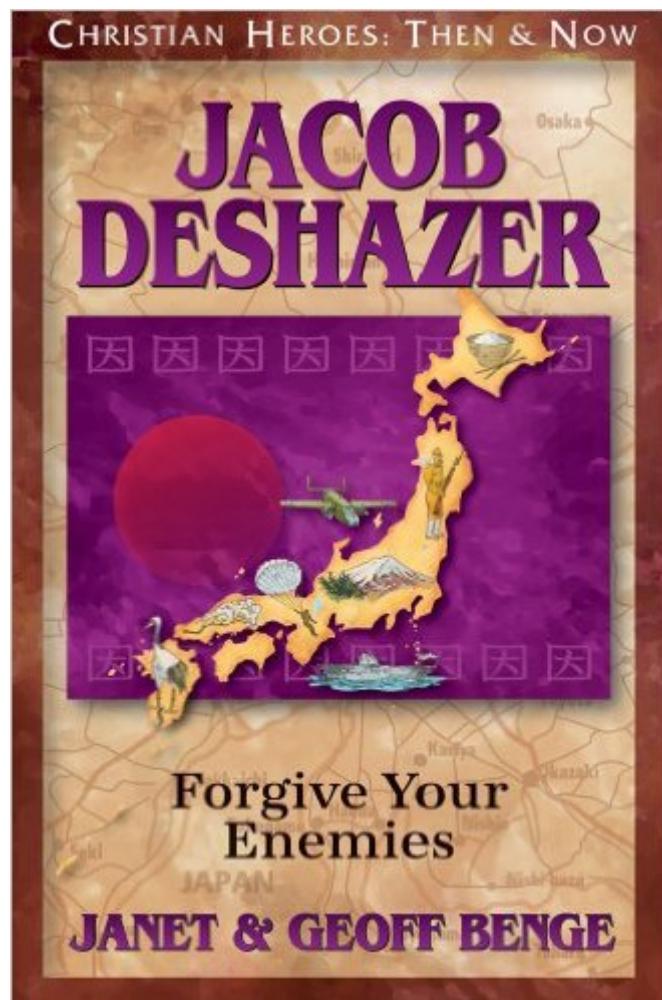


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# Jacob DeShazer: Forgive Your Enemies (Christian Heroes : Then & Now)



## **Synopsis**

Three thousand feet above China, it was Jake's turn to jump. He slid his pistol, knife, and ration packets into the pockets of his leather jacket and edged toward the open hatch of the B-25 bomber. He checked the tension on the harness of his parachute, made sure the handle of the ripcord was free, and then began lowering himself out of the hatch and into the darkness. One of the famous Doolittle Raiders who first attacked Japan after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, Jacob DeShazer knew his one-way mission was dangerous. Indeed, it led to his capture as a prisoner of war. Beaten, malnourished, and alone in his cell, Jacob was given a Bible - and far away from home, this American soldier became a Christian. After the war, Jacob returned to Japan and served his former enemy for thirty years as a missionary. His testimony of forgiveness and reconciliation - of love over hate - inspires a powerful gospel message for our lives today.

## **Book Information**

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Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 4 - 7

## **Customer Reviews**

I had the pleasure of meeting Jacob deshazer a number of years ago, and this book filled in many of the details of his marvelous story. The events described in this book could have caused Jacob to spend his life in bitterness, with hatred in his heart. But instead, he allowed God to use these events as a testimony of God's grace and forgiveness. A powerful story that should not be forgotten.

This is a story about Jacob Deshazer, one of Jimmy Doolittle's boys in WW2. It describes how he hated the Japanese and volunteered in a secret mission to bomb Japan very early in the war. He was captured and most of the book describes his time in prison. He fortunately was saved in prison due to the Japanese giving the prisoners 5 books to read between them, one of them being the Bible. When his turn came to read it, he read through the entire Bible 2 times in only 3 weeks and memorized many scriptures. He came out a changed man and through his tracts a lead pilot of the Pearl harbor bombing was saved. I have indeed learned a lot from him concerning loving your enemies.

This read is very educational but adventuresome. It gives an account of one hero's personal experience in the war and how God used it in his life for good. I wouldn't recommend this series for 10 year olds unless they are very mature, but 12 is a good age to start them reading every one of Janet Benge's biographies. I had never heard of Jacob Deshazer before but now I count him as pioneer of Christian truth who laid a solid foundation for others to build on.

Jacob DeShazer had turned his back on God as a young man. He felt he had control of his life and was doing well. Then came the Japanese attack on Pear Harbor and the U.S. was thrust into WWII. As many young men of that time, he cultivated a hatred for the Japanese people that festered into a deep dark place in his mind and soul. Hatred does that to a man. He enters in to a secret training program that ultimately ends up with him becoming one of 'Doolittle's Raiders'. This famous group of men were to fly bombers off of an aircraft carrier (never done before) with orders to bomb Japan. His hatred motivated him to look forward to the mission. The take-off and bombing were successful but the ill-fated planes lacked enough fuel to make it safely to China and safety. Many were captured by the Japanese and put in to prison camps. During his 40 months of torture, near starvation and hopelessness God speaks to Jake and his faith is renewed and his hatred removed. After the war, Jake became a missionary to his former enemies. He spent 30 years ministering in Japan. This book contains good WWII history and a beautiful example of what God can do when a person submits to His will. Near the end of the story as Jake has become an old man, he starts having serious memory problems. Take time as you read this small section of the book to reflect on the true meaning of total forgiveness. It will bring you, literally to your knees.

An excellent presentation of one of the little known aspects of World War II, how a member of the Doolittle squad which bombed Japan in 1942 was captured by the Japanese and during his

imprisonment became a Christian and determined to return to Japan after the war as a missionary. After the war he wrote a pamphlet detailing his experiences as a Japanese POW and conversion, which was read by M. Fuchida, the Japanese aviator who led the air raid on Pearl Harbor. Mr. DeShazer's pamphlet was one of the seeds that led to Fuchida's conversion to Christianity and his role as a missionary after the war. It is an indelible story of how God works in many ways unknown and unthought-of by man. Read it to discover how God works through many and various circumstances for His own purposes.

After graduation, Jake started working for the Basque sheep herders in California and Nevada. After two years he had saved up enough to invest in five hundred turkeys. Due to the Great Depression he went broke! Jake then joined the army. Following the bombing of Pearl Harbor, Jake along with many other men volunteered for a mission they were told nothing about! Under the direction of Jimmy Doolittle, Jake was to become one of the infamous Doolittle Raiders who bombed targets in Japan. Jake was the bombardier on a B-25 bomber named the BAT. Sadly, due to having to take off from the USS Hornet earlier than expected along with having a crack in the visor, after their successful bombing raid the team had to bail out over Nangchang. It was not long before Jake found himself in the presence of Japanese soldiers! Jake spent 40 months as a prisoner of war and most of those months in solitary confinement. However, instead of finding bitterness in jail, Jake found the Lord! This incredible story is one of redemption and forgiveness. Not only did Jake find forgiveness for his own life, he forgave all the Japanese soldiers/guards who had so mistreated him. Read how upon marriage and graduation from Seattle Pacific College him and his wife, Florence, dedicated their lives to serving the people of Japan and spreading the gospel throughout the country. How God opened doors for them was INCREDIBLE! Unlike many of the other Christian Heroes: Then and Now books, this one is not all about a life of working as a missionary. Unless you already know the story of Jake DeShazer (we didn't) you may well question what in the world this man is even doing in one of these books as you read through the first few chapters. HOWEVER don't let this stop you from reading this book. The leading up to Jake becoming a missionary is vitally important to the end result. This was a truly gripping and sometimes hard book to read when you read what the POW's experienced. We read this aloud to our children (11, 8 & 5) so do not hesitate to recommend it to your family. Jacob DeShazer 1912-2008

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