

Hallelujah, Praise Jehovah*The Psalter, 1912*

Hallelujah, praise Jehovah,
 O my soul, Jehovah praise;
 I will sing the glorious praises
 Of my God through all my days.
 Put no confidence in princes,
 Nor for help on man depend;
 He shall die, to dust returning,
 And his purposes shall end.

Happy is the man that chooses
 Israel's God to be his aid;
 He is blessed whose hope of blessing
 On the Lord his God is stayed.
 Heav'n and earth the Lord created,
 Seas and all that they contain;
 He delivers from oppression,
 Righteousness he will maintain.

Food he daily gives the hungry,
 Sets the mourning prisoner free,
 Raises those bowed down with anguish,
 Makes the sightless eyes to see.
 Well Jehovah loves the righteous,
 And the stranger he befriends,
 Helps the fatherless and widow,
 Judgment on the wicked sends.

Hallelujah, praise Jehovah,
 O my soul, Jehovah praise;
 I will sing the glorious praises
 Of my God through all my days.
 Over all God reigns for ever,
 Through all ages he is king;
 Unto him, your God, O Zion,
 Joyful hallelujahs sing.

ΤΩ ΚΡΟΝΟΥ ΚΑΙΡΩ*In the Nick of Time***Before I Forget***Kevin T. Bauder*

(With apologies to Wilbur Smith, who has already used this title, and to Murray Harris, who borrowed it from him before I could)

I won't sugar coat the news: I just turned sixty-five. I can remember when my mother's father turned this age. He seemed ancient and used up. But then he had fought in the Great War, supported a family during the Depression, and lived through World War Two, the Korean War, and a good bit of the Johnson administration.

My earliest recollection is of being strapped down to a hospital gurney and having my stomach pumped. I was just over a year old, and apparently I had got into the aspirin. Nobody could tell how many I may have gulped. The experience was terrifying. It felt like the end of the world.

About that time my father built a small house outside Mapleton, Michigan. The water was so salty that it corroded the plumbing. Dad also built me a playhouse in the back yard, near an open field of sandy hills. I could listen to the bobwhites whistle in the scrub.

When I was three or four years old my parents trusted Christ as Savior. I was old enough to notice the change that came into our home. Some habits suddenly disappeared. New ones took their place. We began to attend church whenever it was open: typically, four services per week. Every visiting missionary or Bible teacher became a guest in our home. My parents did not simply profess faith. Their lives genuinely changed as they grew in faith and good works.

My own conversion came at seven years of age. At ten I followed the Lord in believer's baptism. Shortly afterward I recognized consciously and deliberately the claim that Christ held over my life, and I submitted myself to serve Him in whatever way He wished.

During my first ten or eleven years we constantly had foster children in our home. Over the years I had more than twenty foster brothers and sisters, besides my own sisters and brother. Some were with us only for a few weeks; others stayed for years. Some were newborns. Others were advancing into their upper teens. Fully half were mentally "retarded" (as we called it in



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those days). The rest brought plenty of emotional baggage from their circumstances, but all were special. Cindy and Kelly had watched their mother murder their father. Sarah was a newborn who was with us long enough to seem like a real little sister. Ray was six or seven years older than me, strong as a bull, and acted like a big brother. Whenever one of them was taken away it felt like the end of the world.

Everybody was scared of communism and nuclear war during those days. In school we practiced hiding under our desks from nuclear attack. At church camp and in youth rallies we were regularly warned that the communists had sworn to take over America by 1972, and they were ahead of schedule. Of course, we now know that it won't happen until 2022.

My first recollection of global events comes from November 22, 1963, when Mrs. Mullarz, our elementary principal, came into our classroom and told our teacher to turn on the radio. President Kennedy had just been shot. School was dismissed early that day and didn't resume for a week. It felt as if a world had ended.

Over the next several years we witnessed a string of assassinations: Malcolm X (1965), Martin Luther King, Jr. (1968), and Bobby Kennedy (1968). Viet Nam began to heat up, eventually leading to anti-war protests. Those were years of civil unrest: hippies, yippies, the 1967 race riots, more riots at the 1968 Democratic National Convention, the Chicago Seven, the Kent State shootings, the University of Wisconsin bombing. In Cleveland the Cuyahoga River caught fire in 1969. Later that year Woodstock was supposed to be about peace and love, but what I remember is that somebody else had to clean up the mess—which is a bit of a metaphor for my generation. Then Woodstock was followed by Altamont. So much the worse for peace and love.

At the end of 1968 my parents left Michigan for Bible college. My father graduated in 1973, the same spring that I graduated from high school. He graduated in the top half of his class; I graduated in the bottom half of mine. Richard Nixon was the president, the nation was in the middle of an energy crisis, stagflation was running rampant, and the Watergate hearings were just beginning.

I managed to cram a four-year bachelor's program into the next six years. I also gained experience as a factory worker, a hot asphalt roofer, a lifeguard, a warehouse laborer, and a retail salesman. During that time I met, courted, and wed a farmer's daughter from southern Iowa. Within a year of our marriage I knew that the Lord was leading me toward vocational ministry. In June of 1979 we moved to Denver for seminary. The next four years brought my M.Div., my Th.M., and an invitation to teach in a Bible college.

That teaching experience lasted only two years, but it was when our daughter was born. I left the Bible college for a pastorate, and that is where our

son was born. During that pastorate I began work on a D.Min. While finishing the D.Min., I left the pastorate to begin work on a Ph.D. Then, while working on the Ph.D., I led in planting a church near Dallas, pastoring that congregation for several years. At the beginning of 1998 I began teaching at Central Baptist Theological Seminary.

One thing I've learned: the end of the world isn't all it's cracked up to be. The Asian Flu epidemic of 1957-58 was going to be the end of the world. Then it was the Cuban Missile Crisis. Perhaps it was the Civil Rights Movement, desegregation, and bussing. Or was it Viet Nam? Or global cooling? Perhaps it was the Counterculture—or maybe Watergate. No, it was the Iran hostage crisis. Or the Swine Flu. Or AIDS. Wait, it must have been Ruby Ridge. Or Waco. Or the Clinton presidency in general. Or the Oklahoma City bombing. Or global warming. On second (third? fourth?) thought, it must have been the Avian Flu. Or the West Nile Virus. Or Ebola. Or September 11. Or the invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan. Or climate change.

Come to think of it, I've endured one end of the world after another—yet here I am. God is still governing the universe. Christ is still coming. We Christians still have a job to do. We have not been called to panic or to speak shrill words. We have been called, you and me, simply to be faithful.



This essay is by Kevin T. Bauder, Research Professor of Systematic Theology at Central Baptist Theological Seminary. Not every one of the professors, students, or alumni of Central Seminary necessarily agrees with every opinion that it expresses.
