

Quit Yourself

Twice in the scriptures there is a term used which denotes a sense of urgency and strength: the term is “quit,” defined as “to make a man of” (Vine’s).

The first was during the closing period of the Judges of Israel: the tabernacle of Jehovah was in Shiloh, and Eli the priest was presiding. The Philistines, who occupied Philistia, lived along a coastal strip between the Mediterranean and the land of Israel and Judah. There were five lords of the Philistines located in the cities of Ashdod, Ashkelon (where the temple of Dagon was located), Ekron, Gaza, and Gath. The Philistines were cunning, warring people who were a menace to Israel for many generations. During the period of our consideration, “Israel went out against the Philistines to battle.” “And the Philistines put themselves in array against Israel: and when they joined battle, Israel was smitten before the Philistines; and they slew of the army in the field about four thousand men. And when the people were come into the camp, the elders of Israel said, Wherefore hath Jehovah smitten us to-day before the Philistines? Let us fetch the ark of the covenant of Jehovah out of Shiloh unto us, that it may come among us, and save us out of the hand of our enemies. So the people sent to Shiloh; and they brought from thence the ark of the covenant of Jehovah of hosts, who sitteth above the cherubim: and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God. And when the ark of the covenant of Jehovah came into the camp, all Israel shouted with a great shout, so that the earth rang again. And when the Philistines heard the noise of the shout, they said, What meaneth the noise of this great shout in the camp of the Hebrews? And they understood that the ark of Jehovah was come into the camp. And the Philistines were afraid, for they said, God is come into the camp. And they said, Woe unto us! for there hath not been such a thing heretofore. Woe unto us! who shall deliver us out of the hand of these mighty gods? these are the gods that smote the Egyptians with all manner of plagues in the wilderness” (1 Samuel 4:1-8). The Philistines were faced with what they believed impossible odds. Yet, their choices were few: the Philistines resolve was, “Be strong, and quit yourselves like men, O ye Philistines, that ye be not servants unto the Hebrews, as they have been to you: quit yourselves like men, and fight” (1 Samuel 4:9). And so, they fought! Israel was smitten, and the ark of God was taken.

The second time the phrase was used was when the Apostle Paul told the Corinthians, “Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong” (1 Corinthians 16:13).

There is no better time to fulfill this admonition than when, being faced with the craftiness of the devil, we are called into service to “Be sober, be watchful:

your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour, whom withstand stedfast in your faith, knowing that the same sufferings are accomplished in your brethren who are in the world. And the God of all grace, who called you unto his eternal glory in Christ, after that ye have suffered a little while, shall himself perfect, establish, strengthen you” (1Peter 5:8-10).

How shall we do so? “Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil” (Ephesians 6:10-11). Ross Triplett, Sr.