



October–December 2022
NEWSLETTER

SO HELP ME GOD

U.S. MARINE CORPS/SET, ARMANDO ELIZALDE

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U.S. AIR FORCE/JUSTIN R. PACHECO

GET THE LEAD OUT!

by CH (LTC) Steven Hokana
USA (Ret.)

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. PSALM 51:7

When I played baseball, we had a coach who sought to motivate the team. He would call out, “C’mon, hustle your bustle.” Interesting phrase. We never understood the specific words, but clearly the intent lodged in the tone of his voice. Coach was telling us to pick up the pace if we were going to catch balls flying high and dropping



U.S. NAVY/3RD CLASS ELEKIA MORELOS

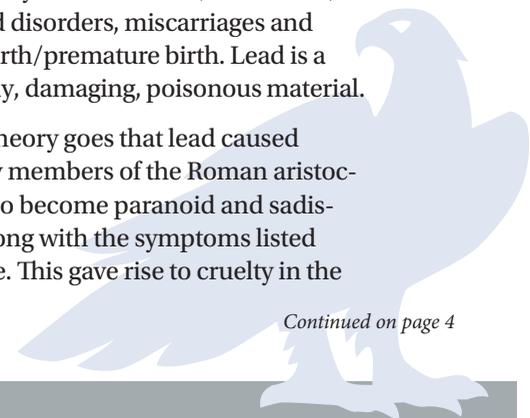
short. When training on a track in my Army days, an NCO fitness trainer with wall-to-wall muscles and an accompanying megaphone voice would bellow: “People, this is not a walk in the park ... get the lead out. Let’s move, move, move!” In both cases, this motivated us to run faster, have confidence in our bodies and accomplish the goals set before us.

A curious phrase, “get the lead out.” I read an article about lead in the Roman era. There is a highly controversial theory in academia concerning the fall of the Roman Empire. The theory goes that the Roman aristocracy, with opulent wealth, had indoor plumbing. They installed these pipes

in their multiple grandiose fountains and luxurious bathhouses (elaborate gymnasiums and spas). But the Romans had a problem. The pipes were made of lead. A short list of lead poisoning symptoms in adults include high blood pressure, difficulties with memory/concentration, headaches, mood disorders, miscarriages and stillbirth/premature birth. Lead is a deadly, damaging, poisonous material.

The theory goes that lead caused many members of the Roman aristocracy to become paranoid and sadistic along with the symptoms listed above. This gave rise to cruelty in the

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U.S. AIR FORCE/SENIOR AIRMAN ZACHARY CACICIA

FINDING HOPE

in deep sadness

by CH (LTC) Steven Hokana
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“I have heard your prayer; I have seen your tears. Behold, I will heal you.”

(2 KINGS 20:5)

Have you ever tried to fight off tears? The Bible is filled with talk concerning tears. They have a powerful impact on us who wear the uniform. Some have experienced death of a fellow warrior, a combatant in arms, someone we loved and served alongside. So, with a face soaked in tears, where is it we look for comfort and peace? Where can the warrior go for refuge?

I assisted an infantry battalion in preparing a memorial service for a fallen soldier. I’ll never forget the battalion commander and what he did. It was the day before we had the obligatory full rehearsal. The firing team was there, the ushers, the company commander who would speak, and the battle-buddy of the fallen warrior. I was amazed that, aside from the battalion commander and I, everyone else was around 20 years old.

At the start of the rehearsal, the leader asked all the participants to come to the front of the chapel and take a seat. He began by voicing the important “commander’s intent.” The commander then abruptly stopped talking and noticed a commotion in the back row. The hubbub was from the firing team and the ushers. All of them knew the fallen warrior well.

The commander, a full head taller than his soldiers

and gifted with a booming voice, walked to the back, to the center of the shuffling and mummering. He was truly a warrior, with badges from every “hooah” school an infantryman could attend and a combat patch from the same division we were currently assigned. You could hear his boots clicking on the floor as he marched to the rear of the formation.

But he wasn’t angry. Far from it. He knew his people. The commander was full of compassion and love for his infantrymen. You see, his firing team and ushers were sobbing softly and trying to hide their tears. The commander moved to the youngest in the group. He bent down and wiped tears from his face with his gentle bare hand. Words barely audible of quiet compassion were spoken to the youngest neophyte infantryman.

To everyone else he said in a gentle voice, “Tears are good. Tears are OK. Tears are real. We need tears. When we cry we remember with honor those who died. Now, let’s rehearse our ceremony with tears in our eyes remembering our friend and fellow soldier.”

This commander, a Christian, points to Jesus. He knew his infantrymen, burdened with sadness and with faces soaked with tears.

So it is with us. We have a Lord who walked among us and knows us; we are the sheep of His pasture (PSALM 23). Jesus experienced sorrow. When at Lazarus’ tomb, Jesus saw the



grief of those present and wept (JOHN 11:35). Tears are not a sign of weakness. Tears remind us of our fallen humanity and need for a Savior.

The most important thing to note is that we are not people in a forever-hopeless condition. Paul writes in 1 Thessalonians 4:13: “But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope.”

Paul continues by reminding us wherein our hope is found: “For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first” (1 THESS. 4:14–16).

Even in the deep sadness caused by death, where the tears flow unrelenting, the hope we have in Christ is not diminished. We have a sure and certain hope in Christ. “He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away” (REV. 21:4).

What a wonderful and joyous time it will be when Christ returns. Tears will be gone. “Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning” (PSALM 30:5).



U.S. AIR NATIONAL GUARD/
SENIOR AIRMAN JOSHIAT MEECE



U.S. NATIONAL GUARD/MASTER SGT. BECKY VANSHUR

WHAT TO DO WHEN SAD



STAY in the Word of God.

“But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night” (PSALM 1:2).



ATTEND worship as often as you can.

“For where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am among them” (MATTHEW 18:20).



GATHER with fellow believers.

“And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers” (ACTS 2:42).



REMEMBER that sadness is temporary.

“Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning” (PSALM 30:5).



TAKE COMFORT knowing that God journeys with you through life's ups and downs.

“And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age” (MATTHEW 28:20).



BE WATCHFUL of temptation.

“Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak” (MATTHEW 26:41).



NEVER FORGET, Jesus is the source of salvation.

“Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me’” (JOHN 14:6).



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arena, senseless wars where uncounted millions were slaughtered, strategic errors and fratricide. Historians believe lead in the water caused the horrific and often very violent martyrdom of Christians in various coliseums throughout the Empire. Perhaps a glaring example of cruelty was seen in Great Britain after the Boudica revolt by Gaius Suetonius Paulinus. We may never know the details, but he was recalled to Rome for being too harsh by the most violent and sadistic emperor of all, Nero.

We have something inside of us that brings about warring madness, cruelty to ourselves and others and death ... eternal death. Unlike lead, there is no initial positive use for this.

I'm talking about sin, which the explanation of Luther's Small Catechism defines as "humanity's fallen condition. We are turned away from God and are unable to look to Him for security, meaning and righteousness. This inner sinful condition results in actual sins of thought, desire, word or deed contrary to God's will as summarized in the ten commandments."

Sin came into the world through Adam and Eve. The entire human race fell. Sin therefore is immediate, deadly and absolute ruinous to our life, our relationships and our world. "Therefore, just as sin came into the world through

one man, and death through sin ... so death spread to all men because all sinned" (ROM. 5:12).

Can it be that sin is worse than lead?!? Yes! To top it off, on our own we are not capable of "getting the lead out." Our sin cannot be purged, excised or removed on our own. It is a part of who we are. In Romans 3 we read: "For by works of the

law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin" (ROM. 3:20).

The good news, the Gospel, is that we are not left in the dust of death and our own horrible predicament. Jesus makes this crystal clear when speaking to Thomas: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (JOHN 14:6).

Think about it. Our horrible, terminal condition of eternal death is removed by Jesus. We cannot purge this sin on our own. We cannot "get the lead out." Instead, through the Holy Spirit we fall into the arms of a loving, merciful God who removes our sins from us. This was accomplished by Jesus' death on the cross. The shedding of His blood was a sacrifice for our sins. We are now forgiven. As baptized members of His body, the church, we live in an honest, sure and eternal hope. What a wonderful and beautiful Savior we have. We are called, as redeemed children of God in Christ, to live in thanksgiving and hope that Jesus is our resurrected Lord.

“ WE CANNOT ‘GET THE LEAD OUT.’ INSTEAD, THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT WE FALL INTO THE ARMS OF A LOVING, MERCIFUL GOD WHO REMOVES OUR SINS FROM US. ”

CHECK IT OUT!

WORSHIP AND DEVOTIONS
worshipanew.org

MILITARY ONE SOURCE
militaryonesource.mil

VETERANS CRISIS LINE
veteranscrisisline.net

WARRIORS OF FAITH
thelc.ms/lhm-warriors

FORGIVENESS IS A CHOICE
shoplhm.org/forgiveness-is-a-choice

PTSD THE WAR AT HOME
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VICTIM, VALIDATED, VICTORIOUS
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STRENGTH AND HONOR
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