

Burying Our Weapons of Rebellion

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Kuzika Silaha Zetu za Uasi

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Wa Akidi ya Mitume Kumi na Wawili

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May we bury—very, very deep—any element of rebellion against God in our lives and replace it with a willing heart and a willing mind.

The Book of Mormon records that approximately 90 years before the birth of Christ, the sons of King Mosiah began what would be a 14-year mission to the Lamanites. Unsuccessful efforts had been made over many generations to bring the Lamanite people to a belief in the doctrine of Christ. This time, however, through the miraculous interventions of the Holy Spirit, thousands of the Lamanites were converted and became disciples of Jesus Christ.

We read, “And as sure as the Lord liveth, so sure as many as believed, or as many as were brought to the knowledge of the truth, through the preaching of Ammon and his brethren, according to the spirit of revelation and of prophecy, and the power of God working miracles in them—yea, I say unto you, as the Lord liveth, as many of the Lamanites as believed in their preaching, and were converted unto the Lord, never did fall away.”

The key to the enduring conversion of this people is stated in the next verse: “For they became a righteous people; they did lay down the weapons of their rebellion, that they did not fight against God any more, neither against any of their brethren.”

This reference to “weapons of rebellion” was both literal and figurative. It meant their swords and other weapons of war but also their disobedience to God and His commandments.

The king of these converted Lamanites expressed it this way: “And now behold, my brethren, ... it has been all that we could do ...

Na tuzike—chini, chini kabisa—dalili yoyote ya uasi dhidi ya Mungu katika maisha yetu na tuiba-dilishe kwa moyo wa hiari na akili iliyo tayari.

Kitabu cha Mormoni kinaandika kwamba takriban miaka 90 kabla ya kuzaliwa kwa Kristo, wana wa Mfalme Mosia walianza kile ambacho kingekuwa misioni ya miaka 14 kwa Walamani. Juhudi zisizo na mafanikio kwa vizazi vingi zilikuwa zimefanywa ili kuwaleta Walamani kwenye kuamini katika mafundisho ya Kristo. Wakati huu, hata hivyo, kupitia hatua za kimuujiza za Roho Mtakatifu, maelfu ya Walamani waliongozwa na kuwa wanafunzi wa Yesu Kristo.

Tunasoma, “Na kwa kweli kama vile Bwana aishivyo, kwa hakika vile wengi walivyoamini, au vile wengi walivyoelimishwa kwenye ukweli, kupitia kwa mahubiri ya Amoni na ndugu zake, kulingana na roho ya ufunuo na ya unabii, na uwezo wa Mungu ukifanya muujiza ndani yao—ndio, nawaambia nyinyi, kama vile Bwana aishivyo, vile wengi wa Walamani walivyoamini kuhubiri kwao, na wakamgeukia Bwana, hawakuanguka kamwe kutoka kanisani.”

Muhimu katika uongofu wa kudumu wa watu hawa umelezwa katika aya inayofuatia: “Kwani walipata kuwa watu wenye haki na wakaweka chini silaha zao za uasi, kwamba hawangeweza kupigana na Mungu tena, wala dhidi ya yeyote wa ndugu zao.”

Rejeleo hili la “silaha za uasi” lilikuwa halisi na la lugha ya picha. Iliamaanisha panga zao na silaha zingine za vita lakini pia kutomtii kwao Mungu na amri Zake.

Mfalme wa Walamani hawa walioongoka alieleza kwa njia hii: “Na sasa tazama, ndugu zangu, ... vile imekua yote ambayo tungetenda (kwa

to repent of all our sins and the many murders which we have committed, and to get God to take them away from our hearts, for it was all we could do to repent sufficiently before God that he would take away our stain.”

Note the king’s words—not only had their sincere repentance led to forgiveness of their sins, but God also took away the stain of those sins and even the desire to sin from their hearts. As you know, rather than risk any possible return to their prior state of rebellion against God, they buried their swords. And as they buried their physical weapons, with changed hearts, they also buried their disposition to sin.

We might ask ourselves what we could do to follow this pattern, to “lay down the weapons of [our] rebellion,” whatever they may be, and become so “converted [to] the Lord” that the stain of sin and the desire for sin are taken from our hearts and we never will fall away.

Rebellion can be active or passive. The classic example of willful rebellion is Lucifer, who, in the premortal world, opposed the Father’s plan of redemption and rallied others to oppose it as well, “and, at that day, many followed after him.” It is not hard to discern the impact of his continuing rebellion in our own time.

The Book of Mormon’s unholy trio of anti-Christ—Sherem, Nehor, and Korihor—provide a classic study of active rebellion against God. The overarching thesis of Nehor and Korihor was that there is no sin; therefore, there is no need for repentance, and there is no Savior. “Every man prosper[s] according to his genius, and ... every man conquer[s] according to his strength; and whatsoever a man [does is] no crime.” The anti-Christ rejects religious authority, characterizing ordinances and covenants as performances “laid down by ancient priests, to usurp power and authority.”

A latter-day example of willful rebellion with a happier ending is the story of William W. Phelps. Phelps joined the Church in 1831 and was appointed Church printer. He edited several early Church publications, wrote numerous hymns, and served as a scribe to Joseph Smith. Unfortunately, he turned against the Church and the Prophet, even to the point of giving false testimony against Joseph Smith in a Missouri court,

vile sisi tulikuwa wapotevu zaidi miongoni mwa wanadamu wote) kutubu dhambi zetu na mauaji mengi tuliyotenda, na kupata Mungukuziondoa kutoka mioyo yetu, kwani ni hii tu tungefanya kutubu ya kutosha mbele ya Mungu kwambaan-geondolea mbali hatia yetu.”

Zingatia maneno ya mfalme—toba yao ya dhati ilikuwa imesababisha sio tu msamaha wa dhambi zao, lakini pia Mungu aliondoa madoa ya dhambi hizo na hata hamu ya kutenda dhambi kutoka mioyoni mwao. Kama unavyojua, badala ya kuacha uwezekano wowote wa kurudi kwenye hali yao ya awali ya uasi dhidi ya Mungu, walizika mapanga yao. Na walipozika silaha zao, kwa mioyo iliyobadilika, pia walizika tabia yao za dhambi.

Tunaweza kujiuliza wenyewe ni nini tunaweza kufanya ili kufuata mpangilio huu, “kuweka chini silaha za uasi [wetu],” zozote zile na “kuongolewa katika Bwana” kwamba doa la dhambi na hamu ya kutenda dhambi kuondolewa kutoka mioyoni mwetu na kamwe tusinguke.

Uasi unaweza kuwa wa utendaji au kimyakimya. Mfano wa kawaida wa uasi wa makusudi ni Lusiferi, ambaye, katika ulimwengu wa kabla ya maisha ya duniani, alipinga mpango wa ukombozi wa Baba na kuwakusanya wengine kupinga pia, “na, siku hiyo, wengi walimfuata.” Si vigumu kutambua athari za uasi wake unaoendelea katika wakati wetu wenyewe.

Wapinga-Kristo watatu katika Kitabu cha Mormoni—Sheremu, Nehori, na Korihori—ni mfano hai wa uasi dhidi ya Mungu. Tasnifu ya juu ya Nehori na Korihori ilikuwa kwamba hakuna dhambi; kwa hivyo, hakuna haja ya toba, na hakuna Mwokozi. “Kila mtu anafanikiwa kulingana na akili yake, na ... kila mtu alishinda kulingana na nguvu yake; na chochote ambacho mtu alifanya si kosa.” Mpinga Kristo anakataa mamlaka ya kidini, akitaja ibada na maagano kama maonyesho “yaliyoanzishwa na makuhani wa zamani, ili kujitwalia nguvu na uwezo juu yao.”

Mfano wa siku za mwisho wa uasi wa makusudi wenye mwisho wa furaha ni masimulizi kuhusu William W. Phelps. Phelps alijiunga na Kanisa mwaka 1831 na aliteuliwa kuwa mpiga chapa wa Kanisa. Alihariri machapisho kadhaa ya awali ya Kanisa, aliandika nyimbo nyingi, na kutumika kama mwandishi wa Joseph Smith. Kwa bahati mbaya, aligeuka dhidi ya Kanisa na Nabii, hata kufikia hatua ya kutoa ushahidi wa

which contributed to the Prophet's imprisonment there.

Later, Phelps wrote to Joseph asking for forgiveness. "I know my situation, you know it, and God knows it, and I want to be saved if my friends will help me."

In his reply the Prophet stated: "It is true that we have suffered much in consequence of your behavior. ... However, the cup has been drunk, the will of our Heavenly Father has been done, and we are yet alive. ... Come on, dear brother, since the war is past, for friends at first are friends again at last."

With sincere repentance, William Phelps buried his "weapons of rebellion" and was received once more in full fellowship, never again to fall away.

Perhaps the more insidious form of rebellion against God, however, is the passive version—ignoring His will in our lives. Many who would never consider active rebellion may still oppose the will and word of God by pursuing their own path without regard to divine direction. I am reminded of the song made famous years ago by singer Frank Sinatra with the climactic line "I did it my way." Certainly in life there is plenty of room for personal preference and individual choice, but when it comes to matters of salvation and eternal life, our theme song ought to be "I did it God's way," because truly there is no other way.

Take, for instance, the Savior's example regarding baptism. He submitted to baptism as a demonstration of loyalty to the Father and as an example to us:

"He showeth unto the children of men that, according to the flesh he humbleth himself before the Father, and witnesseth unto the Father that he would be obedient unto him in keeping his commandments. ...

"And he said unto the children of men: Follow thou me. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, can we follow Jesus save we shall be willing to keep the commandments of the Father?"

There is no "my way" if we are to follow Christ's example. Trying to find a different course to heaven is like the futility of working on the Tower of Babel rather than looking to Christ and His salvation.

The swords and other weapons that the La-

uongo dhidi ya Joseph Smith katika mahakama ya Missouri, ambapo ilichangia Nabii kuweka gerezani.

Baadaye Phelps alimwandikia Joseph akimwomba msamaha. "Ninaijua hali yangu, wewe unaijua, na Mungu anaijua, na ninataka kuokolewa kama marafiki zangu watanisaidia."

Katika majibu yake Nabii alisema: "Ni kweli kwamba tumeteseka sana kutokana na tabia yako. ... Hata hivyo, kikombe kimenywewa, mapenzi ya Baba yetu wa Mbinguni yamefanywa, na bado tuko hai. ... Njoo, ndugu mpendwa, kwa kuwa vita vimepita, kwa kuwa marafiki wa kwanza ni marafiki tena."

Kwa toba ya dhati, William Phelps alizika "silaha zake za uasi," alipokelewa tena katika ushirika kamili, na kamwe hakuanguka tena.

Labda aina ya uasi wa kuchukiza zaidi dhidi ya Mungu, hata hivyo, ni ule wa kimyakimya—kupuuza mapenzi Yake katika maisha yetu. Wengi ambao kamwe hawangeweza kuonyesha uasi waziwazi bado wanaweza kupinga mapenzi na neno la Mungu kwa kufuata njia yao wenyewe bila kujali maelekezo ya kiungu. Ninakumbushwa kwa wimbo uliotungwa miaka mingi iliyopita na mwimbaji Frank Sinatra na mstari wa juu kabisa, "Nilifanya kwa njia yangu." Hakika katika maisha kuna nafasi nyingi za mapendeleo na chaguzi binafsi, lakini linapokuja suala la wokovu na uzima wa milele, wimbo wetu wa dhima unapaswa kuwa, "Nilifanya kwa njia ya Mungu," kwani hakika hakuna njia nyingine.

Kwa mfano, chukua mfano wa Mwokozi kuhusiana na ubatizo. Alijisalimisha kwenye ubatizo kama onyesho la uaminifu kwa Baba na kama mfano kwetu:

"Anawaonyesha watoto wa watu kwamba, kulingana na mwili anajinyenyekeza mbele ya Baba, na kumshuhudia Baba kwamba yeye atakuwa mwaminifu kwake katika kutii amri zake. ...

"Na akawaambia watoto wa watu: Nifuateni mimi. Kwa hivyo, ndugu zangu wapendwa, je, tunaweza kumfuata Yesu tusipokubali kushika amri za Baba?"

Hakuna "njia yangu" iwapo tunataka kufuata mfano wa Kristo. Kujaribu kupata njia tofauti kwenda mbinguni ni kama ubatili wa kufanya kazi kwenye Mnara wa Babeli badala ya kumtafuta Kristo na wokovu Wake.

Panga na silaha nyingine ambazo Walamani

manite converts buried were weapons of rebellion because of how they had used them. Those same kinds of weapons in the hands of their sons, being used in defense of family and freedom, were not weapons of rebellion against God at all. The same was true of such weapons in the hands of the Nephites: “They were not fighting for monarchy nor power but ... were fighting for their homes and their liberties, their wives and their children, and their all, yea, for their rites of worship and their church.”

In this same way, there are things in our lives that may be neutral or even inherently good but that used in the wrong way become “weapons of rebellion.” Our speech, for example, can edify or demean. As James said:

“But the tongue [it seems] can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.

“Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God.

“Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.”

There is much in public and personal discourse today that is malicious and mean-spirited. There is much conversation that is vulgar and profane, even among youth. This sort of speech is a “weapon of rebellion” against God, “full of deadly poison.”

Consider another example of something that is essentially good but that could be turned against divine directives—a person’s career. One can find real satisfaction in a profession, vocation, or service, and all of us are benefited by what devoted and talented people in many fields of endeavor have accomplished and created.

Still, it is possible that devotion to career can become the paramount focus of one’s life. Then all else becomes secondary, including any claim the Savior may make on one’s time and talent. For men, and for women as well, forgoing legitimate opportunities for marriage, failing to cleave to and lift one’s spouse, failing to nurture one’s children, or even intentionally avoiding the blessing and responsibility of child-rearing solely for the sake of career advancement can convert laudable achievement into a form of rebellion.

waongofu walizizika zilikuwa silaha za uasi kwa sababu ya jinsi walivyozitumia. Aina hizo hizo za silaha mikononi mwa watoto wao, zikitumika katika ulinzi wa familia na uhuru, hazikuwa silaha za uasi dhidi ya Mungu hata kidogo. Ndivyo ilivyokuwa kwa silaha kama hizo mikononi mwa Wanefi: “Kwani hawakuwa wanapigania utawala wala uwezo lakini walipigania maskani yao na uhuru wao, wake zao na watoto wao, na vyao vyote, ndiyo, kwa kanuni zao za kuabudu na kanisa lao.”

Kwa njia hiyo hiyo, kuna mambo katika maisha yetu ambayo yanaweza kuwa vuguvugu au hata mazuri lakini ambayo hutumiwa kwa njia isiyo sahihi huwa “silaha za uasi.” Maneno yetu, kwa mfano, yanaweza kujenga au kukebehi. Kama Yakobo alivyosema:

“Bali ulimi hakuna awezaye kuufuga; ni uovu usiotulia, umejaa sumu iletayo mauti.

“Kwa huo twamhimidi Mungu Baba yetu, na kwa huo twawalaani wanadamu waliofanywa kwa mfano wa Mungu.

“Katika kinywa kile kile hutoka baraka na laana. Ndugu zangu, haifai mambo hayo kuwa hivyo.”

Kuna mengi leo katika katika mazungumzo ya umma na ya binafsi ambayo ni ya nia ovyo na roho ya udhalilishaji. Kuna mengi ya mazungumzo ambayo ni machafu na matusi, hata miongoni mwa vijana. Aina hii ya usemi ni “silaha za uasi” dhidi ya Mungu, “zilizojaa sumu ya mauti.”

Fikiria mfano mwingine wa kitu ambacho kimsingi ni kizuri lakini ambacho kinaweza kugeuzwa dhidi ya maagizo ya Mungu—kazi ya mtu. Mtu anaweza kupata kuridhika katika taaluma, wito, au huduma, na sisi sote tunafaidika na kile ambacho watu waliojitolea na wenye vipaji katika nyanja nyingi za juhudi wamekamilisha na kuunda.

Hata hivyo, inawezekana kwamba kujitolea kwenye kazi inaweza kuwa fokasi ya juu kabisa ya maisha ya mtu. Kisha mengine yote yanakuwa ya pili, ikiwa ni pamoja na chochote ambacho Mwokozi anaweza kuomba kufanywa katika muda na talanta ya mtu. Kwa wanaume na wanawake vile vile, kuacha fursa halali za ndoa, kushindwa kuambatana na, na kumwinua mwenza wake, kushindwa kulea watoto wake, au hata kuepuka kwa makusudi baraka na majukumu ya kulea watoto kwa ajili tu ya sababu ya maendeleo ya kazi kunaweza kubadilisha mafanikio ya kujivunia kuwa aina ya uasi.

Another example concerns our physical being. Paul reminds us that we are to glorify God in both body and spirit and that this body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, “which ye have of God, and ye are not your own.” Thus, we have a legitimate interest in spending time caring for our bodies as best we can. Few of us will reach the peak of performance we have seen recently in the achievements of Olympic and Paralympic athletes, and some of us are experiencing the effects of age, or what President M. Russell Ballard called “the rivets coming loose.”

Nevertheless, I believe it pleases our Creator when we do our best to care for His wonderful gift of a physical body. It would be a mark of rebellion to deface or defile one’s body, or abuse it, or fail to do what one can to pursue a healthy lifestyle. At the same time, vanity and becoming consumed with one’s physique, appearance, or dress can be a form of rebellion at the other extreme, leading one to worship God’s gift instead of God.

In the end, burying our weapons of rebellion against God simply means yielding to the enticing of the Holy Spirit, putting off the natural man, and becoming “a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord.” It means putting the first commandment first in our lives. It means letting God prevail. If our love of God and our determination to serve Him with all our might, mind, and strength become the touchstone by which we judge all things and make all our decisions, we will have buried our weapons of rebellion. By the grace of Christ, God will forgive our sins and rebellions of the past and will take away the stain of those sins and rebellions from our hearts. In time, He will even take away any desire for evil, as He did with those Lamanite converts of the past. Thereafter, we too “never [will] fall away.”

Burying our weapons of rebellion leads to a unique joy. With all who have ever become converted to the Lord, we are “brought to sing [the song of] redeeming love.” Our Heavenly Father and His Son, our Redeemer, have confirmed Their unending commitment to our ultimate happiness through the most profound love and sacrifice. We experience Their love daily. Surely we can reciprocate with our own love and loyalty. May we bury—very, very deep—an element of

Mfano mwingine unahusu utu wetu wa kimwili. Paulo anatukumbusha kwamba tunapaswa kumtukua Mungu katika mwili na rohona kwamba mwili huu ni hekalu la Roho Mtakatifu, “ambalo mnalo kutoka kwa Mungu, na ninyi si mali yenu.” Basi, tuna maslahi halali katika kutumia muda kutunza miili yetu vizuri kadiri tuwezavyo. Wachache wetu tutafikia kilele cha utendaji ambao tumeona hivi karibuni katika mafanikio ya Olimpiki na Paralimpiki, na baadhi yetu tunakabiliwa na athari za umri, au kile Rais M. Russell Ballard alichokiita “ribiti zinazolegea.”

Hata hivyo, naamini inampendeza Muumba wetu tunapojitahidi kutunza zawadi Yake ya ajabu ya mwili wa nyama na mifupa. Itakuwa ni alama ya uasi kwa mtu kuumbua au kuchafua mwili wake, au kuutumia vibaya, au kushindwa kufanya kile mtu anachoweza ili kufuata mtindo wa maisha yenye afya. Wakati huo huo, upuuzi na kushughulikia sana umbile la mtu, muonekano, au uvaaji vinaweza kuwa aina ya uasi kwa upande mwingine, na kusababisha mtu kuabudu zawadi aliyopewa na Mungu badala ya Mungu.

Mwishowe, kuzika silaha zetu za uasi dhidi ya Mungu kunamaanisha tu kuukubali ushawishi wa Roho Mtakatifu, kumvua mtu wa asili, na kuwa “mtakatifu kupitia upatanisho wa Kristo Bwana.” Hii humaanisha kuweka amri ya kwanza kuwa kwanza katika maisha yetu. Humaanisha kumuacha Mungu ashinde. Ikiwa upendo wetu kwa Mungu na uamuzi wetu wa kumtumikia kwa uwezo wetu wote, akili, na nguvu zetu zote vitakuwa kigezo ambacho kwacho tunapima vitu vyote na kufanya maamuzi yetu yote, tutakuwa tumezika silaha zetu za uasi. Kwa neema ya Kristo, Mungu atasamehe dhambi zetu na uasi wa zamani na ataondoa doa la dhambi hizo na uasi kutoka kwenye mioyo yetu. Baada ya muda, Yeye ataondoa hata tamaa yoyote ya uovu, kama alivyowafanyia wale Walamani waongofu wa zamani. Baada ya hapo, sisi pia “kamwe hatutaanguka.”

Kuzika silaha zetu za uasi kunaleta shangwe ya kipekee. Pamoja na wale wote ambao wame-wahi kuongoka kwa Bwana, “tunaletwa kuimba [wimbo wa] upendo wa ukombozi.” Baba yetu wa Mbinguni na Mwanawe, Mkombozi wetu, wamethibitisha jukumu lao lisilo na mwisho la furaha yetu ya juu zaidi kupitia upendo na dhahabu ya kipekee. Tunapata uzoefu wa upendo wao kila siku. Hakika tunaweza kulipiza kwa upendo na uaminifu wetu wenyewe. Na tuzike—chini,

rebellion against God in our lives and replace it with a willing heart and a willing mind. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

chini kabisa—dalili yoyote ya uasi dhidi ya Mungu katika maisha yetu, tuibadilishe kwa moyo wa hiari na akili iliyo tayari. Katika jina la Yesu Kristo, amina.