

Commander of the Lord's Army

Explanation of the Picture

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First in a Series of Eight

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This drawing is the first in a series of eight different drawings that center around God's progressive revealing of His Son in this creation. Each drawing has its own song. "JESUS" is written in different colors to bring out a different aspect of His work and appearance in this world. Each Original is exactly twice the size of the old album jacket. You know what my thinking was at the time - and I sure am feeling dated!

"In Him all things were created, in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities, all things have been created through Him and for Him and He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together" (Col 1:16-17).

1. **"JESUS"** - These letters are white, representing a Christophany, which is an appearance of the Christ in human form before He actually entered this creation through physical birth. Also, the letters are outlined in light brown which are a foreshadowing of His birth in Bethlehem, (man's body being formed from the dust of the earth - Gen 2:7), which came about *"in the fullness of time"* (Gal 4:4).

2. The Two Picture Inserts:

a) **Moses and the Burning Bush.** God used two different men to lead the children of Israel out of the slavery of Egypt into the promised land. One was Moses and the other was Joshua. The exodus and the possessing of the promised land were monumental undertakings. In this scene, it is very possible that God was confirming to Joshua that He would be with him even as He had been with Moses. Both got the same order: *"Remove your sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy"* (Ex 3:5 and Josh 5:15). Any time we are confronted with God (through encouragement, reproof, chastening, etc.), we would be well advised to *"remove our sandals"* - for we, too, are on holy ground.

b) **Abraham and the Three Sojourners.** Matthew Henry has observed that Jesus appeared to the soldier Joshua *as a soldier* - as a man of war with sword drawn. But when He appeared to the wanderer Abraham, He appeared *as a wanderer*. Every true Christian knows that God does "bow down" from the heavens to meet us on **our** level (Ps 113:5-8). Yet, He never violates His holiness and Godhead in these exhibitions of mercy, power, wisdom and love.

3. The Sky. It is red and the sun is *going down* over a fertile land. Judgment was descending upon the inhabitants of the land of Canaan - and Joshua was God's tool for judgment upon a wicked people who were to be "spewed out" of the land. Joshua and the Israelites were under orders to leave nothing that breathed *alive* - men, women, children or livestock (Deut 20:10-18). While it may be true that the entire world is currently under a sky of grace - do not be fooled into thinking that individuals are in some kind of free and benevolent, "*no judgment; love of God*" zone. Individuals are being spewed out of this world on a continual basis. After a list of sins in Colossians 3:5, Paul concludes with this; "*For it is on account of these things (sins just listed) the wrath of God comes.*" Not "*will come.*" This is an *undisputed* present tense verb. The future tense could have easily been used - but **was not**. God's wrath comes now. Ananias and Sapphira know this is true (Acts 5:1-11). So also the Herod of Acts 12 (esp v 23). When God decides to - He strikes. Just because He no longer has His activity recorded for us - like we find in these Acts passages - does not mean He is not doing the same things. Dear Reader, a bloodied sun is descending, the sky is red, and the great tribulation and second coming of the Christ (in judgment) is hastening upon us (Rev 22:20). Are you ready?

4. The Green Land and Brown Wilderness. The Jews were entering the promised land which flowed with milk and honey. They were leaving the desert where little life could grow. In like manner, we are in a desert now where righteousness has no home, and are heading toward the promised land "*wherein dwelleth righteousness*" (2Pet 3:13). The Canaanites of that land (Satan and his associates) have already been spewed out of there. Praise God.

5. The Commander Himself - He is the Dread Champion (Jer 20:11)!

a) His belt buckle has 12 stones in it (the twelve tribes He took under His wing and command). Oh, what a tremendous error to later reject Him as Commander and King in exchange for a Saul, David, Solomon, and all the rest! The eye of flesh is shortsighted and stupid. But, ... don't I often make that same exchange? Where stupidity abounds, please make changing grace abound.

b) As the Ancient of Days, He is white-headed. A true elder must be "white headed"- well seen *spiritual* white hairs. There are no shortcuts to genuine maturity. A brother once told me, "A person can be very spiritual, but that does not necessarily mean mature." You see, aggressive spirituality can occur at new birth and beyond, but maturity can only come with time and experience. May God grant us both.

c) Notice that the Commander of the Lord's Army has His back turned toward the Canaanites! Does that mean He doesn't know what they are doing? One group says, "*God doesn't see!*" (Ps 10:11). Well, to them He says He "*watches all the paths of men - the good and the evil*" (Pr 5:21). A second group says, "*God doesn't care!*" (Ps 10:13). To them He asserts He has recorded every deed, word, and thought they have ever had – even all secrets (Rev 20:13, Mt 12:36-37 and Ro 2:16). Incidentally, who else cares that much? A third group says, "*I'm doing okay; look how I'm prospering. I must be on His good side.*" To them, He says, "*Because I kept silent, you thought that I was just like you*" (Ps 50:21). But they judge wrongly. All of them do.

God is not a nagging mother, wagging His finger at men and women. The inhabitants of the land of Canaan had turned their back on God. As a judgment, He then turned His back toward them. If He is not wanted, He leaves. But, ***He does return*** - and when He does, He comes with a righteous sword. Don't make the mistake of creating an Old Testament God and a New Testament God. There is **one** God, and He "*is the same yesterday, today, and forever*" (Heb 13:8). Everyone that pushes Him away can succeed in that effort ... for a season. But, do not be fooled - He will come back.

Father, grant to my readers, Your saving grace,
So they might seek the Dread Champion's face.
Grant them the gift of your pardoning mercy,
That comes from the Commander of the Lord's army.

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In 1977, Robin became a Christian. BA, Bus Admin (Milligan College '90) and M-Div (Emmanuel School of Religion '92).