



Update

November 2019

Vernon & Martha Hedge

The Blessing of a Pest



The Mexican boll weevil started its destructive journey into Texas in 1891 and systematically destroyed crops as it traveled across the coastal states. It arrived in Coffee County Alabama in 1915 guaranteeing financial ruin to the farm community. In 1916 a resourceful businessman, H.M. Sessions, talked one of the distraught farmers, C. W. Baston, into planting peanuts instead of cotton. Sessions provided the seed, promised help with the harvest and a dollar per bushel.

Baston made \$8,000 (about \$195,000 today) on his successful peanut crop, paid off his debt and had money in the bank for the next crop. Other farmers swarmed to plant peanuts and cash in. Never again was cotton their only crop. They planted potatoes, sugar cane, sorghum and tobacco. Because of the boll weevil, the farmers learned the strength of diversity.

A few years later another businessman, Bon Fleming, came up with the idea of erecting a monument to the boll weevil in Enterprise, Alabama, the only monument in the world to a pest. Not only is it a symbol of good coming out of bad, it has become a tourist attraction—another source of income for the community.

Perhaps you have a boll weevil problem. Maybe a job loss or a major health challenge like we are facing since Vernon's stroke in June. God will take what seems bad

to us and will turn it to our good. He is not limited in His resources or creativity.

Life may look different, as it did in the 1920s, but God will be in the outcome.

The Apostle Paul wrote to the Philippian church,

“I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all through Him who gives me strength”

(Phil 4:11-13 NIV).

It's out of contentment that thanksgiving flows. We can only be content when we know experientially that God is taking care of us. That's the secret that Paul knew. That doesn't mean we no longer have goals or work to improve our lives. It does mean we can have peace in the journey. ✨



Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth!

Serve the Lord with gladness!

Come into his presence with singing!

Know that the Lord, he is God!

It is he who made us, and we are his;

we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.

Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise!

Give thanks to him;

bles his name!

For the Lord is good;

his steadfast love endures

forever, and his faithfulness

to all generations.

(Ps 100 ESV)

This tribute is so powerful I want to share it. When we take a fresh look at Who our God is and what He continues to do for us, it is easy to be thankful. If you read this out loud, it will have more impact.

He is the First and Last, the Beginning and the End.
He is the Keeper of Creation and the Creator of all.
He is the Architect of the universe and
The Manager of all times.

He always was, He always is, and
He always will be. . .
Unmoved, Unchanged, Undefeated,
and never Undone.

He was bruised and brought healing,
He was pierced and eased pain,
He was persecuted and brought freedom,
He was dead and brought life,
He is risen and brings power,
He reigns and brings Peace.

The world can't understand Him,
The armies can't defeat Him,
The schools can't explain Him, and
The leaders can't ignore Him.
Herod couldn't kill Him,
The Pharisees couldn't confuse Him, and
The people couldn't hold Him.
Nero couldn't crush Him,
Hitler couldn't silence Him,
The New Age can't replace Him, and
Logic can't explain Him away.

He is Light, Love, Longevity, and Lord.
He is Goodness, Kindness, Gentleness, and God.
He is Holy, Righteous, Mighty, Powerful, and Pure.
His ways are right,
His Word is eternal,
His will is unchanging, and
His mind is on me.

He is my Redeemer,
He is my Savior,
He is my Guide, and
He is my Peace.
He is my Joy,
He is my Comfort,
He is my Lord, and
He rules my life.

I serve Him because His bond is love.
His burden is light, and
His goal for me is abundant life.

I follow Him because He is the Wisdom of the wise,
The Power of the powerful,
The Ancient of Days, the Ruler of rulers,
The Leader of leaders,
The Overseer of the overcomers, and
The Sovereign Lord of all
that was and is and is to come.

And if that seems impressive to you, try this for size.
His goal is a relationship with ME.
He will never leave me,
Never forsake me,
Never mislead me,
Never forget me,
Never overlook me, and
Never cancel my appointment
in His appointment book.

When I fall, He lifts me up,
When I fail, He forgives,
When I am weak, He is strong,
When I am lost, He is the way,
When I am afraid, He is my courage,
When I stumble, He steadies me,
When I am hurt, He heals me,
When I am broken, He mends me,
When I am blind, He leads me,
When I am hungry, He feeds me.

When I face trials, He is with me,
When I face persecution, He shields me,
When I face problems, He comforts me,
When I face loss, He provides for me,
When I face Death, He carries me Home.

He is Everything for everybody, everywhere,
Every time, and every way.

He is God, He is faithful.
I am His, and He is mine.
My Father in heaven has overcome the
father of this world.

This is why I feel so secure,
God has said I am His, and
He is in control.
That means all is well with my soul.
Every day is a blessing because

God Is!
