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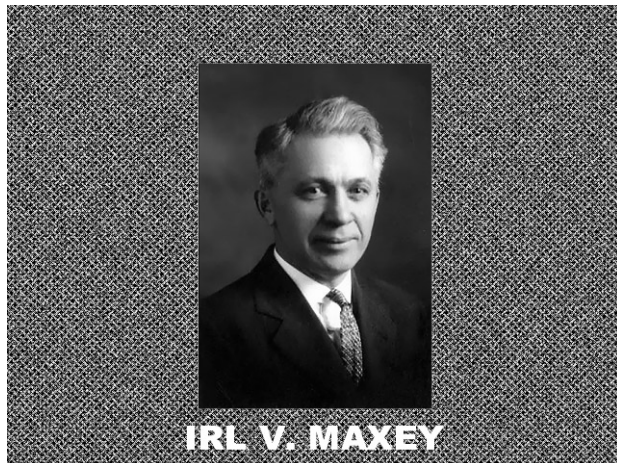
**HE BUILT TADMOR IN THE WILDERNESS
A Sermon By Irl V. Maxey**

**Digitized and Edited
By Duane V. Maxey**

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INTRODUCTION TO THIS FILE

Papa dated this sermon as written on April 13, 1912. At that time, he had just passed his 30th birthday on March 12th of that year. He does not give the location at which the sermon was written. However, in his book titled: "We'll Get To That Later" (hdm0129), my brother Parker states:

"In his mid-twenties Father moved west and married my mother, Jessie H. Caldwell, in Montpelier, Idaho on May 5, 1910. They were united in marriage by Rev. Henry W. Parker (after whom I was named). Mother married at the age of 20, a young woman whose ancestors in earlier years migrated to Canada from Ireland and then to Michigan before moving west. Earlier in that same year Father received a local preacher's license in the M.E. Church in Caldwell, Idaho on June 7. From 1911 to near the end of 1913 Father pastored in Glenns Ferry, Idaho."

Therefore, papa was pastoring in Glenns Ferry, Idaho at the time this sermon was written. Glenns Ferry is located now on Interstate 84, about half-way between Twin Falls and Boise. In the year 2000, Glenns Ferry had a population of only 1,611 - so, it is quite likely that papa's church there was not large, but I am sure that what counted most with him (wherever he preached) was being in the center of God's will.

This, I consider to be one of the best sermons of our father that I have thus far read among those recently given to me by my brother, Gale E. Maxey of Boise, Idaho. It is certainly inspiring and challenging. Once again, though I have done a bit of editing in the file, I have endeavored to ascertain papa's meaning and set it forth. In an instance or two in this sermon, I was not able to decipher his writing. I tried and tried, but could not do so. In other instances I was finally able to decipher his handwriting after searches online to verify what he had written. This message certainly reveals a depth and breadth of study and learning by our father that goes far beyond my own! I pray that God will make this sermon, "He Built Tadmor In The Wilderness," a blessing, inspiration and challenge to each of the many who may read it, if Jesus tarries. -- Duane V. Maxey, (Ahwatukee) Phoenix, Arizona, January 21, 2006.

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SERMON TEXT: -- "And he built Tadmor in the wilderness, and all the store cities, which he built in Hamath" (2 Chronicles 8:4).

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INTRODUCTION TO THE SERMON

You will find my text in the fourth verse of the eighth chapter of Second Chronicles: "He built Tadmor in the wilderness."

Solomon, the mighty progressive is on the throne of Israel, and everything is on the move. The army is increased and the borders of his kingdom extended. The temple is built and all cities are improved. Now he decides to build a city far away from the haunts of men. Such a task! Where will he get his building material? -- from the forests up on mount Lebanon.

But the cost of transportation will be great, and the cost of labor very high. Yes, that is true -- miles and miles of bad roads, away from a water supply, and miles from provisions. Yes, everything is against him but natural beauty. Here in the wilderness he built Tadmor. Environment, then, does not always make an individual a city or a nation.

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I. THE TADMORS OF CITY LIFE

There are, and have been, other Tadmors. See a persecuted people flying from the onslaught of enemies and taking refuge on some low islands out from the shore. Here bogs were filled up and piles driven, canals dug out, and walls of masonry built. Cathedrals tower toward the sky and bridges span the canals -- once a quagmire, and now Venice, the city of beauty and splendor. Its towering Campanile* giving music of the chiming bells to all the surrounding shore-line. Its canals with their gliding gondolas are an attraction to all the world. "He built Tadmor in the wilderness."

[*Campanile di San Marco: Venice's 325-foot bell tower -- Even though the tower was erected at the beginning of the 20th century, it is an exact replica of the 15th-century bell tower. In 1609, Galileo Galilei exhibited his telescope here. Information obtained from online sites.]

The mad waves of the Baltic Sea once washed the shores of Ingerland* and seemed to say, I can move the silt and make the slough, and no Swedish subject dare inhabit this place. But the hills were torn down and the sloughs were filled. The mad waves were held back by buttress, and broad streets were laid, and buildings tower toward the sky. The waves that once so madly bore the silt now carry loads of commerce to the shore.

[*Ingerland is apparently a coastal city in the U.K., and from what papa wrote above it seems to be located on the Baltic Sea coast of Sweden. However, in spite of repeated online searches, I was unable to locate this city. I was only able to verify that it is a city, somewhere apparently in the U.K.]

St. Petersburg, the proud Capital city of the Russian Empire. "He built Tadmor in the wilderness." Where is there a slough, a wilderness or a sagebrush plain [like that around Glenns Ferry, Idaho] that men will not bid defiance to and build a city?

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II. THE TADMORS OF NATIONAL LIFE

A few Mongolians were scattered on some straggling islands in the Pacific ocean. Volcanoes belched forth their vitriol and angrily wailed: Anyone who tries to inhabit these islands will perish! I make an island in a night, and leave the next in sad plight! But the sturdy Japanese have stayed there and brought civilization from afar to the [*?????] Islands, and the mighty Japanese Empire now stands as a monument to endurance and is among the great nations of the world. "He built Tadmor in the wilderness."

[* In spite of repeated efforts to discern papa's handwritten name for these islands, I was unable to decipher it. His scrawled word looks something like "ginnering" or "quinnering" but when I also did repeated online searches I found no such name for a group of Islands, nor did I see anything like that name among the archipelago islands of Japan. Perhaps the name papa wrote was an earlier designation for the four main islands of Japan:-- Honshu, Hokkaido, Kyushu and Shikoku. Regardless, without the precise name, the reader can discern the point of the example.]

May I not also call your attention to Netherland, fighting back the waves of the sea and making for themselves a home and a country. What do not, and will not, men overcome to build cities, mold nations, and construct empires?! They laugh at the ocean, smile at the desert, and mock at the wilderness.

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III. THE TADMORS OF CHARACTER

When one starts to get an education he is building a Tadmor in the wilderness. Stretches of barren mind lay between him and the supply -- much to do -- much energy to spend and a great price to pay. Yonder is the Lebanon of Knowledge where the streams of knowledge flow. He may obtain education. This is our encouragement, that God our Father is always near.

We may prepare to confront oceans difficulties. Like the ocean rushed in on the poor Netherlanders and wasted the efforts of years, and their homes, so suddenly we will seem to fail -- sickness will lay us out, or death in our homes retard us. Then, Oh! -- then a Jamestown failure and starvation confronts us and renders useless our efforts with all of their cost! The Persian Army of Ignorance

meets us at Marathon, but here we are the victors. We strengthen our will so the ocean of difficulties are beaten back. "He built Tadmor in the wilderness."

Every man is thrust into a wilderness and must subdue the desert and in a large sense mold his own environment, overcome the hindrance and make it a blessing of power.

Demosthenes, the Grecian lad who stammered so, put rocks in his mouth and spoke beside the seashore to the senseless waves until he became a mighty orator!

Lincoln molds the fire-shovel into a nice slate and the flickering fire into the most incandescent lamp and turned his thumb-worn books into mighty libraries -- until his mind and life, thrown in squalor and want and adversity, became the mighty debater, the orator of Gettysburg, and the Martyr President.

Lorrimer, the boot-black, now Senator of Illinois -- Buckley, the consumptive, now the mighty editor, are but further illustrations of the truth. "He built Tadmor in the wilderness."

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IV. THE TADMORS OF THE SPIRIT

When we are converted, we are an oasis thrust into a wilderness of sin and sorrow. We are alone and this wild world is not a friend of grace to help us on to God. Jesus said, I am not of this world, even so you are not of this world (cf. John 17:14, 16).

Our help must come from afar, and we must not count the cash. We are in the world and not of it, so environment has not, nor ever will, make us what we must become. Our work is to overcome the environment, mold for ourselves and those in whom we come in contact a material help. To our knees in our tents! Oh Israel. From the Mount Lebanon of Heavenly Grace we must bring, on the wings of petition, our material. Servants, but cry: "This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him.." A thousand blessed angels attend us and lead us, and One camps with us and leads us as He did Joshua of old.

Though traveling this way of agonizing prayer, and all alone, we need not fear, for "I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them" (Isaiah 42:16).

This Phidias* of our spirit we are given to build a Parthenon. Build a flaming Tadmor.

[*With and online search, I found this: "Phidias was born in Athens. He became a friend and adviser to Pericles and helped him to beautify Athens after the Greek victory over Persia."]

Jesus said we are to be as a light set on a hill that cannot be hid. The Parthenon built by Phidias was on an eminence so all Athens could and did behold its beauty. Build so we can have a queen like Zenobia* to rule and a minister like Longmannus* and we will not lose our savor.

[*From online sites, I found the following: -- *Zenobia was queen of Palmyra -- See point V below. *Artaxerxes I, was called Longmannus. He allowed Ezra (7:1-28) to gather Israelites out of captivity to go back, and 13 years later (445 B.C.), he had reigned 20 years and gave Nehemiah the responsibility of overseeing the work of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem.]

As I said before, mold an environment. Jesus is our example in this. My! what a wilderness he came to, and what an influence he left! Was Jesus made by environment? or did He make environment? Did He get His help from Capernaum, Samaria, or Jerusalem? or did He get it from afar -- even from the Father?

An answer to these questions will satisfy us that His help and consolation came from afar. "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Mark 2:17; Luke 5:32).*

[*I think papa quotes this Scripture to amplify the fact that Christ did not come to gather about Himself a multitude of righteous helpers, so much as He came to, "change the environment" by Himself with the Father's help from afar, through the exertion of a powerful, saving influence over those in the wilderness of sin.]

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V. TADMOR WAS CHANGED INTO PALMYRA

My last thought will be that finally the city of Tadmor was changed to Palmyra -- the City of Palms. We shall be changed if we stay faithful to the Lord. Our spirit will grow and be beautified. Finally, the Lord will say, "Enough, Come up higher!" and we will join the bloodwashed who have palms in their hands and dwell with the Lord forevermore in that Holy City of Palms (Victory). Amen.

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THE END OF THIS SERMON