



Shackleton:

A Study in Leadership, Perseverance,
and Providence.

Introduction

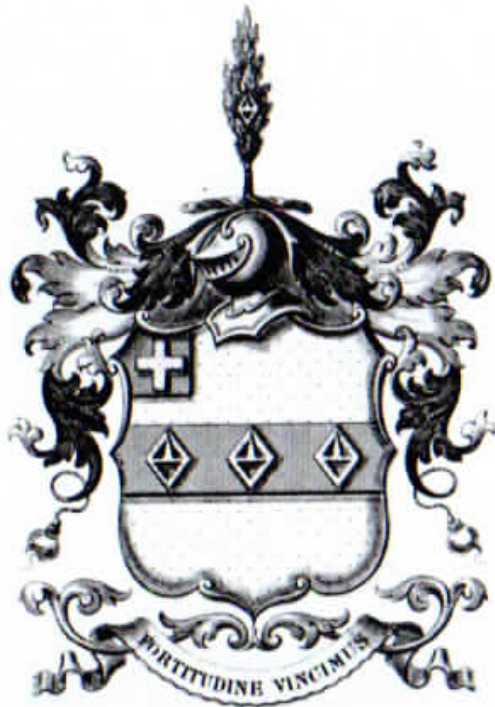
When carefully investigated and studied historically, the unique story of Sir Ernest Shackleton and his twenty-seven companions aboard the *Endurance* yields vast treasures of practical wisdom and insight for living *coram Deo*. Many of us have strained at the oars to navigate our way through some of life's toughest storms; and we need help. How these courageous men persevered in the face of severe and unrelenting trials over a two-year period staggers our imaginations while strengthening our resolve to listen to their voices and to move forward through every obstacle that we encounter on the way to the Celestial City. Attentiveness to God's Word and learning from Christ how to persevere through our losses, trials, and pains will lead us safely home.

Introduction

“The struggles, disappointments and endurance of this small party of Britishers, hidden for nearly two years in the fastnesses (grip) of the Polar ice, make a story which is unique in the history of Antarctic exploration.”



Shackleton Family Crest and Motto



Shackleton.

FORTITUDINE VINCIMUS

By Endurance We Conquer



Timeline: Shackleton's *Endurance* Expedition

- August 1, 1914: The *Endurance* sails from London
- October 26, 1914: Departs Buenos Aires
- November 5, 1914: The *Endurance* arrives at Grytviken, South Georgia
- December 5, 1914: Departs from South Georgia
- January 18, 1915: The *Endurance* immobilized in pack ice
- February 14, 1915: The *Endurance* crew used ice-chisels, prickers (sharply pointed tools), saws and picks, working strenuously for almost two days to free the ship from the ice. Shackleton: "The task was beyond our powers."



Timeline: Shackleton's *Endurance* Expedition

- February 22, 1915: The *Endurance* reaches the farthest south point of her drift. The ice pack froze solidly around the ship; it becomes a winter station on February 24.
- May 1, 1915: The crew says goodbye to the sun and enters into the darkness of mid-winter. Antarctica has 6 months of summer and 6 months of winter each year.
- July 13, 1915: The most severe blizzard they have encountered sweep down on the men, burying the ship in 5 feet of snow. The ship was invisible at a distance of 50 yards. The temperature ranged from -21° to -33° Fahrenheit. The gale was 60 or 70 miles an hour.

Endurance in the Grip of the Floes

Shackleton, on August 26, 1915: “We knew the *Endurance* to be stout and true, but these were anxious days because no ship every built by man could live, if taken fairly in the grip of the floes and prevented from rising to the surface of the grinding ice.”



Photo by Frank Hurley

Hopes Dashed



Shackleton: “After a year’s incessant battle with the ice, we had returned to almost identically the same latitude which we had left with such high hopes a year before. But under what conditions now! Our ship was crushed and lost, and we drifting on a piece of ice at the mercy of the winds.”



Timeline: Shackleton's *Endurance* Expedition

- October 27, 1915: The *Endurance* has been stuck in the ice for over 9 months. Shackleton issues the call, "Abandon Ship!" "The floes, with the force of millions of tons of moving ice behind them, were simply annihilating the ship." They establish Ocean Camp on an ice floe.
- November 8, 1915: Frank Hurley, the photographer, dives into the flooded ship to recover 120 of his precious glass plates. They smash 400 others so he is not tempted to risk his life to return for them later.
- November 21, 1915: The *Endurance* sinks. "This evening, as we were lying in our tents, we heard the Boss call out, 'She's going, boys!...' And, sure enough, there was our poor ship a mile and a half away,



Timeline: Shackleton's *Endurance* Expedition

struggling in her death agony. She went down bows first, her stern raised in the air. She then gave one quick dive and the ice closed over her forever....Without her our destitution seemed more emphasized, our desolation more complete. The loss of the ship sent a slight wave of depression over the camp.”

- December 29, 1915: After pulling their life-boats for seven and a half miles in seven days, they formed a new camp which they called “Patience Camp.”
- April 9, 1916: The *James Caird*, the *Dudley Docker*, and the *Stancomb Wills* are launched for the voyage to Elephant Island; land on April 15.



Patience Camp



Elephant Island



Elephant Island



Elephant Island party under the leadership of Frank Wild



Timeline: Shackleton's *Endurance* Expedition

- April 15, 1916: At Elephant Island, the first time the men have stood on solid ground in 497 days.
- April 24, 1916: Shackleton and five other men leave Elephant Island for South Georgia in the *James Caird*. “The men who were staying behind made a pathetic little group on the beach, but they wave to us and gave three hearty cheers. There was hope in their hearts, and they trusted us to bring the help which they so sorely needed” (Shackleton).



Replica of the *James Caird*

A Severe Privation to Endure



“Thirst took possession of us, but I dared not permit the allowance of water to be increased, because an unfavorable wind might have driven us away from the island and have lengthened our voyage by several days. Lack of water is always the most severe privation which men can be condemned to endure, and we found that the salt water in our clothing and the salt spray which lashed our faces made our thirst quickly grow to a burning pain.”



Timeline: Shackleton's *Endurance* Expedition

- May 10, 1916: After a treacherous two-week journey, the *James Caird* lands on the south coast of South Georgia.
- May 19, 1916: Shackleton, Worsley, and Crean begin their trek across South Georgia to get help at the whaling station on the north coast.
- May 20, 1916: After a 36-hour hike to the north coast, the three men arrive at Stromness whaling station. Worsley sails to the south coast to pick up the three men left behind.
- May 23, 1916: The first of three attempts are made to return to Elephant Island.
- August 30, 1916: Sir Ernest Shackleton, aboard the *Yelcho*, rescues 22 men on Elephant Island, **24 months and 22 days since leaving England.**



The Chilean ship, the Yelcho, rescues 22 men at Elephant Island



A Study in Perseverance

The Truth About Difficulties



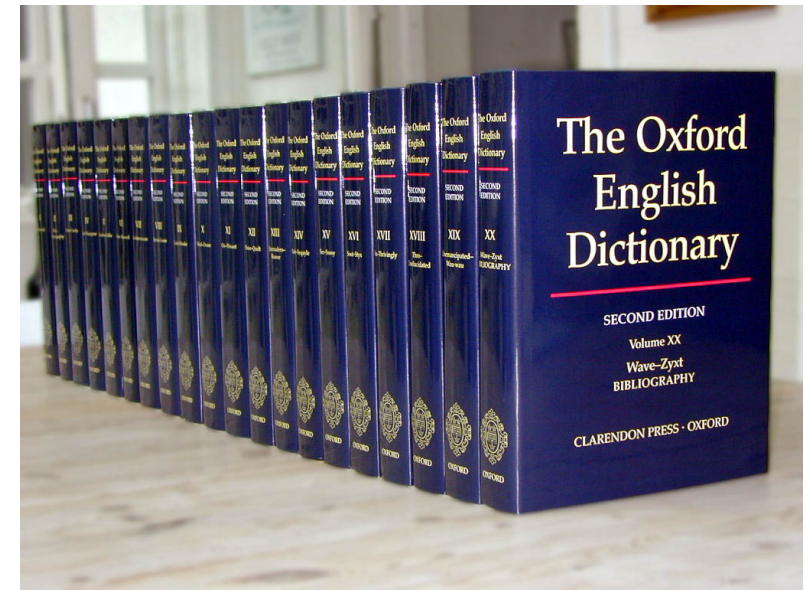
Martyn Lloyd-Jones

Medical Doctor and Minister
Westminster Chapel, London
1899-1981

“Nothing is more fatal than to start in the Christian life with the notion that now we are Christian we have finished with all our difficulties and problems. That is far from being the truth. Indeed it is almost the antithesis of the truth. The New Testament rather gives the impression that because we are Christians we must expect attacks upon us in a way that we have never known or realized before.”

The Meaning of *Endurance*

- **Endurance**, *n.*, the fact of enduring (pain, hardship, annoyance); the habit or the power of enduring; longsuffering, patience (OED).
- The etymology of the word is from the Old French, *endure*, which means “to make hard.” Thus, the meaning is “to indurate, to harden. In a good sense, it means to make sturdy or robust, to strengthen; to undergo, bear, sustain (continuous pain, opposition, hardship, or annoyance); to undergo without succumbing or giving way” (OED).





The Language of Endurance: *Be Strong*

- One of the Greek words for *endurance* is found in Hebrews 11:27. It is a passage about Moses. “By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he **endured**, as seeing Him who is unseen.” The word means “be strong, be steadfast, hold out, endure.”
- Dr. Simon Kistemaker: “The abiding presence of God, especially during Moses’ trying days in Egypt, **strengthened Moses’ faith**. Because of God’s instructions, Moses was able to **persevere** in faith and accomplish his task to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt.”
- Moses did not *endure* “in the sense that he suffered but that **he stood firm in his strength**, steadfast and fearless, “as seeing the Invisible One” who was infinitely mightier than the little visible Pharaoh.”



The Language of Endurance: *Persevere*

- This word is found in Ephesians 6:18 and means “to hold fast to something, continue or persevere in something.” See also Acts 6:4; Rom. 12:12; and Col. 4:2.
- “Praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all **perseverance**, making supplication for all the saints, and also for me...” (Eph. 6:18).
- “Keep on at it, do not do it by ‘fits and starts,’ do not have spasms of praying. Be unremitting, keep on and go on, **never quit, never cease praying**” (Martyn Lloyd-Jones).



The Storm on the Sea of Galilee: A.B. Bruce

“The literal storm would be fixed in their minds as a symbol of the spiritual one and of all similar trials of faith. There were many things that happened on that fearful night - the watching, getting wet, rowing without results, fatigue, terror, and despair. These would live forever in their memory. They would symbolically represent all of the dangers and tribulations through which believers must pass on their way to the kingdom of heaven, especially those that come upon them while they are still young in the faith. The significance of the symbol can be seen in three features: 1) the storm happened at night; 2) in the absence of Jesus; and 3) while it lasted, all progress was stopped. Storms at sea may happen at all hours of the day, but trials of faith always happen during the night. If there were no darkness, there could be no trial.”



The Storm on the Sea of Galilee: A.B. Bruce

“The worst that we can encounter in these trials of faith is that in all our rowing, we make no progress. The most we can do is to hold our own, to keep off the rocky shore while we are on the sea. It is really something just to be able to do this; better still, it is everything. For it is not always true that if we are not going forward, we must be going backward. This is a saying for good weather only. When storms come, there is such a thing as standing still. To do even this much is quite an achievement. Is it really a small thing to weather the storm, to keep off the rocks, the sand, and the breakers? Do not provoke the person who is already agitated enough by the winds that beat against him. Do not share your wise sayings about progress and backsliding indiscriminately.

The Storm on the Sea of Galilee: A.B. Bruce

“Instead of playing the part of Job’s friends, it would be better to remind him that the greatest thing he can do in his situation is to hold on, to be immovable, to keep his moral integrity and his profession of faith, and to keep off the dangerous coasts of immorality and unfaithfulness. Assure him that if he will only row a little longer - no matter how tired his arms get - God will come and calm the wind, and he will immediately reach the land.”



Christ in the Storm on the Sea of Galilee

Rembrandt van Rijn

1606-1669



The Language of Endurance: *Hold On*

- This word carries the idea of the “brave patience with which the Christian contends against the various hindrances, persecutions, and temptations that befall him in his conflict with the inward and outward world” (Trench).
- “And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations; knowing that tribulation brings about **perseverance**; and **perseverance**, proven character; and proven character, hope; and hope does not disappoint; because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us” (Rom. 5:3-5).
- “For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one also hope for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, with **perseverance** we wait eagerly for it” (Rom. 8:24-25).

The Language of Endurance: *Hold On*

- “Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with **endurance** the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him **endured** the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Hb. 12:1-2).
- “But remember the former days, when, after being enlightened, you **endured** a great conflict of sufferings, partly, by being made a public spectacle through reproaches and tribulations, and partly by becoming sharers with those who were so treated” (Hb. 10:32-33).

The Language of Endurance: *Hold On*

- “Therefore, we ourselves speak proudly of you among the churches of God for your **perseverance** and faith in the midst of all your persecutions and afflictions which you **endure**. This is a plain indication of God’s righteous judgment so that you may be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which indeed you are suffering” (II Thess. 1:4-5).
- “For you have need of **endurance**, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised” (Hb. 10:36).
- “Blessed is the man who **perseveres** under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him” (James 1:12).

The Language of Endurance: *Hold On*

- “Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials; knowing that the testing of your faith produces **endurance**. And let **endurance** have its perfect result, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing” (James 1:2-4).
- “As an example, brethren, of suffering and patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. Behold, we count those blessed who **endured**. You have heard of the **endurance** of Job and have seen the outcome of the Lord’s dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful” (James 5:10-11).

Summary

1. The fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden was a “catastrophic personality shock,” which not only impacted all of humanity but the entire created universe. Therefore, we should expect trials and suffering in this life.
2. Endurance is a virtue which God builds into us as we encounter various obstacles throughout our lives.
3. God strengthens our faith for the work He has called us to do.
4. When faced with difficulties, we must persevere in prayer and wait for God’s answer.

Summary

5. Sometimes, the greatest thing we can do is just hold on.
6. We are called upon to glory in our tribulations because of the future hope we have (and hope cannot be seen). Jesus endured the cross because of the joy set before Him.
7. Afflictions give occasion for the exhibition of the power and grace of Christ.
8. We are called upon to run our respective races with endurance.
9. We are being made worthy of the kingdom of God (crown of life).
10. Like Job, we will ultimately realize the mercy & compassion of God.