

Proclaiming the Gospel

For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness;
But unto us which are saved it is the power of God" (1 Cor. 1.18).

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The Wise Still Seek Him

Edifying the Body of Christ (Eph. 4.10-16)

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Message
of
Jesus Christ

The God of Battles

is our God

The battle is raging. The guns are firing; the bombs are exploding; the ear splitting noise, the smoke, the screams, the stench. Confusion. Fear. Panic. Pain.

The battle is raging; the war is full-blown! Satan's time is short. He has marshaled his forces in an all-out attack against God's people – those who know and are serving the Lord Jesus Christ, those who love and spread the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. The fires that Satan sets within our lives burn deeply, and they are used powerfully by Satan who endeavors to eradicate our trust in the Lord Jesus. Ignoring the fact that Jesus Christ has already won the battle against him, Satan is working to thwart the purpose of God in individual lives, in the body of Christ collectively, in this nation, and in the world. He tells us that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the living God in Christ Jesus, is not concerned about our lives – those of us who are called according to His purpose. The pain goes deep, and no relief is found. This battle is not getting better or easier – nor will it – “Until Then.”

Do you doubt that we are in battle for our lives – spiritually and physically? Do disturbing thoughts come to your mind unbidden? As fast as you force one thought out, another comes? Do “what if” scenarios parade through your mind preventing you from trusting the Lord or from communing with Him? Paul tells us, “...whatsoever things are true...honest...just...pure...lovely...of good report... [of] any virtue...any praise, think on these things” (Phil 4.8). Satan knows that if he can implant his lies in our minds, he can wear us down causing defeat and death, both spiritually and physically. May God help us to keep a constant vigil on our minds and keep them turned to thoughts of the Lord.

Saints, we serve a God who will not be defeated. He will have the last word – in total victory against Satan and all the forces of hell. He is mighty God, conqueror of every battle He has ever fought, and He is our God!

If you seem to be suffering more battles than you can survive, know that God is God of your battles. Remember Joseph in the Old Testament, and be encouraged (Gen 39-48).

Hated by his ten brothers and sold into slavery, Joseph held onto his faith in the God of Israel in the face of rejection and abandonment. God blessed Joseph and gave him favor with his master. He was trusted and handled his master's affairs with

mighty God in Christ Jesus was indeed with Stephen – no not to deliver him from death, but that the glory of Jesus would be revealed through a humble servant – willing to be used for the glory of the Lord Jesus.

We serve a mighty God, and He is with us in every battle, in every attack of Satan. Satan attempts to wear us down with his constant attack on our minds and emotions as in the battles that Joseph fought – rejection, abandonment, false accusations...

In what manner does Satan attack you? Discouragement? Depression? Feeling useless? Unable to rise above the sin that separates you from the Lord in your daily walk with Jesus Christ? Fear? Unable to accomplish what you believe is before you to do?

Recognize that the attack is from Satan and refuse to entertain the lies that he is feeding you. It takes effort to resist and fight Satan; but with determination, put your mind on Jesus Christ and begin praying – talking to the God of your battles. He is with you (Heb 13.5, 6); He will strengthen you and bring you through it all.

**He is God of battles,
And He is our God!**

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Co-laborers together for Jesus Christ

Come apart and rest (Mark 6.31)

integrity – only to face an invitation to commit adultery with his master’s wife, a temptation which he refused. Falsely accused and thrown into prison, he was used by God to interpret dreams for his fellow prisoners which gave him a glimmer of hope for release. Then – another battle; he was forgotten. The prisoner who was released forgot to speak on his behalf. All Joseph’s life was filled with battles, the battles of



but Joseph knew and served a mighty God – the God of his battles.

God had plans for Joseph – Joseph, a man who had a heart for the Lord, a man who had been molded in the fire of afflictions, strengthened by the constant exercise of dealing with difficulties.

Know that God is concerned about every battle you face. He has promised, “I will never leave you nor forsake you” (Heb 13.5-6). Trust Him with the battle, and He will use it to make you into a vessel to accomplish His purpose.

Joseph, with a heart pure before God, was used to save the lives of thousands of people including the Israelites out of whom would come the Messiah, Jesus Christ. When Joseph revealed himself to his brothers, those brothers who had rejected him, he told them, “But as for you, ye thought evil against me; *[but]* God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as *[it is]* this day, to save much people alive” (Gen 50.20).

God sometimes supernaturally fought the battle for the children of Israel; other times He gave them instructions concerning the battle, while some of God’s people have endured to the death or suffered shame and persecution. When God parted the waters of the Red Sea and Israel crossed on dry ground, the Egyptians pursued them into the midst of the sea where God Himself removed their chariot wheels preventing them from escaping; and they were drowned (Ex 14.24, 25).

When Jehoshaphat and the Israelites faced the armies of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, he sent singers ahead of his army to sing praises to the Lord. While they sang and praised the Lord in the face of the enemy, God set ambushments against the enemy, and they were smitten (II Chr 20.15-22). Singers in front of the army?! They served and trusted the God of battles!

Consider the following passages. King David was given directions that to many would seem strange and irresponsible; however, David knew his Lord, knew that his God could be trusted; and he chose to obey. Hear the Word of the Lord:

And when David enquired of the LORD, he said, Thou shalt not go up; *[but]* fetch a compass behind them, and come upon them over against the mulberry trees. And let it be, when thou hearest the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees, that then thou shalt bestir thyself: for then shall the LORD go out before thee, to smite the host of the Philistines (II Sam 5.23-24).

Gideon was instructed to go against the Midianites with only 300 men using trumpets, pitchers, and lamps. Gideon, with his small army, defeated the Midianites because the Lord went before him in this battle; and he obeyed the voice of the Lord (Jdg 7).

Daniel lived for the Lord God of Israel in a “strange” land (Ps 137.4). He was a high official, and the other officials of that country were jealous of his position as well as his successes. The “locals” came together (all too often like in “religious circles”) endeavoring to set Daniel up for failure, to make him look like he was against the “powers that be” in hopes of causing him to fall and betray his Lord. Daniel knew what was going on, but he was not distracted; he continued praying and walking with the Lord God of Israel. Daniel had to face the den of lions; but God, mighty God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob delivered him alive and well. (Dan 6)

The three Hebrew children in the fiery furnace had absolute trust in the God of battles (Dan 3.17-18).

If it be *[so]*, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver *[us]* out of thine hand, O king.
But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

God delivered Daniel from the lions’ den and the three Hebrew children from the fiery furnace, but not always does He deliver us unharmed. But know what He chooses is for His glory and for our good.

Peter and John went forth speaking the truth of God in Christ Jesus and were vessels through whom people were healed. The people took notice that they had been with Jesus. Peter and John were threatened, but were not distracted from walking on with the Lord Jesus (Acts 4.12-21). Paul and Silas were imprisoned for witnessing for the Lord Jesus Christ; they were falsely accused. But nothing hindered their walking on preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ – not even their being in prison, for they sang praises to the Lord Jesus during their imprisonment (Acts 16.16-23).

Stephen, a deacon who preached mightily the Gospel of Jesus Christ, was stoned for speaking forth the truth of Jesus Christ (Acts 6-7). As the “religious ones” stoned him and killed him, the glory of the Lord came down; and Stephen prayed for the “religious ones” that they would be forgiven. He saw Jesus as he was dying. Oh,