

THE COMING COLD AUTUMN WINDS

John F. Hall

The weatherman is calling for a blast of cold air on October 18th. The forecast is showing a low of 28 degrees that night. A record might be set. I will close the air vents on my house's block foundation. I will also put three-inch thick solid concrete blocks in front of the aluminum air vents. Decades ago, I moved into the old farm house with my wife, Paula and my son, John, during a snow storm. I was in a grocery store, later that month, and a man that I knew came up to me and said: "John, I heard that when they opened the front door, in the house that you moved into, that it blew out the fire in the fire places." The man was not telling a tall tale. There is nothing



stopping the wind from racing up the hill and slamming into the front door. The window

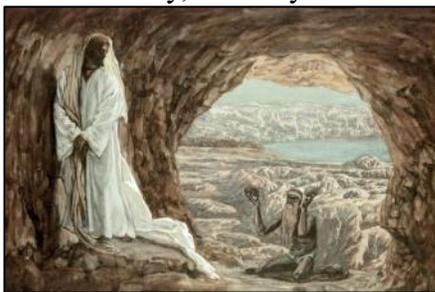


glass on both sides of the front door is single pane. It has no insulation value. The glass was made back in 1860, and it has a blue tint. I assume because it was made with a mixture of lead. I replaced all of the other windows in the two story house. But I kept the windows on both sides of the front door. I had storm windows crafted and installed in front of the two windows. I had Plexiglas installed on the inside of the glass, in the foyer. This created a dead-air space that

provides some insulation.

In Ecclesiastes, Chapter 3, Verse 1, are these words: "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven." I believe that everyone is given a purpose and a certain amount of time to accomplish that purpose. Some journey through life and never know or achieve their purpose on this earth. In the autumn season of my life, I have a compulsion to continue to write stories. Like the late poet and story writer, Jesse Stuart, writing has become a significant part of my life. I admit, that after writing stories for the past 45 years, that I am still a work in progress.

The other day, I briefly looked at a painting that was representing Jesus Christ in a cave



in the desert. It was painted by a French artist name James Tissot, sometime between 1886 and 1894. The painting is titled, "Jesus Tempted in the Wilderness." The painting is in the Boston Museum. In the painting, a thin old man with a white heard, is sitting on a rug. He is holding up two large rocks. He represents Satan tempting Jesus Christ to turn the rocks into bread. Jesus tells Satan: "It is written, that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God."

I've wondered about Jesus Christ being in a cave in the Judean Desert. The painting by James Tissot makes sense to me because, as a soldier, I was in the Mohave Desert in California, for a week. I was on a hill in a defensive position with no tent over me. I was burning up in the day time and freezing at night.

It is possible that Jesus might have sought protection from the 100-degree heat by going into a cave. The Qumran Caves are in the Judean Desert. They are a series of caves, both natural and artificial, found around the archaeological site of Qumran. It is in these caves that the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered. As for food in the desert, there are edible roots and plants in the Judean Desert.

Deborah Ann Belka wrote the poem, "In the Desert." These are her words: "Sometimes in the desert, God needs to send me... even though He knows it's not where I want to be. For it's too hot and dry, barren and desolate,, but, He knows more faith in Him I need to cultivate. New things I know He's doing, when I'm in this forlorn place, it's where I realize how much I need His grace. Sometimes into the desert, God has to take me... so my pride and ego are easier for me to see. For I get out of practice, on Him daily depending instead to my own needs I alone was attending. Sometimes in the desert, God forces me to go... for, He knows it's in this place where more grace will grow."

I fully agree with Deborah Belka, the desert is too hot, too dry, too barren, and too desolate for me. When I was in the desert, as a soldier, I had to march for ten miles through those hot sands. I would look up at the stark and inhospitable mountain. I immediately missed the green grass and those cool Kentucky rains.

I woke up from a sound sleep on a chilly Kentucky morning, about half past five o'clock in the morning. It is usually the sciatic pain that wakes me up. This time was different. I believe that Christ does not speak to us directly. He speaks to us in our dreams, in the people that He puts in our life, and to things that happen to us. The Good Lord has a way of giving me thoughts in my sleep. It is usually just a few words. This time it was six words. I keep an old iPhone 6, that has no SIM card, next to my pillow. I use the Notes app to draft my stories. I really did not want to open my eyes to put those six words into my iPhone. But my memory is slipping some, so I typed in those words: "My father's blood runs through me."

I was not sure if those words were meant for my father or for Jesus Christ's Father in heaven. But for some reason, I thought that Jesus woke me up to write a song. Several years ago, my Christian Fraternity Brother, John Juneau asked me to write a song. I thought that was a strange request because I am a story writer and not a song writer. Not too long ago, I wrote my first song called, "We Had It All." I asked John Juneau to set the song to music. I believe there is some kind of connection between being in physical pain and being a soulful song and soulful story writer. The painful arthritis in my fingers is a constant reminder of that connection. Jesus Christ told His stories in the way of parables. They constitute about a third of His teachings.

I depend on Christ's grace upon grace and His inspiration for each story that I write. Some of Christ's words are engraved in my soul. Some are found in Matthew, Chapter 10, Verse 33: "but whoever denies Me before men, I also will deny him before my Father who is in heaven."

This is the song that I wrote, and I use the six words for the title: "My Father's Blood Runs Through Me." These are my lyrics: "Just as Jesus was praying, all alone in that desolate and dark cave, in the desert, all the world would soon know of His destiny. My father's blood runs through me. Christ was praying to His Father in heaven, to spare Him from the Cross, as drops of blood and sweat from His forehead, dropped to the ground, in that forgotten place. My father's blood runs through me. Christ knew that someday He would cry out from the Cross and say: "My God! My God! Why have You forsaken Me? He would have to take on the sins of the world since His Father created humanity. My father's blood runs through me. In that cave, there was no creature comforts and no creature friends. The loneliness and the sound of silence echoed throughout that cave. My father's blood runs through me. Only Christ's Father in heaven could hear His Son's cry. My grandfather died when my father was only 10. Too soon my father had to become a man. My father's blood runs through me. Those that love me, don't want me to say that I am old. They cannot feel the real pain that I have in my body and in my soul. My father's blood runs through me. I wish I could have lived in Christ's time, and could have found Him in that cave. I would have brought Him bread and wine. Christ would have blessed the gifts, and then, offered His life for all humanity. While in that cave, I would have asked Him for His forgiveness, because I am a sinful man. But I know, that some day, Christ's Father's blood in heaven will run through me."

After writing the song, I mailed it John Juneau to see if he might be able to set it to music to play on his guitar. The coming cold autumn winds will finish the job of blowing all the leaves off the trees in my front yard. I tell the young adults, that I mentor, to give Christ at least an hour of their time. After all, He gives them 168 hours a week to spend with their creature comforts and their creature friends. I tell them to go to church on Sunday to refresh their connection with Christ. They should bring their concerns, their needs, their gratitude for all the gifts that He has given them, and present them to Christ in prayer. They need to turn off their cellphones and turn off the world for at least an hour. They don't need to be bored, like a frog on a log, as their Pastor preaches the Word of Jesus Christ. If they don't get anything out of coming to church on Sunday, it is because they don't bring anything to church. They need Christ's grace in their lives because He loves them.

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*Read other stories by John F. Hall and others at:
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