

Be of Joy, For We Know What the End Holds For Us

One of the things that good “Baptists” did not do back in “the old days” was go to the theater. As a very young boy I wasn’t sure why, but it seemed to have something to do with going to Heaven, along with not having long hair (guess that shows my age).

One summer, when I was about 9 or 10, my brother and I went to stay with some adult friends in Albuquerque, New Mexico. They were a bit older than our parents and had no children. We loved going and staying with Herman and Cleo. This particular summer, the movie *Bambi* was in a theater in their city. Cleo decided to take us. She reassured us that it would be fine and that she would take the blame.

I remember my emotions so clearly. Fear ... coupled with childhood excitement. We got popcorn and the lights dimmed as the movie came on. The story opened with Bambi as a new fawn simply trying to get his legs under him to stand up and walk. We then delighted in his adventures with his friends, Thumper and Flower.

The music, songs and scenes made us smile and even laugh out loud. Bambi even meets Felin, the little doe fawn. Love blossoms. What a joy! Then, suddenly, out of nowhere, things changed. “Man,” as the movie calls the hunter, disrupts the peace and quiet. In horror and fright we watched as Bambi’s mother is shot and killed. Who shoots a baby’s mommy?

As if that wasn’t bad enough, a short time later the forest is burned to the ground, once again by “Man.” First Bambi is orphaned and now he is homeless. Suddenly I understood *why Baptists didn’t go to movies*. I can remember wanting to leave. This “movie” thing was not what I had hoped.

Then, the scene changes dramatically. Springtime arrives. New growth comes and lying in the bushes is Felin with two fawns. The camera pans back and there stands Bambi on the bluff looking over his kingdom, the proud "Prince of the Forest." As horrible as things had gotten in the movie, I was glad I stayed. The ending made it worth it all ...

Look at Revelation 21: "Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth ... and I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, 'Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them ... And God will wipe every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death.' ... Then He who sat on the throne said, 'Behold, I make all things new.' And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful'" (Rev. 21:1-5, emphasis added).

This world we live in is full of sorrow, pain, tragedy and trials. Sometimes, if you are like me, you feel trapped. Afraid. Wondering what it's all about. Remember this, the evil one, Satan, is the "prince of the power of the air." He runs free in this world. He has turned God's wonderful creation into his playground. Sin, filth, degradation and unforgiveness abound. Life often seems unbearable.

However, here is the joyous good news. We *know what the end of the "movie" is*. Our Champion, Jesus Christ, wins. His kingdom is restored. Alpha and Omega destroys the enemy once and for all. There is hope, because we have His Word, which records the end of the story for all to read.

As you journey this week in your Christ walk, *rejoice*. We know the end of the story. Life may be tough right now. You might have some health issues, or experienced the recent loss of a loved one. There may be strife in your marriage. You might not have enough money to make ends meet. Do not lose hope! Just when you think the "movie" could get no worse, your Champion will be there.

And in the end, we win in a big way. There will be no more tears. No more mourning, or pain or even death, but life eternal. Everlasting. And we will cry with the saints of all time, *"Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God"* Just hang on. The end of the "movie"—the end of the story, recorded for all to read—makes it worth it all. I promise.