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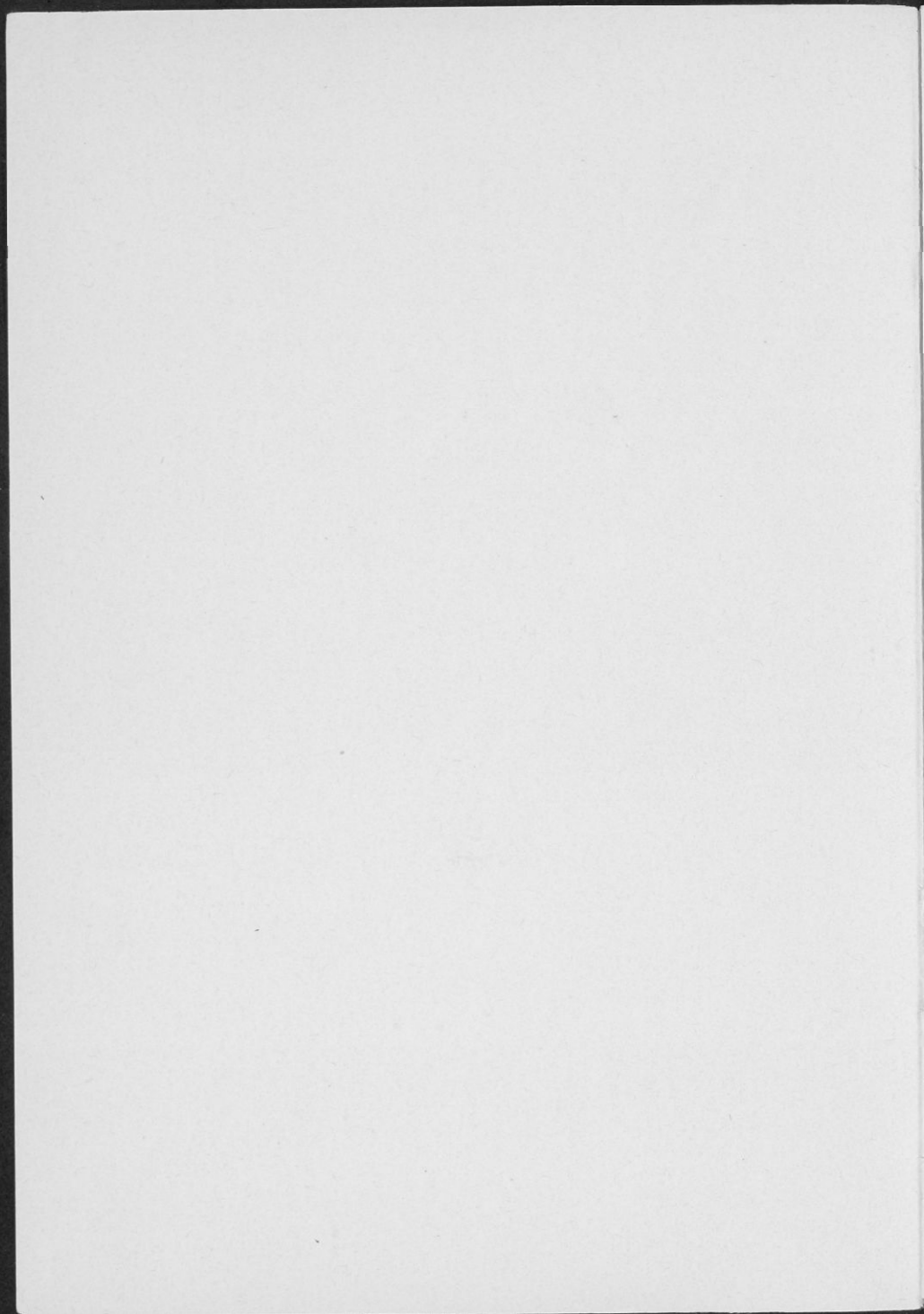
Names

that live forever

ABRAHAM MOSES

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Names That Live Forever

Four addresses delivered on the Catholic Hour from November 7, 1954 through November 28, 1954 by the Very Rev. Msgr. John J. Dougherty. The program is produced by the National Council of Catholic Men in cooperation with the National Broadcasting Company.

BY

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ABRAHAM THE FAITHFUL FRIEND

THE FAITHFUL FRIEND OF GOD

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ABRAHAM THE FAITHFUL FRIEND

Address Delivered on November 7, 1954

I believe there is one name that is "above every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come." (Eph. 1:21) It is the name Jesus. For "God has exalted Him and has bestowed upon Him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend of those in heaven, on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that the Lord Jesus Christ is in the glory of God the Father." (Phil. 2:9-11)

We glory in the name of Jesus and give it an honor that we give to no other. Jesus is our splendor in the past, our strength in the present, and our hope for the future. He is forever our way, our truth, and our life, and if ever we utter other names, it is to do Him honor. Jesus came from an illustrious line, brilliant with names that live forever. Matthew begins his Gospel with these words: "The book of the origin of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham." (Matt. 1:1) It is of the illustrious name of Abraham that I shall now speak.

You might wonder why I should go so far back in time for my subject, when our own time is so heavy with dramatic

figure and heroic event. You might think me somewhat romantic and unrealistic to go wandering so far afield for my topic. I voice these thoughts to assure you that I am not unaware of them and also to introduce the reason for my choice. We live in the age of anxiety. The crisis that confronts us is a crisis of our civilization. That civilization is properly described as the Judeo-Christian culture. Now a greater threat to culture than an external enemy is internal decay. A famine of thought will destroy a culture as surely as a seige. To survive a culture must be loved, and to be loved it must be known. Faith is the life-breath of Western Civilization. It was born of the Christian Faith, and at the heart of that Faith is the mystery of God speaking to man through Jesus Christ.

Paul the Apostle said of Jesus, "God has spoken to us by His Son," but he also said, "God at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets." (Hebr. 1:1) God spoke in historic time first to Abraham. This speaking marks the beginning of the story of faith. It is a story of the kindness of God and of the great faith of a man.

To understand that divine kindness and that human faith, you must have some idea of the condition of mankind then, how much they were in need of God, and how much they needed to hear God speak.

God called Abraham from a dark pagan world. Centuries later Josue said to the tribes of Israel in Chanaan, "Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel: Your fathers dwelt of old on the other side of the river (Euphrates). There the father of Abraham, and Nachor, and they served strange gods. And I took your father Abraham from the borders of Mesopotamia." (Jos. 24:2) The book of Judith relates that the Israelites left the children of Chaldea "because they would not follow the gods of their fathers, who were in the land of the Chaldeans. Wherefore forsaking the ceremonies of their fathers, which consisted in the worship of many gods, they worshipped one God of heaven." (5:7-9)

In the echo of these words listen now to the call of Abraham as related in Genesis 12. "And the Lord said to Abraham, Go forth out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and out of thy father's house, and come into the land which I shall show thee. And I will make of thee a great nation . . . In thee shall all nations of the earth be blessed." (12:1-3) Do you catch something of the feeling of Paul when he remembered Abraham and wrote these lines to the

Hebrews? "By faith he who is called Abraham obeyed by going out into a place which he was to receive as inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he abode in the Land of Promise as in a foreign land . . . for he was looking for the city that has foundations, of which city the architect and the builder is God." (11:8-10) With the call of Abraham to leave the pagan world the first stone was laid in the city of God on earth. On that stone was carved the truth, "God is one." But to see the deeper meaning of that call we must try to behold the world he left.

On the eastern fringe of one the earth's most horrible deserts two rivers give life and a name to the land of Mesopotamia. Near the point where the Tigris and Euphrates entered the Persian Gulf stood the ancient city of Ur. This was Abraham's city. Not long ago archeologists dug into the great mound of earth beneath which Ur lay buried for centuries. They looked with wonderment upon its remains and upon the relics of its fabulous culture. Art treasures of incredible beauty lay before their eyes, personal jewels, gold and silver mounted harps, a golden helmet. Here was a civilization that anticipated the cultures of Egypt and Greece.

But what was the religion of Ur? Who were the strange gods that the fathers of Abraham

worshipped? Many were the gods of Ur, and many the goddesses. All the forces of nature were personified, made gods, male or female. The moon was a god called Sin. The air was a god called Enlil. The sky was a god called Anu. This might be dismissed as hapless and harmless fantasy, but listen! This is what they found in the burial grounds at Ur. "About the bodies of kings, covered with pearls, gold, lapis and agate, were buried twenty-five, fifty, seventy-four sacrificed servants. Among them are men and women, domestics, even a muleteer with his beasts lined up as if on parade. No trace of violence is to be seen on their bodies. These victims must have been done to death by poison." (Daniel-Rops, *Sacred History*, p. 12) What have we here! Human sacrifice, men and women put to death that the king might not have to descend into the underworld alone.

This is the world that Abraham is told to leave. This went with the comfort and luxury of the city, with its silk hangings, its embroidered garments, its perfumes and jewels — this distorted value of human life. A strange idea of a man always goes with a strange idea of God — or with no idea of God!

Look now at the contrast! The tents of the wandering Abraham are silhouetted against the desert sky and behind him the tower temple of Ur and all

its gleaming culture. Behold the symbols of two worlds. To-day the museums of London and Philadelphia house the art of the dead city of Ur, but millions of living hearts are hearths where burn the undying embers of Abraham's faith.

The men of Ur had found the power to raise a temple, to cut jewels, and to mold silver, but they had lost the power to preserve the image of God in Whose likeness they were made. "For while professing to be wise, they have become fools, and they have changed the glory of the incorruptible God for an image made like to corruptible men and to birds and four-footed beasts and creeping things." (Rom. 1:22f) Men needed to know the true God. Only then would they put the right value on man and all the works of man. Only then would all nations of the earth be truly blessed. God chose Abraham as the first instrument of that blessing. This is the beginning of the culture of the spirit, the beginning of the building of the city of God. It starts with a mystical call, with the entrance of God upon the dark stage of the world as He speaks His first lines to Abraham. "I the Lord God am one." This is the first stone in the structure of western civilization. God chose Abraham to lay that stone. Therein lies the greatness of his name. Therein is his glory.

But do not think of Abraham

as an historical abstraction. The Abraham of Genesis is a man of flesh and blood, a man of weakness as well as of strength. In so many things he is a child of his time. Some of his behavior is perplexing to the ethical taste of the Christian reader. We must remember that the early parts of Genesis are age old stories that were told around the campfires of the Israelites for centuries before they were written down. They have the authentic flavor of the ancient east, the tang of the nomad life and custom. Their reliability has been recently confirmed by the archaeologist's spade. Ancient records dug up confirm the names and the customs of the Patriarchs of Genesis. It would be an error to look for the fullness of Thomas Aquinas in Abraham. Revelation was not an instantaneous flash; it was the gradual growth of day. The first ray of light in historic time came with Abraham. The sun of justice came with Jesus, the light of the world.

In the Christian tradition Abraham is not a dead but a living symbol. His name is found at the very beginning of the Gospel and runs through the entire New Testament. His name is on Mary's lips as she

sings her Magnificat for the Child that is within her, the fulfillment of the promise

Even as he spoke to our
fathers
to Abraham and his seed
forever. (Luke 1:55)

St. Paul affirms that "the men of faith are the real sons of Abraham," for "the promises were made to Abraham and to his seed . . . who is Christ." (Gal. 3:7;16) Abraham's name is uttered each and every day in the Mass as a symbol of faith and the spirit of religion. We beseech God to accept our sacrifice as he did accept "the sacrifice of our father Abraham."

It is the way with us to be inspired by our fellow men. Great men of the past take on a special power to inspire us. In the simple clear lines of Abraham's life we see the dramatic contrast and the eternal conflict between matter and the spirit, the crisis of our time in miniature. We have so much of the comfort and luxury, the gold and the glitter of Ur, and we need so much to hear the voice of God and to respond with faith like Abraham's. Like Abraham we need so very much to be a faithful friend of God.

MOSES LEADER AND LAWGIVER

Address Delivered on November 14, 1954

Last week I spoke of Abraham, and to forge a link between this talk and that one I shall quote some lines from Genesis 15. "And when the sun was setting a deep sleep fell upon Abraham, and a great and darksome horror seized upon him. And it was said to him: Know thou beforehand that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land not their own, and they shall bring them under bondage, and afflict them four hundred years. But I will judge the nation which they shall serve, and after this they shall come out with great substance." (15:12-14)

So it came to pass that in the days of Jacob, Abraham's grandson, who was called Israel, that Joseph his son was taken away into Egypt. There in the course of days he became very powerful, and in time of famine in the land of Canaan Israel's other sons went down to Egypt and there because of Joseph they found favor with Pharaoh. In Egypt the children of Israel grew into a great multitude and filled the land.

All this was made possible by the providence of God in history. About 1750 B.C. the Egyptian Delta was overrun by Semitic conquerors known as Hyksos, meaning "rulers of for-

eign countries." They were masters in the Delta until about 1550, when they were driven out by the princes of Thebes. In those centuries the Semitic Israel was well treated, but with the return of the native princes to power their fortunes changed. As the Bible puts it, "there arose a new king over Egypt, that knew not Joseph." (Exodus 1:8) So the period of Israel's bondage set in and they were sorely oppressed. Then God raised up Moses to deliver them and the second great chapter of Israel's story was enacted.

The setting of that chapter is dramatic. It opens in the land of Egypt. The look of ancient Egypt has become rather familiar to us because there have been so many recent movies about Egypt. Hollywood has been captivated by the fascination of that strange and colorful land. I have seen and studied that old fabulous world, and found its monuments most impressive. The temples of Luxor and Karnak stagger you with their proportions. The Museum of Cairo is like a never-never land with the riches found in the tomb of King Tutankhamun. Every child in school has been fascinated by the pyramids of Egypt. The pyramid of Cheops made the news recently

with the remarkable discovery of the funerary boat.

The second act of the drama of Israel opens in Egypt. The great climax of the act is reached in the heart of a parched and trackless waste known as the desert of Sinai. There upon a wild red rocky crag the principal actors were Moses and God. The drama of the story is not confined to its setting. The great pitch of the play rises out of the actors. Moses has the lead—or rather, God has the lead. The part of Moses cannot be understood without God, nor can the whole movement of the second act. The theme of this act is that Almighty God uses Moses, Pharaoh, the Red Sea—the men and the things of time to accomplish the purposes of eternity.

In this talk the spotlight is on Moses. I desire to make him live and breathe for you. By what power? By the words that come to you across the space between. Would that I could do with words what Michelangelo did with stone! The genius of Michelangelo made Moses almost come to life in stone. How often have I gazed at that masterpiece in Rome, hardly believing my eyes! There is a story told that when Michelangelo finished his masterpiece he was so thrilled with it that he hurled his chisel at it and cried, "Speak!" And well he might, for the stone vibrates with the presence and the power of Moses.

Centuries had passed since

God promised Abraham, "I will make of thee a great nation." Now the time had come for that promise to be fulfilled, for that nation to be forged. Abraham's seed had "sprung up into multitudes" (Exodus 1:7), but a people in bondage is not a nation. There must be a liberator. But men without a country are not a nation. God had said to Abraham in Canaan, "To thy seed will I give this land." (Gen. 12:7) And a nation needs a law. The time had come for the fulfillment of the promise, for liberation, law, and land. Then Moses strides across the stage of sacred history as liberator, lawgiver, and father of his country. God elects him to fulfill the promise made to Abraham. He is a man moved by the might of God.

As with Abraham the mission of Moses began with a mystical call. He had grown up in Pharaoh's court, and he was "instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians" (Acts 7:22), but he had fled to Madian where he was a shepherd tending the flocks of Jethro. God appeared to him on Mount Horeb in a flame of fire. And He said: "I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. . . I have seen the affliction of my people in Egypt . . . I am come down to deliver them out of the hands of the Egyptians." (Exodus 3:6ff)

God chose Moses as the instrument of liberation. But

there is still greater religious significance in the experience at Horeb. It marks an increase in revelation, an increased knowledge of God imparted to man by God Himself. After identifying Himself with the God of Abraham, the Lord said to Moses, "My name (Yahweh) I did not show them." (Exodus 6:3) It is in this name that God reveals Himself more fully to Moses. Ancient peoples attributed great mystery and power to names, and with that feeling we must view this event. God said to Moses, "I am Who am. Thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel: He Who is (Yahweh) hath sent Me to you." (Exodus 3:14)

The original statement of this is, as you know, written in Hebrew. In Hebrew the divine name (Yahweh) is a part of the verb 'to be.' God said to Moses, "This is My name forever, and this is my memorial to all generations." (Exodus 3:15) For the ancient Hebrew the name stood for the thing, and consequently he would see in the name the affirmation of God existing without limits of time or space. This marks an advance in man's knowledge of God. In the thirteenth century before Christ the great civilizations of Egypt and Babylon adored not one god, but many. Their gods were the personification of natural forces like the sun, the rain, and thunder, and they could not conceive gods without goddesses. The God of

Horeb is the spiritual God of all men and of all the world, not the God of one country. This is called monotheism, and it is the foundation of the Hebrew and the Christian religions and the foundation of western civilization.

So the first vital fact about Moses and the source of all his greatness is that he was a prophet, that is, one who communed with God, one to whom God spoke. He stood between God and man in the position where a man does most for mankind.

Then came the liberation. Osee the prophet put these immortal words in the mouth of God: "Israel was a child, and I loved him; and I called my son out of Egypt." (11:1) You know the story of the liberation, the Exodus or the going out of Egypt. You remember the ten plagues wherein God showed His power. You recall the crossing of the Red Sea, and the destruction of Pharaoh's army. These unforgettable events were dominated by the personality and power of Moses.

More important than reciting details and quoting stirring texts is the perception of the meaning of the Exodus in the history of religion. The Lord God revealed His might in Egypt. He made known His awesome presence and power in the events of history. Israel never forgot the wonders of the Exodus and the strong arm of the Lord. He was indelibly

stamped upon the national consciousness never to be erased. A weak and wayward people might forget Him, flaunt His law, forsake Him, but God would not let Israel go. He would not let them forget Him forever. Thus they would be the vehicle that would bring the knowledge of the true God to the world. They would be His chosen people, that through them all nations of the earth might be blessed.

Then came the desert years of Israel when Moses bore the weight of them, the burden of their murmurings, their weakness and their melancholy. At Mount Sinai in the desert he hovered between them and God as an eagle. There the covenant was forged between God and Israel. By that alliance they promised to be His people and He promised to be their God. They promised to keep His law and he swore He would give them the land promised to their father Abraham.

There the majesty of God appeared. "Mount Sinai was all wrapped in smoke, for the Lord came down upon it in fire. The smoke rose from it as though from a furnace, and the whole mountain trembled violently. The trumpet blast grew louder and louder, while Moses was speaking and God answering him with thunder." (Exodus 19:18f) Then God delivered all these commandments: I, the Lord, am your God, Who brought you out of the land

of Egypt, that place of slavery . . . Thou shalt not kill . . . Thou shalt not commit adultery . . . (Exodus 20 passim)

The very same desert was a setting for shame. There a scene was enacted which makes you feel the throbbing might of Moses. When he tarried on Mount Sinai the people said to Aaron, "Come, make us a god who will be our leader; as for the man Moses who brought us out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has happened to him." (Exodus 32:1) Then Aaron made a golden calf out of the earrings of the women. And they cried out, "This is your god, O Israel, who brought you out of the land of Egypt." (32:4) Moses came down from the mountain with the two tablets of the commandments in his hands. "As he drew near the camp, he saw the calf and the dancing. With that, Moses' wrath flared up, so that he threw the tablets down and broke them on the base of the mountain. Taking the calf they had made, he fused it in the fire and then ground it to powder, which he scattered on the water and made the Israelites drink." (32:19-21)

In the desert years were laid the foundations of Israel's worship. The sacred center of their worship was the Tent of Testimony or Tabernacle, which housed the Ark of the Covenant, the chest containing the tablets of the Law. In these years the priesthood was estab-

lished. From the Tabernacle would come the great Temple of Solomon, and the Levitical priesthood was an earnest of the Christian priesthood to come.

How dramatic were those formative years of Israel! How stirring the story of the birth of the nation! Is it any wonder that these events were burned into the memory of Israel? Is it surprising that their inspired poets sang of them? These events live on in the Christian consciousness too. The Fathers of the Church saw them as shadows of things to come: as

Moses led Israel out of the bondage of Egypt Jesus led men out of the slavery of Satan; as the first-born of the Israelites were saved by the blood of the Passover lamb so mankind is saved by the blood of our Paschal Lamb Who is Christ; as Israel set up its tent in the desert and the glory of God shone over it John says of Jesus: "He pitched His tent among us . . . and we saw His glory." (1:14) When He was transfigured in glory on Mount Thabor the Apostles saw beside Him Elias and Moses.

DAVID THE SHEPHERD KING

Address Delivered on November 21, 1954

A thousand years had passed since Abraham was laid to rest in the land of Promise. Across ten centuries his descendants had marched mounting as they marched—down through the centuries of the Egyptian exile, across the years of desert wandering, through the years of the conquest of Canaan, down the decades of settlement. Now the tents of nomad Israel are no more. Israel is master in Canaan, the land of Promise. A palace stands in the city of Jerusalem and therein lives a king whose name is David, which means beloved of the Lord. The time is about a thousand years after Abraham and a thousand years before Christ.

It is almost startling to realize that David lived three thousand years ago. He seems so contemporary each Christmas when in spirit we follow Mary and Joseph and the shepherds to the town of David, Bethlehem. He seems so much part of our lives when we read the Psalms of David, or when we hear the monasteries echoing sweetly with the chant of his deathless poetry. To Christians the throne of David is not a remote archaic thing, but something that is close to us, as close as Christ our King.

David bestrides the history of Israel like a colossus. This is the David that intrigues the scholar. He surveys with wonder the achievement of this prodigy, this shepherd become king. He measures the stature of David the warrior, victor over the Philistines, Israel's erstwhile foe, victor over Ammon, and Moab, and Edom. He contemplates the genius of David the leader welding the disunited tribes of Israel into a strong well-knit monarchy. He sees the wisdom of David in making Jerusalem the capitol of the united kingdom. He beholds the faith of David bringing the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem, reawakening Israel's national faith by his own fervor. He ponders the creative talent of David the inspired poet giving the riches of the Psalms to his kingdom's ritual. He witnesses loving subjects giving loyalty to their king, and at length he bows his head and says amen to the verdict of sacred history: David a king after God's own heart.

The scholar is fascinated by the interlocking forces of history that made possible the rise of Israel to glory, that set the stage for David's contribution to Israel's spiritual greatness, and through it to the Western

world. Fallen was Babylonia's imperial star; Egypt's might had dwindled, and the Hittite power had waned. In the lull between imperial wars David brought Israel by God's design to the rich fulfillment of his promise.

David the King bestrides history like a colossus, but the David the faithful love is David the man; David the strong, David the weak, David the handsome, David the bold, David the mighty, David the meek, David "ruddy and of a comely countenance," (1 Kings 17:42) David of the heart that was "perfect with the Lord his God." (3 Kings 11:4)

The David the faithful love is the man with the heart of a friend, full of warmth and tenderness, the man that inspires a love and loyalty like that of Jonathan, of whom it is written, "the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul." (1 Kings 18:1). Such friendship is inspired only by a great love in David. The love in Jonathan is witness to the greatness of the heart of David. The Scriptures give testimony to that love in one of the noblest expressions of ancient Hebrew poetry, David's lament over Saul and Jonathan. When they fell on the battlefield of Mount Gelboe fighting against the Philistines David made this lament: "Remember, Israel, the dead, wounded on thy heights, the flower of Israel, cut down on thy mountains, how fell they,

warriors such as these? Keep the secret in Geth, never a word in the streets of Ascalon; Shall the women-folk rejoice, shall they triumph, daughters of the Philistines . . .? Mountains of Gelboe, never dew, never rain fall upon you, never from your lands be offerings made of first fruits; there the warrior's shield lies dishonored, the shield of Saul bright with oil no more. . . Saul and Jonathan so well beloved, so beautiful; death no more than life could part them; never was eagle so swift, never was lion so strong. Lament, daughters of Israel, lament for Saul, the man who dressed you bravely in scarlet, who decked your apparel out with trinkets of gold. How fell they, warriors such as these, in the battle? On thy heights, Gelboe, Jonathan lies slain. Shall I not mourn for thee, Jonathan, my brother, so beautiful, so well beloved, beyond all love of women." (2 Kings 1:19-27)

The David the faithful love is the man with the heart of a father, so full of tender mercy and forgiveness. Absalom was David's son, fair but foolish, a rebellious and traitorous son. When he led a revolt against the king, his father, he died at the hand of Joab, David's general. When the news of victory was brought to the king his first question was, "Is all well with my son Absalom?" He was told of the death of his son, and the heart of David is revealed in these unforgettable words of

grief, "My son Absalom! Absalom my son! Would to God that I might die for thee, Absalom my son, my son Absalom!" (2 Kings 18:33)

The David the faithful love is David the sinner. They love him not for his sin, but for his sorrow. You remember David's great sin, how his passion for Bethsabee overwhelmed him and he took to himself her who was another's wife, the wife of Urias the Hethite. You recall how David strove to hide his sin by calling Urias home from the battlefield, how Urias refused to go to his wife while his fellow warriors were enduring the hardships of war, how David ordered him put in the front of the fight where he was killed in action. Remember then the dramatic appearance of Nathan the prophet before David the King. When he came to the King he said, "There were two men that lived in the same town, one rich one poor. The rich man had flocks and herds in great abundance; the poor men had nothing except one ewe lamb which he had bought and reared, letting it grow up in his house like his own children, share his own food and drink, sleep in his bosom; it was like a daughter to him. The rich man was to entertain a friend, who was on his travels, and to make a feast for this foreign guest, he would take no toll of his own flocks and herds; he robbed the poor man of the one lamb that was his, and wel-

comed the traveler with that. David burning with indignation at the wrong, said to Nathan, "As the Lord is a living God, death is due to such a man as this; for this cruel deed of his he shall make compensation four-fold. And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man." (2 Kings 12:1-6) Then David said to Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord.

This is the David the faithful love, the powerful oriental king, who unlike oriental kings bowed his head at the rebuke of the man of God and acknowledged his sin, the oriental king who did penance, who prayed and fasted that the child of his sin might be spared and meekly accepted the child's death as the will of God.

The David the faithful love is the man of faith who desired to build a temple to the Lord his God, and who was chosen to play a leading role in the secrets of God. Do you recall how David called the prophet and said to him, "Here I am dwelling in a house all of cedar, while God's ark has nothing better than curtains of hide about it!" (2 Kings, 7:2). Nathan approved David's plan, saying, "Go, do all that is in thy heart." Then that night the word of the Lord came to Nathan, saying, "Go, and say to my servant David. Thus saith the Lord: . . . the Lord will make thee a house. And when thy days shall be fulfilled and thou shalt sleep with thy fath-

ers, I will raise up thy seed after thee . . . and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house to my name and I shall establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son . . . my mercy I will not take from him, as I took it from Saul. And thy house shall be faithful, and thy kingdom forever before thy face, and thy throne shall be firm forever." (2 Kings 7:11-17).

The David the faithful love is the man of prayer, who when he heard the message of Nathan went in and sat before the Lord and said, "Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house that thou hast brought me thus far? . . . And what more can David say unto thee? For thou knowest thy servant, O Lord God: for thy word's sake and according to thy own heart thou hast done all these great things." (7:18-20). We love the David God loved and honored by choosing his royal line as the family of the Messiah-King to come.

Israel's glory did not long endure after David. When Solomon his son died the kingdom was rent into two warring factions. It was the spiritual glory of David that was to survive the wars of Israel, its crushing defeats and its shameful exiles. In that darkness David was a shining symbol of the Messiah who was to come of his line. Three centuries after David the prophet Isaias

foretold the Prince of Peace, and said of him, "His empire shall be multiplied and there shall be no end of peace. He shall sit upon the throne of David and over his kingdom to establish it from henceforth and forever." (9:7). Four centuries after David the prophet Jeremias foretold, "Behold the days shall come, saith the Lord, and I will raise up to David a just branch; and a king shall reign and shall be wise, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth." (23:5). Five centuries after David Ezechiel the prophet foretold, "Therefore this saith the Lord God to you . . . I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even as my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. And I the Lord will be their God, and my servant David the prince in the midst of them; I the Lord have spoken it." (34:23f).

This is the David the faithful love above all, the lovable and loving shepherd-king caught up in the might and the mystery of God, David the royal father of Jesus, shining symbol of the King of Kings.

When the voices of the prophets had long been still the hush of the silence of the fullness of time was broken by the voice of an angel. Gabriel said to Mary, "Behold, thou shalt . . . bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great and shall be called the

Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he shall be king over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end." (Luke 1:31-33).

The blood of David was in Christ, and so much of the heart of Christ was in David. He lived and loved in a day of

crude codes and customs and an almost barbarous sense of honor. Child of his time in so many ways the measure of his great heart and religious spirit lifted him head and shoulders above his time, and then God took hold of him and made him timeless, for the eternal Son of God is called the son of David forever.

ELIAS THE BURNING PROPHET

Address Delivered on November 28, 1954

Elias the Prophet lived in the ninth century before Christ, or about twenty-eight hundred years ago. It was a dramatic time. A thousand years before Abraham had left the paganism of Ur to follow the true God. Four centuries before God had given the Law to Moses on Mount Sinai. A hundred years before David the King had ruled in Jerusalem over a united Israel. In the day of Elias a united Israel was a thing of the past. After Solomon's death the kingdom was divided into two rival factions, Israel in the north and Judah in the south. The day of Israel's regal power and splendor was past and her feet were set in the long march toward desolation and disaster, and from these would come her spiritual greatness.

In the larger world about her things were stirring. The two little nations lay across the path of war and commerce. To the east the giant Assyria was rising from sleep and looking eagerly toward the sea. To the south Egypt dreamed of its past glories and worried about Assyria. The fate of Israel and Judah was to hinge on the movements or the threats of these powers. Thus was God's chosen people caught up in the sweep and swirl of the tides of

history and over the dark deep brooded the spirit of God and through tossed and troubled Israel His purpose would be wrought.

Elias was a prophet, a man chosen by God to speak for God. I wish him to symbolize that unique institution in the history of Israel and in the history of religions, prophecy. For four centuries the history of the chosen people is dominated by the figure of the prophet, the spokesman for God to whom kings and commoners give ear. The pagan nations had their oracles, their soothsayers, their magicians, but by the law of Moses Israel was to have no traffic with such as these. God would speak to them through his prophets. We find the writings of sixteen of the prophets in the Old Testament from Isaias to Malachias, covering a period of some three hundred years. Words of the writing prophets have enriched our language with countless sayings which are as familiar to us as household terms. But of infinitely greater worth is what the prophets have contributed to the spirit of man, to man's understanding of God's nature and His eternal designs—and for the Christian their supreme significance is in the fact that the tra-

dition begun in them is consummated in Christ, God's spokesman and Son.

Before I come to discuss Elias may I make just one further observation on prophecy to correct a false impression that I frequently find. Christians are apt to think of prophets only in terms of prediction; that is they think of them as men who existed to foretell the future, somewhat like a fortune teller. It would be gravely erroneous to conceive them thus, as though their usefulness was confined to the future, as though they were only dreamers of new worlds to come. The prophet was a dynamic personality who lived very much in the present. He was a preacher whose message was primarily directed to his contemporaries. God gave him occasional brilliant insights into the future, but a future that was related to present issues and realities in which the first lines of God's blueprint for the future were visible.

Let us come now to Elias. His is certainly a name that lives forever. Whenever a Christian reads in the Gospel the account of the Transfiguration he repeats the name of Elias. There is in the Church a religious order of men and women who are called Carmelites, who look upon Elias as their spiritual father. At the celebration of Passover in Jewish homes until this day a vacant chair is placed for the prophet Elias. How great the spirit of a man whose

memory survives twenty-eight centuries and is still a spiritual inspiration! I shall try to bring to you an impression of that powerful personality who has so dominated the thought of religious men.

His time was the ninth century before Christ, his place Israel, the northern kingdom. His King was Achab son of Omri. His Queen was Jezabel, daughter of the King of Tyre. There you have three personalities you shall not meet soon again! The stage they moved on was Samaria, the capitol of the northern kingdom. I recall standing there some years ago on a round hill over three hundred feet high formed by a bend of the vale and an incoming glen. Here Omri had set up his capitol. How the memories soar about you as you stand there and look out over the plain of Esdraelon and see Carmel before you stretching toward the sea, memories of Elias and Achab and Jezabel, and of their colorful world!

Jezabel and Elias were worlds apart, and straddling the two worlds was Achab. The world of Elias was the world of the Lord God, and the world of Jezabel was that of Baal of Tyre. In her world Phoenician galleys rode the seas, and pagan gods and goddesses rode the sky. When she came to Israel by way of a political marriage she brought with her her gods and goddesses and their frenzied and well-fed devotees. The

world of Elias was one of fasting and desert solitude, not one of wanton immorality and frenzied ritual. His Lord was the God of heaven and earth, Who knew no consort, and Whom no image could portray. Achab, the Israelite straddled the world of Elias and the world of Jezebel. It was inevitable that the world of Elias would clash with the world of Jezebel and the clash came with this challenge of Elias to Achab. "Gather unto me all Israel, unto Mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred who eat at Jezebel's table." (3K18:19). Then ensued one of the most dramatic contests of the Bible.

"Achab sent to all the children of Israel, and gathered together the prophets unto Mount Carmel. And Elias coming to all the people said: How long do you halt between two sides. If the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal then follow him. And the people did not answer him a word."

Elias then directed that two altars be set up with their victims. Let the prophets of Baal call upon their god, and he would call upon the Lord. Then let him that was true God make his power known. Thereupon the pagan prophets "called on the name of Baal from morning even till noon, saying: O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered; and they leaped over the altar that they

had made. And when it was now noon, Elias jested at them, saying: Cry with a louder voice, for he is a God, and perhaps he is talking or is in an inn, or on a journey, or perhaps he is asleep, and must be awaked. So they cried with a loud voice, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till they were all covered with blood." (3K18:26-28). All to no avail!

Then Elias prepared his altar and he said, "O Lord God of Abraham, and Isaac and Israel, show this day that Thou art the God of Israel and I thy servant, and that according to Thy commandments I have done all these things. Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that these people may learn that Thou art the Lord God, . . . Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the holocaust . . . and when all the people saw this, they fell on their faces and they said: The Lord He is God. The Lord He is God." (18:36-39).

This dramatic contest brings out the characteristic mark of Elias and the mark of every true prophet, unswerving loyalty to the Lord and the absolute incapacity for compromise. We are distant spectators to the contest between Elias and the prophets of Baal; we are spectators ever so close to the contest waged upon the carmels of our hearts, the constant pull of modern idols and the constant lure of other Jezebels. In every man that is stamped with the

sign of Christ there must be something of the prophet's spirit, the great sense of loyalty to God and the utter disdain for compromise.

A second mark of the prophet is seen in the life of Elias in the story of Naboth's vineyard. Naboth had a vineyard near the palace of Achab. Achab desired the vineyard and offered to buy it from Naboth. But it was a family estate that Naboth prized and desired to hold. At this Achab was very much distressed. Upon learning this Jezabel took matters into her hands. She had false witnesses, sons of the devil, accuse Naboth and he was stoned to death unjustly for the crime of blasphemy against God and King. Then Jezabel said to the King, "Arise and take possession of the vineyard of Naboth . . . for Naboth is not alive but dead." (3K21:15).

Then Elias went to meet Achab and he said to him, "Thus saith the Lord: Thou hast slain, moreover also thou hast taken possession . . . Thus saith the Lord: In this place, wherein the dogs have licked the blood of Naboth, they shall lick thy blood also . . . The dogs shall eat Jezabel in the field of Jezrahel" (21:19-24).

The second mark of the prophet is his intolerance of social injustice, his righteous indignation at man's inhumanity to man. We see this burning indignation in Elias nine centur-

ies before Jesus came, and we find flaming indictments all through the writing prophets. With true spiritual insight they saw that God preferred the inner sacrifice of humanity, and mercy and kindness, and that ritual was not designed as a compensation to God for injustice, but as an external sign of the right inner dispositions of heart toward God, and the text of those was man's attitude and behavior toward his fellow man.

From these two marks of the prophets rises the third man who is loyal to God beyond all compromise, a man who decries social injustice to king or to commoner, is one who bears the mark of suffering. How many prophetic and priestly men of our day bear the scars of Christ in the prisons and concentration camps of "The Church of Silence." This is only half of the mark, the negative half. The plus part of the sign is the union with God that man finds in the midst of persecution. So it was with Elias.

When Jezabel heard of the fate of the prophets of Baal she sent a messenger to Elias saying, "Such and such things may the gods do to me, and add still more, if by this hour tomorrow I make not thy life as the life of one of them." (3K19:2). Elias was afraid and he fled into the desert, and to Mount Horeb, where God had given the Law to Moses and made the covenant with Israel. Elias said to the Lord, "With zeal have I

been zealous for the Lord God of hosts, for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant. They have thrown down thy altars, they have slain thy prophets with the sword, and I alone am left, and they seek my life to take it away." (19:10).

Then the Lord directed Elias to go forth and stand upon the mount. Here the covenant between God and Israel was struck. The covenant was now threatened by the inroads of Baalism and the last prophet of that covenant was threatened by the iniquitous queen. Downcast and depressed Elias took his stand upon the mount of the covenant, "and behold the Lord passeth, and a great and strong wind before the Lord overthrowing the mountains, and breaking the rocks in pieces; the Lord is not in the wind, and after the wind an earthquake. And after the earthquake a fire, and after the fire a whisper of gentle air." (19:11f). When Elias heard the whisper of the gentle breeze "he covered his face with his mantle," for he knew that the Lord was not in the wind, and fury, and the trembling that rocked the mountains, but in gentle stillness. The fury and frenzy that rocked Israel with Jezabel and

her thunder god would pass and in the stillness to follow them the power of God would be seen. The vision taught Elias that God was not in his own fury, frenzy and flight, but in the deep quiet of his heart.

So the third mark of the prophet appears in his intimacy with God, the union of the created soul with the uncreated Spirit, a union that is wrought in the hush of prayer and the silence of solitude, for God speaks to the human heart softly like a whisper of gentle air.

Eight hundred years after the days of Elias came the days of Jesus. One day the two met in the mystery of Mount Thabor. Jesus took Peter and James up to a high mountain, and there he "was transfigured before them. And his face shone as the sun, and his garments became white as snow. And behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elias talking with him." (Matt. 17:2f). Moses appeared because Jesus was the fulfillment of the Law. Elias appeared because Jesus was the fulfillment of prophecy. Their names are immortal because of Jesus, "the son of David, the son of Abraham." (Matt. 1:1). Because of Him their names are names that live forever.

THE PURPOSE OF THE CATHOLIC HOUR

(Extract from the address of the late Patrick Cardinal Hayes at the inaugural program of the Catholic Hour in the studio of the National Broadcasting Company, New York City, March 2, 1930.)

Our congratulations and our gratitude are extended to the National Council of Catholic Men and its officials, and to all who, by their financial support, have made it possible to use this offer of the National Broadcasting Company. The heavy expense of managing and financing a weekly program, its musical numbers, its speakers, the subsequent answering of inquiries, must be met . . .

This radio hour is for all the people of the United States. To our fellow-citizens, in this word of dedication, we wish to express a cordial greeting and, indeed, congratulations. For this radio hour is one of service to America, which certainly will listen in interestedly, and even sympathetically, I am sure, to the voice of the ancient Church with its historic background of all the centuries of the Christian era, and with its own notable contribution to the discovery, exploration, foundation and growth of our glorious country . . .

Thus to voice before a vast public the Catholic Church is no light task. Our prayers will be with those who have that task in hand. We feel certain that it will have both the good will and the good wishes of the great majority of our countrymen. Surely, there is no true lover of our Country who does not eagerly hope for a less worldly, a less material, and a more spiritual standard among our people.

With good will, with kindness and with Christ-like sympathy for all, this work is inaugurated. So may it continue. So may it be fulfilled. This word of dedication voices, therefore, the hope that this radio hour may serve to make known, to explain with the charity of Christ, our faith, which we love even as we love Christ Himself. May it serve to make better understood that faith as it really is—a light revealing the pathway to heaven; a strength, and a power divine through Christ; pardoning our sins, elevating, consecrating our common every-day duties and joys, bringing not only justice but gladness and peace to our searching and questioning hearts.

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