. He was saying 'Father I have died,' but I was saying it, too (9. Brynmor Pierce Jones, The Trials and Triumphs of Mrs. Jessie Penn-Lewis. North Brunswick, N.J.: Bridge-Logos Publishers, 1997, pp. 88-89.)

Penn-Lewis herself reported the cessation of the Welsh revival because Satan was working in it to draw off great numbers into "Theosophy ... Christian Science ... and Spiritism" and other "spiritualistic manifestations."¹³ Penn-Lewis believed that the revival stirred and angered Satan in a new way (unknown in all the history of the Church), unleashing his fury and special work against the Church especially through the newly born Pentecostal movement which, she believed, was one of Satan's tools.¹⁴ It is hard to understand why some Charismatics own her and quote her. (See Mary N. Garrard, Jessie Penn-Lewis, A Memoir. Ontario, Canada: Ontario Christian Books, 1989, pp. 229-230.)

Her system can be condensed in broad strokes as follows. There is a twofold work of the cross.

1: salvation aspect of the cross

2: victory aspect of the cross

Penn-Lewis believed that a Christian would be crippled, not progress and be mincemeat for demons unless they actually pressed into the second part of the twofold work of the cross.

The first part is salvation but it hardly does much to equip one for the Christian life.

To oversimplify for the sake of illustration, Penn-Lewis believed that once a person became a Christian, he or she could take an elevator immediately to the top floor as opposed to a lifelong climb up the stairs. In opposition to Penn-Lewis, the long slow climb proves to be the real biblical model as seen in Philippians 2:12-13, 3:12-14, 2 Timothy 4:7-8 and Hebrews 12, among others.

Penn-Lewis did not understand that sanctification flows out of salvation and out of our position in Christ in a progressive life-long difficult growth pattern. In talking of the "message of the cross" she most of the time meant the "higher life" not the Gospel, the new birth experience or evangelism. There was an urgency to get into the "higher life" since time was short and one might be derailed by invading indwelling demons.

Re: - posted by Graftedbranc, on: 2006/5/29 17:14

Quote:
-----"I went to God about 4 p.m. and, as I knelt, I was suddenly within the veil. It seemed as if I and the Lord were one. He stood before the Father holding out His pierced hands, but it was I who stood there, too, in Him. He was saying 'Father I have died,' but I was saying it, too

I would suggest there is absolutely nothing unscriptural about this experience.

1 cor 6:17 says, "He who is joined to the Lord is one spirit

And the Lord in John 14:20 says. "In that day "when the Spirit comes' you shall know that I am in My Father and you are in Me and I am in you.

Our union with Christ is basic to all spiritual experience. And It is upon this union that all the experiences of the Christian Life flow.

That our mind, our emotions, and our will are being brought into oneness with the Living Christ who indwells our regenerated spirit is the work of the Sanctifying Spirit within us whose work is to "conform us to the image of the First Born Son of God".

I would add also that there is nothing unscriptural about her belief that her writings are inspired by the Spirit as any writing of any spiritual benefit are.

There is a difference between the Spirit's inspiration and apostolic authority. That is the Spirit does inspire us and all who have any experience of Christ can testify at times that their writing or speaking flows from the Spirit within our spirit and so is inspired by God. Not in the sense of new revelation but by illumination on the revelation in the Bible. And whatever we do or say that does not flow from the Spirit in our spirit is dead and has no spiritual benefit but is wood, hay, and stubble.

We cannot quote some writing no matter how inspired it is and say, "It is written" except the scriptures which carry the authority of Christ. But we can acknowledge many writings which are inspired and flow from the Spirit and their inspiration is verified by their fidelity to the Scriptures which are the only standard.

Peter says, "Let him who speaks, speak as it were the oracles of God".

If our writing and our speaking does not flow from the Spirit within our regenerated spirit then something is amiss. If we are not experiencing our union with Christ on a daily basis there is something amiss in our Christian Life.

If we miss our union with Christ then we miss the whole heart of the New Testament which is the revelation of the mystery which is, "Christ in you, the hope of Glory".

And if we fail to comprehend and enter into the reality of our union with Christ, then we fail to enter into the promised land, to enjoy its rich bounty and to know Christ as our rich supply and our All in All. We fail to enjoy our "allotted portion with the Saints in the Light".

"Ye died and your life is hid with Christ in God".

I would also add that her expositions on Madam Guyon's writings are unmatched and incomparable and thoroughly scriptural.

If one book has been the most helpful to my own Christian life it has been "Life out of Death by Jessie Penn Lewis" which is a summation and exposition of Madam Guyon's "Spiritual Torrents".

And I would say that in all of church history there is nothing to compare with this little book in its depth, its experience, and its scripturalness in showing the work of God in His redeemed. It has been the source of spiritual help to multitudes of protestant believers including John Wesley, William Law, Andrew Murray, Joe Carroll, and Watchman Nee regarding Christian Experience.

And I would add that whenever I read the chapter in the book called, "the experience of the soul in Divine Union" there is nothing less than an eternal "Amen" in my spirit. I can just read it and I am quickened.

I would also add that her insistence that believers can be "possessed" by demons has to be qualified. It is an unpalatable teaching by many who say, "It is impossible for the devil to dwell in a believer who has the Holy Spirit" but this is ignorant.

Sin dwells in us. And our fallen nature has the poison of the Serpent in it. And if a believer fulfills the conditions for demonic activity then there is nothing which keeps them safe from this. The Lord even said to Peter, "Get thee behind me Satan".

Her writings are extreme only from a point of view which is inexperienced in Christian Warfare and Life in the Spirit. But those who have pressed on into the Holy of Holies and engaged the enemy in spiritual combat know something of these realities.

Graftedbranch

Re: Jessie Penn Lewis - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/5/29 17:29

Logic, I read the two of JPL's books, Spiritual Warfare, and also War on the Saints (abridged and unabridged versions) and I never picked up any of the accusations you mention. I wonder where you found them, and if they are proven.

I found her books very insightful. I admit, I wondered if she was extreme in some of her conclusions, but then, I wasn't there, and did not experience what she saw. The closest experience I can relate to is my times visiting the Toronto Airport Church or similar religious events, and my connection with people who were deep into that. She describes them quite accurately. Those people should read the book, but they seem to have their own collection of spiritual warfare books - which does NOT include JPL (in the past anyway, I'm out of touch).

Diane

Re: - posted by Forevidence (), on: 2006/5/29 21:14

This is an interesting thread because this issue has just been brought to my spirit as of lately.

I have read "War on the Saints." And was really challenged by it the first time I read it, but now I am having my doubts about Jesse Penn Lewis, but I don't know if they were legitimate. I tried to read the book again and it was more confusing than edifying the last time around.

But the thing that gets me is that it has been brought to my attention very similar things to what Logic has just spoken about. I had heard that she had a fanatical approach to demons, and that the Welsh Revival actually was slowed down because of her advice to Evan Roberts. I heard also that Roberts wrote an apology letter to the whole Body of Christ in Wales after Lewis' death to renounce some of things in the book. Also to apologize about all the division that happened because of it. I don't know if these things are true. But I would sure like to find out. Has anyone heard anything similar to what I have heard? Have I been given faulty info?

Please respond if you have any links of info on this matter. Peace.

Re: why the abridged version - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/5/30 8:24

Now you have me curious. If anybody is researching JPL, I wouldn't mind knowing the purpose for printing an abridged version of War on the Saints. I have heard that the controversial bits were left out. (I would need to spend some time myself going through the books again to properly compare.)

I just pulled out my unabridged book and noted one comment I made 10 yrs ago when I read it : "JPL seems overly skeptical about manifestations." Otherwise, positive comments.

I'm sure I too would have different comments now - 10 years later. (likely not to disqualify the book entirely, as there are some powerful truths brought forth)

Diane

Re: War on the saints - posted by brentw (), on: 2006/5/30 11:29

Vance Havner said Jessie Pen-Lewis book "war on the saints" had him looking underneath his bed at night??

Re: - posted by Graftedbranc, on: 2006/5/30 12:50

Quote:

-----Vance Havner said Jessie Pen-Lewis book "war on the saints" had him looking underneath his bed at night??

I would have to say that people's response to a book does not indicate the validity of the book. I am sure many people who read through the book of Revelation may have a fear of many things.

My wife when she was younger had a fear of the rapture based on many "rapture books" and when she would come home and find no one around she had a sudden fear of being "left behind." (This was in her youth).

With all due respect to Vance Havener, I would say that if one has a "fear of demons" because of her book, then one is not enjoying Christ as thier Life because if we are enjoying Christ, then we have no fear of demons. We tread upon them . They are our breakfast.

I would say that "war on the saints" is not a book to hand to a new believer. Our minds are too curious in "dark things" and unless one is strong in his spirit and grounded in Christ and the truth, then rather than seeking Christ, this book can lead one to be taken up with supernatural manifestations and be "demon conscious" rather than "Christ conscious".

But the problem is not with the book but with us. We need to eat only what the Spirit gives us a hunger for and only what we can bear at any given time and if a book does not minister life to us, set it aside until it does. We need to learn to eat what the Lord provides and not delve into things we are not prepared to handle or strong to receive.

Graftedbranch

Re: - posted by roaringlamb (), on: 2006/5/30 13:17

I at times wonder about the "demonology" of the Church today. It is true that there are demons, and that satan seeketh to devour whom he may, yet I wonder if I am being too simple by saying that God is sovereign, and as we see from the book of Job, everything the devil would do in my life is allowed of God. Then when His purpose is accomplished, He tells the wicked one "stop, that is enough!"

I don't know, this seems to be part of salvation, after all Jesus destroyed the works of the devil - "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." 1 John 3.8

And what about this scripture "1 John 5:18 We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and **that wicked one toucheth him not.**

Simply reading through 1 John, you will see that the phrase "that wicked one" is about the devil (1 John 2.13,14; 1 John 3.12; 1 John 5.18)

I'm sure there are more but I am short on time. Please give me feedback, I may be off, but I see victory in this stance rather than fear, and worry. It has helped me much to know that satan has absolutely no power save that which is given him by my Father!

Amen

Re: - posted by Graftedbranc, on: 2006/5/30 20:48

I think God's intent is for us to grow up in all things into Christ who is the Head. But in so doing, as the Song of Songs shows us, we eventually become constituted and equipped to be soldiers in His Army to deal with His enemy and to advance the Kingdom of God.

The Lord Jesus judged Satan and His kindom on the Cross but it is our job through the Spirit to apply and execute this judgement even as the Lord said, 'If I, by the Spirit do cast out demons, then the Kingdom of God has come upon you'.

God desires to bring us on and out of ourselves and our struggles to overcome personal sin and such into the sphere of His warfare.

Remember the land of Cannan was flowing with Milk and honey but it had to be wrested from those who occupied it.

God gave them the land but they had to take it.

God's desire is for His people to encamp around the tent of meeting Where His Presence dwelt and to be soldiers in His Army for His move on the earth.

As we advance in the spiritual life, the Lord's goal is to constitute us with Himself as "Young men who have overcome the evil one". To be soldiers not taken up with our own little spiritual defeats and victories, but to be engaged in His interest to further His kingdom.

As we are built up together with other members of the body of Christ we become an Army to engage the spiritual hosts of wickedness in heavenly places and to do battle with the heavenly hosts engaging in spiritual warfare.

And through this warfare, the tracks are laid for the spreading of the gospel and God's move on the earth. God needs those who are strong in spirit, learned in all the weapons of war, built up together with others, and able to stand against the powers of darkness.

Ephesians 6:12 "For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenlies".

Graftedbranch