

## The Greatest Invasion Ever

On June 6, 1944 the biggest invasion force ever (160,000 men) assembled. They were headed for the beaches and coastline of Normandy, France. After months of training, planning, and waiting for the right weather conditions, the Allied forces were ready. Some went by boat as they stepped off of wood human carriers a little way from the beaches of Normandy. Some were taken by plane as they parachuted behind enemy lines in order to cut off roads so the Germans could not maneuver their troops as they wanted.

This was an invasion that was so risky the head of the U.S. forces, General Dwight D Eisenhower had written his letter of resignation in case it failed. Many died that day on those beaches: some in downed planes and others on the way to the ground in their parachutes. Fighting was be intense as both the Germans and Allied forces realized the importance of this battle. The first invasion force suffered high casualties but a beachhead would be established. Success was not be immediate as it took a number of days to link the beaches together. Over 4,000 Allied forces (ninety percent of the first waves) died those first few hours on June 6.

Many of those soldiers were young men who walked into a wall of bullets. When one looks at pictures of those soldiers, they were young men. Some came from small towns, farming communities, and big cities but they all were like you and I.

I have known a few men who took part in that day of battle but they remained silent after coming back home. Many have now found their way to the grave. They all left their homes for a place they had never seen before. They left because they were asked to by their country. Perhaps some answered the call to duty for the quest for adventure but

most came because of love. They fought not for fame or fortune but to protect their loved ones. In so doing they laid down their lives for their fellowman.

To paraphrase one General, the greatest fighting soldier ever to walk to face of this earth has been the American soldier. More people have been liberated through his efforts, more tyrants have been stopped by his resolve, and better good has been done by this soldier than any other fighting force. He/she never asked for anything more than the land to bury their dead and go to back home.

The German operation "Fortress Europe" was stopped as the major battles would now be in Europe. Victory was not certain on June 6th but it was the beginning of the end for Nazi Germany. Those soldiers were heroes.

Let me make a comparison between those men and Jesus.

Jesus left His home in heaven to come to this world. He left the very place we desire to go. Why? Not to be treated as a King but serve and give His life a ransom for us. "Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." (Matthew 20:28)

Jesus, Immanuel, became deity in the flesh. "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us." (Matthew 1:23). Why? To be tempted as we are and to live the perfect life, free from sin. "For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin." (Hebrews 4:15). Also, to have a body to serve as a sacrifice for our sins. "Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He

might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people." (Hebrews 2:17)

That which motivated Jesus to leave heaven, become like us, and be crucified on the cross is the greatest motivator man has ever known, love. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) It was not the nails that kept Jesus on the cross but His love for mankind.

Finally, the victory was not apparent at first. In fact, the disciples thought the death of Jesus was the end. But three days later they saw the empty grave, they started to comprehend the victory Jesus had won over Satan, sin, and death, Acts 2.23-24.

Europe is littered with cemeteries containing the graves of American soldiers. Let us all be aware of the cost of freedom and the great battle that was waged on June 6, 1944. Let us all understand without the victory of our Savior at Calvary we would have no hope. - - Dennis Tucker