

“BEHOLD, I THOUGHT”

by Tom Wacaster

They thought the Titanic was unsinkable! They thought there were sufficient life boats for whatever emergency they might face. They thought the double bottom, sixteen watertight compartments could withstand anything! They thought the ship could float even with some of its bulkheads filled with water! They thought the three million rivets holding the steel plates together were indestructible! They thought even after the ship had struck an iceberg that there was no cause for alarm - everything would be alright! They thought all was fine and some continued dancing, enjoying the music, and partying! They thought...but they were wrong!

Naaman was the captain of the host of Syria (2 Kings 5:1). The Bible describes him as a "great man....honorable" and "a mighty man in valor." He stood head and shoulders above his peers. But the Bible says he was a "leper." The extent of his leprosy is not known, but it was bad enough that it drove him to seek relief. At the advice of a maid who was of the land of Israel, Naaman searched out the man of God that just might possibly be able to cure him of his leprosy. But when he received the instructions to "Go and wash in Jordan seven times" Naaman became "wroth, and when away in a rage" (5:11). In his anger he manifested an attitude that not only temporarily barred him from healing, but will bar untold millions from heaven's gate. "Behold, I thought"! In his estimation "Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus" were better than the old muddy Jordan. Had it not been for the advice of one of his servants, Naaman would have died a leper.

"Behold I thought"! Three very simple words. No doubt we have heard, and occasionally used these three words ourselves. A motorist stopped by the police may respond, "Behold, I thought..." Poisoned by an accidental overdose the dying victim is heard to say, "Behold, I thought..." A wrong product purchased at the local store, failure to pay taxes, an innocent violation of the law, and when the realization of our error comes to light we are heard to say, "Behold I thought." Unfortunately there are many who, like Naaman, have their mind made up. Preconceived notions can be dangerous, if not deadly. In the spiritual realm preconceived notions are eternally detrimental. "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by thy name, and by thy name cast out demons, and by thy name do many mighty works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. 7:22-23). Those thus described by our Lord will, no doubt, cry out on the judgment day, "Behold, I thought." It seems to me, in view of what is at stake, that one would want to make doubly sure that he is on the right track when it comes to the spiritual journey upon which he has embarked. Peter stated it well, "Wherefore, brethren, give the more diligence to make your calling and election sure" (2 Pet. 1:10). When Jesus comes again, it will be too late. Don't find yourself among so many for whom eternity will echo the words, "Behold, I thought"!