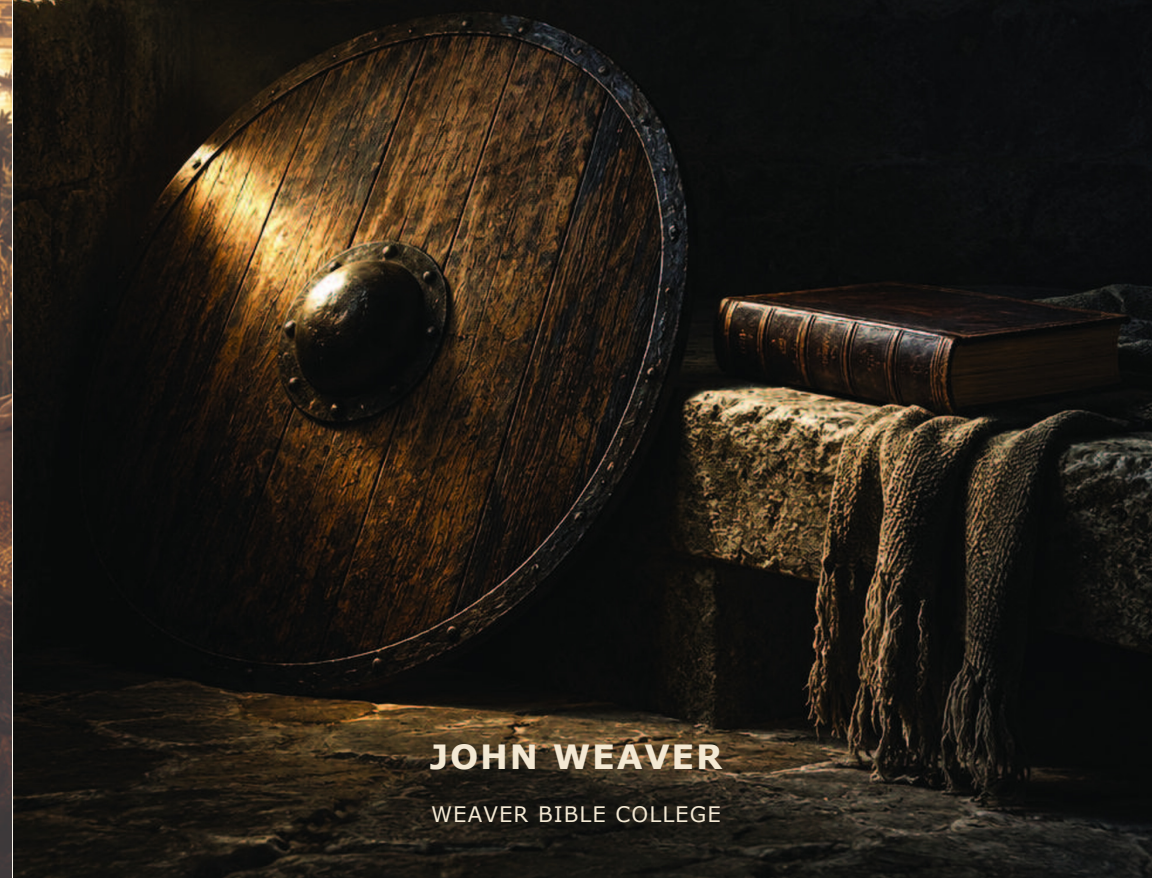
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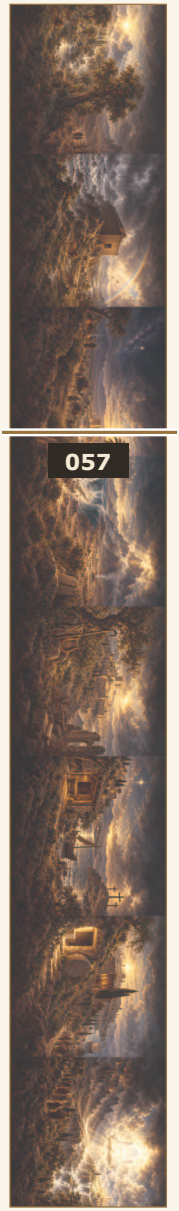
*"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet,*
*and a light unto my path."*

PSALM 119:105



**JOHN WEAVER**

WEAVER BIBLE COLLEGE



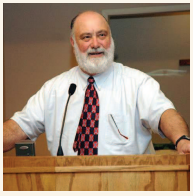

*The battle is the LORD'S.*

**1 SAMUEL 17:47, EXCERPT**

Strength in conflict begins with dependence on God rather than confidence in human resources. John Weaver considers prayer, obedience, preparation, and God's sovereignty over the outcome of battle. These messages draw on biblical examples to ask how Christian conduct should differ from the self-reliance and fear that commonly shape conflict.

*"When we fight, it must be from a biblical perspective and not from some knee-jerk, rebellious action."*

JOHN WEAVER



## John Weaver

John Weaver's sermons form the teaching collection presented by Weaver Bible College. This volume gathers his teaching from that collection.

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# How To Fight Like A Christian

Covenant Theology

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# How To Fight Like A Christian

John Weaver

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CHAPTER 1

# How To Fight Like A Christian

*Part One of Two*

**SCRIPTURE READING - 2 Chronicles 13:1-22 (KJV)**

## Introduction and Clarification of the Title

Let us open our Bibles to 2 Chronicles, chapter 13. I want to read the entire chapter. This message will continue next Sunday, Lord willing, because this will mainly be the introduction. It will be a two-part message. The main points will be next Sunday, Lord willing. 2 Chronicles 13, beginning with verse 1.

"Now in the eighteenth year of king Jeroboam began Abijah to reign over Judah. He reigned three years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also was Michaiah, the daughter of Uriel of Gibeah. And there was war between Abijah and Jeroboam. And Abijah set the battle in array with an army of valiant men of war, even four hundred thousand chosen men: Jeroboam also set the battle in array against him with eight hundred thousand

chosen men, being mighty men of valor. And Abijah stood up upon mount Zemaraim, which is in mount Ephraim, and said, Hear me, thou Jeroboam, and all Israel; Ought ye not to know that the LORD God of Israel gave the kingdom over Israel to David for ever, even to him and to his sons by a covenant of salt? Yet Jeroboam the son of Nebat, the servant of Solomon the son of David, is risen up, and hath rebelled against his lord. And there are gathered unto him vain men, the children of Belial, and have strengthened themselves against Rehoboam the son of Solomon, when Rehoboam was young and tenderhearted, and could not withstand them.

"And now ye think to withstand the kingdom of the LORD in the hand of the sons of David; and ye be a great multitude, and there are with you golden calves, which Jeroboam made you for gods. Have ye not cast out the priests of the LORD, the sons of Aaron, and the Levites, and have made you priests after the manner of the nations of other lands? so that whosoever cometh to consecrate himself with a young bullock and seven rams, the same may be a priest of them that are no gods. But as for us, the LORD is our God, and we have not forsaken him; and the priests, which minister unto the LORD, are the sons of Aaron, and the Levites wait upon their business."

**SCRIPTURE READING - 2 Chronicles 13:11-22 (KJV)**

And they burn unto the LORD every morning and every evening burnt sacrifices and sweet incense: the shewbread also set they in order upon the pure table; and the candlestick of gold with the lamps thereof, to burn every evening: for we keep the charge of the LORD our God; but ye have forsaken him. And, behold, God himself is with us for our captain, and his priests with sounding trumpets to cry alarm against you. O children of Israel, fight ye not against the LORD God of your fathers; for ye shall not prosper.

But Jeroboam caused an ambushment to come about behind them: so they were before Judah, and the ambushment was behind them. And when Judah looked back, behold, the battle was before and behind: and they cried unto the LORD, and the priests sounded with the trumpets. Then the men of Judah gave

> a shout: and as the men of Judah shouted, it came to pass, that God smote Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah and Judah. And the children of Israel fled before Judah: and God delivered them into their hand. And Abijah and his people slew them with a great slaughter: so there fell down slain of Israel five hundred thousand chosen men. Thus the children of Israel were brought under at that time, and the children of Judah prevailed, because they relied upon the LORD God of their fathers. And Abijah pursued after Jeroboam, and took cities from him, Bethel with the towns thereof, and Jeshanah with the towns thereof, and Ephrain with the towns thereof. Neither did Jeroboam recover strength again in the days of Abijah: and the LORD struck him, and he died.
>
> But Abijah waxed mighty, and married fourteen wives, and begat twenty and two sons, and sixteen daughters. And the rest of the acts of Abijah, and his ways, and his sayings, are written in the story of the prophet Iddo.
>
> So the title of this message is "How to Fight Like a Christian." Let me tell you, first of all, what I do not mean by this title. I'm not referring to those individuals who are cantankerous, ornery, mean, vindictive, and outright hateful. There are plenty of professing Christians that fit into that category, but I'm not referring to them. Nor am I referring to what are known as the fighting fundamentalists. I remember how many professing Christians and pastors constantly attacked and belittled each other simply because they disagreed on eschatology or some other minor point of interpretation. I became so disgusted with many of them, especially with their uncharitable, un-Christian attitudes, that for the longest time I refused even to identify myself as a fundamentalist because I did not want to be identified with those people who were fussing and feuding all the time.

I remember reading about one pastor who had written an excellent little treatise titled “Come to Jesus.” The author had a falling out with a pastor friend and wrote a very scathing, scornful, hateful, and derogatory treatise against him. He sent it to another pastor friend and asked for counsel as to what he should title it. After reading it,

the pastor wrote back, “You should title it, ‘Go to Hell,’ by the same author of ‘Come to Jesus.’”

Obviously, I am not talking about those kinds of fighting Christians. The truth is that most Christians are about the only people I know who attack their own wounded. Stop and think about that. They are like chickens. When one gets pecked and blood is drawn, the rest jump on him, and the next thing you know, the chicken is dead. Many Christians act just like that. Most Christians have never understood the principles of Galatians 6:1–2: “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.”

The title How to Fight Like a Christian applies to fighting in a biblical manner—not only fighting the good fight of faith, as Paul calls it in 1 Timothy 6:12, but also fighting real physical battles. Most Christians do not display a biblical attitude or mentality when it comes to fighting. Rather, they display fear, dismay, and outright confusion. The Bible tells us in 2 Timothy 1:7, “For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.” When discussing how to fight biblically, whether against the neighborhood bully, a corrupt government, or hostile enemies, biblical principles should control our fighting. It is almost inconceivable to the modern mind that there is such a thing as God-ordained fighting methods.

## God as a Man of War and the Legitimacy of Biblical Fighting

Most professing Christians somehow think of God as being pacifistic and as One who does not condone fighting or war whatsoever. Most Christians tend to think that all war and all fighting are forbidden. The truth of the matter is that such thoughts and beliefs are contrary to Scripture. Do you realize that our God is expressly called a man of war? In Exodus 15:3, the Bible says, "The LORD is a man of war: the LORD is his name." Moreover, it was through war that God delivered the children of Israel out of Egypt. Deuteronomy 4:34 says, "Or hath God assayed to go and take him a nation from the midst of another

nation, by temptations, by signs, and by wonders, and by war, and by a mighty hand, and by a stretched out arm, and by great terrors, according to all that the LORD your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes?" God specifically brought them out by war.

It was through war that Lot was delivered and brought back to Abram. It was through war that Israel was brought from Egypt and that the children of Israel conquered Canaan. The inhabitants of the lands were conquered not only under Joshua but also under David. Through war, kingdoms were defeated or conquered; and it will be through war that Jesus Christ fully and finally conquers all His enemies. Revelation 19:11 says, "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war."

Fighting is not unbiblical, although there is an unbiblical fighting. War is not unbiblical, although there is an unbiblical warfare. If we fight in war, we must do so according to Holy Scripture. Only in doing so will we not only prevail, but end up honoring and glorifying our Lord as well. Before sharing the truths on fighting like a Christian, allow me to tell you this: the best way to fight is not to have a fight. Avoiding a fight is much easier and better than winning a fight.

## Avoiding Fights Through Obedience

Stop and think about that. Why fight unless it's absolutely necessary? Would you not rather avoid a fight or avoid a war rather than expend time, energy, monies, and lives in order to win? So the question has to be asked then, well, how do we avoid fighting? And how do we avoid wars? Well, the answer is very simple and straightforward. We avoid fights and wars through biblical obedience. I want you to turn very quickly, hold 2 Chronicles, but turn very quickly, if you would, to Leviticus chapter 26. In Leviticus chapter 26, there's a number of passages I want you to see. Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus. Look, if you would, Leviticus 26 and verse 6. Here is a promise. We'll look at several of these very quickly. Leviticus 26 and verse 6. This is a blessing. In fact, you can hold Leviticus 26 because we're going to come back there momentarily. But look in Leviticus 26 and verse 6 where God says, following the blessing of

obedience, he said, "And I will give peace in the land, and ye shall lie down, and none shall make you afraid."

"And I will rid evil beasts out of the land, neither shall the sword go through your land." So God says, if we obey him, he's going to give us peace. Look in your Bibles, if you would, to the book of Joshua chapter 21 and verse 44. I want you to understand that blessings of peace and prosperity always follow obedience. The Lord is quite capable of giving rest and freedom from fear and war. Notice if you would Joshua chapter 21 and verse 44. Joshua 21 and verse 44. Notice what the Bible says. Joshua 21 verse 44, "And the LORD gave them rest round about, according to all that he sware unto their fathers: and there stood not a man of all their enemies before them; the LORD delivered all their enemies into their hand." But notice, "and the LORD gave them rest." Look, if you would, to Joshua 22 and verse 4. Joshua 22 and verse 4. "And now the LORD your God hath given rest unto your brethren, as he promised them: therefore now return ye, and get you unto your tents, and unto the land of your possession, which Moses the servant of the LORD gave you on the other side Jordan."

If you would turn right over to 1 Chronicles, chapter 22. We're in 2 Chronicles, so go back to 1 Chronicles, and look in chapter 22 and verse 9. I'm just trying to show you how God is capable of giving peace and rest. God tells David, “Behold, a son shall be born to thee, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him rest from all his enemies round about: for his name shall be Solomon, and I will give peace and quietness unto Israel in his days.” Notice what God promises: peace and quietness. He's going to give him rest from all of his enemies.

Look, if you would please, in 2 Chronicles chapter 15 and verse 15. Again, God says this, “And all Judah rejoiced at the oath: for they had sworn with all their heart, and sought him with their whole desire; and he was found of them: and the LORD gave them rest round about.” Wow! The LORD gave them rest round about.

Go to 2 Chronicles 20 and look in verse 30. “So the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet: for his God gave him rest round about.” God gave him rest.

Now I want you to go back to 2 Chronicles chapter 17. I'd like to be able, really, to read this entire chapter, at least the first 12 verses, but I'm not going to, simply for time's sake. But, of course, it's dealing with Jehoshaphat. I want you to note, if you would please, beginning there with verse 8. 2 Chronicles 17, verse 8.

"And with them he sent Levites, even Shemaiah, and Nethaniah, and Zebadiah, and Asahel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehonathan, and Adonijah, and Tobijah, and Tobadonijah, Levites; and with them Elishama and Jehoram, priests. And they taught in Judah, and had the book of the law of the LORD with them, and went about throughout all the cities of Judah, and taught the people. And the fear of the LORD fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that were round about Judah, so that they made no war against Jehoshaphat. Also some of the Philistines brought Jehoshaphat presents, and tribute silver; and the Arabians brought him flocks, seven thousand and seven hundred rams, and seven thousand and seven hundred he goats. And Jehoshaphat waxed great exceedingly; and he built in Judah castles, and cities of store."

The peace that God gave him was a result of teaching the law of God and the people being obedient. He became great, and God used all of this—the teaching of the Word of God—and brought peace and prosperity. The best way to avoid a fight is simply by obedience.

David wrought many wars. The Bible said that Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands. However, even David, in the many wars that he fought, received rest. In 2 Samuel 7:1, the Bible says, "And it came to pass, when the king sat in his house, and the LORD had given him rest round about from all his enemies." So God is quite capable of giving rest and peace and protection as well.

## The Necessity of Fighting Even in Times of Peace

If you and I do not wish to be fighting constantly and consistently—individually, familially, ecclesiastically, and nationally—then we must bring our lives into obedience to the Word of God and greater conformity to the Word of God. You have to remember the truth of Psalm 127:1: "Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the

city, the watchman waketh but in vain." Peace, preservation, and protection are from the Lord and from Him alone.

Even though God gives peace and rest from enemies through obedience, occasionally, even in a time of peace, an act of war or some serious crime will require fighting. For instance, Joab was captain of David's host, and he was a wicked man who shed the blood of war in the time of peace. In 1 Kings chapter 2, verse 5, David tells Solomon, "Moreover thou knowest also what Joab the son of Zeruiah did to me, and what he did to the two captains of the hosts of Israel, unto Abner the son of Ner, and unto Amasa the son of Jether, whom he slew, and shed the blood of war in peace, and put the blood of war upon his girdle that was about his loins, and in his shoes that were on his feet." Joab literally murdered Abner and Amasa.

Unhappily, there will always be occasions like this. Whenever they arise, however, we must always act in a biblical manner. When we fight, it must be from a biblical perspective and not from some knee-jerk, rebellious action. We have to learn to respond and not react. Response takes time, thought, and action. Reaction is simply acting on our impulses without regard to truth.

The truth of the matter is that Abner should have fought. He should have defended himself. However, he was deceived. Even David said that Abner should have defended himself. In 2 Samuel chapter 3, beginning with verse 33, David laments over Abner: "And the king lamented over Abner, and said, Died Abner as a fool dieth? Thy hands were not bound, nor thy feet put into fetters: as a man falleth before wicked men, so fellest thou. And all the people wept again over him."

Notice what David said: "Your hands were not bound." Why did you not fight back? "Your feet were not in fetters." Why did you not move? Why did you not get out of the way? The truth of the matter is this: Joab deceived Abner.

Joab took Abner’s beard to kiss him. By the way, when you read in the Bible, “Greet ye one another with an holy kiss,” the standard biblical greeting in the Old Testament and the New Testament was for men to greet men by taking their beards and kissing their beards. Joab took Abner’s beard and kissed it, recognizing that as a sign of

peace. Therefore, Abner did not notice the sword in Joab's hand. As Joab was kissing his beard, he stuck the sword under the fifth rib and murdered him.

But here is what David is saying: He should have fought. In other words, there is a time to fight, even in basically a time of peace. And, by the way, Joab murdered Amasa and Abner, and both of them were his cousins. They were his cousins, but he murdered them. There will always be times to fight, even in a time of peace, and there will always be times of war. There will be times that require fighting.

## Biblical Assumption of War and God's Promises for Battle

I want you to turn in your Bibles to the book of Numbers, chapter 10. We are going to go through several passages very quickly. Look at Numbers 10:9, and then we will go to Deuteronomy. I am telling you that there will always be times of fighting and times of war. Numbers 10:9 says, "And if ye go to war in your land against the enemy that oppresseth you, then ye shall blow an alarm with the trumpets; and ye shall be remembered before the LORD your God, and ye shall be saved from your enemies." This is exactly what they did in 2 Chronicles chapter 13. When the flanking movement happened, the priest blew the alarm. God said, "And if ye go to war in your land against the enemy that oppresseth you"—in other words, there will be a time of war.

Look in the book of Deuteronomy, chapter 20. You are going to hear me quote this verse several times today, and probably several times next week. Notice Deuteronomy 20:1: "When thou goest out to battle against thine enemies," not if, but when. God is saying, yes, there is going to be a time to fight. There is going to be a time of war: "When thou goest out to battle against thine enemies, and seest horses, and chariots, and a people more than thou, be not afraid of them: for the LORD thy God is with thee, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." Note what he said: "when you go out to battle against your enemies." Also, in Deuteronomy 21:10, just the first part says, "When thou goest forth to war against thine enemies." Notice the word when.

Look at 1 Kings 8:44. Solomon is dedicating the temple, and he is praying. Notice one of the petitions in his prayer: "If thy people go out to battle against their enemy..." Now notice the next phrase: "...whithersoever thou shalt send them." God is sending them out to fight. "If thy people go out to battle against their enemies, whithersoever thou shalt send them, and shall pray unto the LORD toward the city which thou hast chosen, and toward the house that I have built for thy name: then hear thou in heaven their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause."

Fighting and war are assumed facts in Scripture. What God is telling us is that usually, even in a time of peace, there is going to be an occasion to fight. If we live obedient lives, those occasions will be few and far between. But if they do arise, even in a time of peace, then we still have to fight biblically. In doing so, we not only win, but we honor and glorify our Lord as well.

Now turn to two passages. I told you we would come back to Leviticus 26, and go ahead and find Deuteronomy 28. Look at these two passages side by side, because there is a biblical truth concerning fighting and war. First, notice Leviticus 26:7-8. Look what God says.

This is once again one of the blessings from obedience. Leviticus 26:7 says, "And ye shall chase your enemies, and they shall fall before you by the sword. And five of you shall chase an hundred, and an hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight: and your enemies shall fall before you by the sword." God is saying, if you obey me, keep my law, and keep my word, five of you are going to chase a hundred, and a hundred will put ten thousand to flight; your enemies shall fall before you by the sword.

Look in Deuteronomy 28:7, because here is another blessing from obedience: "The LORD shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face: they shall come out against thee one way, and flee before thee seven ways."

I do not know about you, but I kind of like those odds. I would like for five of us to chase a hundred, and a hundred of us to chase ten thousand. I would like to see our enemies come against us one way and flee seven different ways in agony and defeat. You say, "Brother

Weaver, I do not think you should like that." I do not only think I should like it; I think if you are a child of God, you should like it as well and desire the same thing. Why? Because the only alternative is for God's people to be defeated and in agony, for wickedness to conquer, and for rebellion to prevail. I would certainly much rather our Lord reign than Satan. I would much rather obedience reign than sin, disobedience, transgression, and rebellion. So obedience to God and His Word is vitally important. How important? Look in Exodus 23:22. God promises, "But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak; then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries." Skip down to verse 27: "I will send my fear before thee, and will destroy all the people to whom thou shalt come, and I will make all thine enemies turn their backs unto thee."

Obedience is vitally important for victory. We cannot be a victorious people without being an obedient, submissive people—one that obeys and listens to the Word of God. The truth is very simple: if I have to fight, or if I have to go to war, it must be done in obedience to God and His Word, because I want Him to fight for me. I want Him to be an enemy to my enemies and an adversary to my adversaries. I want Him to cause all my enemies to turn their backs to me. I want His protection. I want to be able to say with David, in Psalm 140:7, "O GOD the Lord, the strength of my salvation, thou hast covered my head in the day of battle." Would you not like to be protected in the day of battle? I certainly would. God says that if we obey Him, He will be an enemy to our enemies.

## God's Power to Help or Destroy Based on Obedience

The Lord is not only a man of war; He is also the God of battles. Everyone knows the story of David and Goliath. Goliath was a big, mean man of war, with weapons, protection, and a host of the Philistines behind him. David went out to meet him with a sling and stones. Goliath had a sword, a shield, and a spear. David said in 1 Samuel 17:47, "And all this assembly shall know that the LORD saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the LORD's, and he will give you into our hands."

The battle is the Lord's. He does not save with sword and spear. In Psalm 24:8, listen to this: "Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle." Our God is not only a God of war; He is also the Lord of the battles. Understand this simple truth: God is able to help, and He is also able to destroy.

King Amaziah learned this lesson the hard way. Amaziah was one of those foolish individuals who was helped until he became strong.

King Amaziah was about to go to war with Edom, but he did not think he had a sufficient number of soldiers under his direction. So he hired some Israelites, and it cost him a good bit of money. Second Chronicles 25:6 says, “He hired also an hundred thousand mighty men of valour out of Israel for an hundred talents of silver.” He had an extra hundred thousand soldiers for a hundred talents of silver. But verse 7 says, “But there came a man of God to him, saying, O king, let not the army of Israel go with thee; for the LORD is not with Israel, to wit, with all the children of Ephraim.”

The prophet continued: “But if thou wilt go, do it, be strong for the battle: God shall make thee fall before the enemy: for God hath power to help, and to cast down.” Amaziah asked, “But what shall we do for the hundred talents which I have given to the army of Israel?” The man of God answered, “The LORD is able to give thee much more than this.” Then Amaziah separated the army from Ephraim and sent them home. Their anger was greatly kindled against Judah, and they returned home in great anger.

Notice what the prophet told him: “God, if thou go, God shall make thee fall before the enemy.” If you go in disobedience, God will make you fall, because “God hath power to help, and to cast down.” Amaziah obeyed God in this instance. He sent that hundred-thousand-man army home. They were upset and angry, but he sent them home. He went ahead and fought against Edom, and God gave him the victory. Why? Because he was obedient. But notice his stupidity.

I want you to understand that a lot of civil leaders, most politicians, are totally, absolutely irrational. Let me tell you what Amaziah did. After he defeated Edom, he took their gods, brought

them home, made them his gods, bowed down before them, and burned incense unto them. They could not even save the Edomites!

“Now it came to pass, after that Amaziah was come from the slaughter of the Edomites, that he brought the gods of the children of Seir, and set them up to be his gods, and bowed down himself before them, and burned incense unto them. Wherefore the anger of the LORD was kindled against Amaziah, and he sent unto him a prophet, which said unto him, Why hast thou sought after the gods of the people, which could not deliver their own people out of thine hand? And it came to pass, as he talked with him, that the king said unto him, Art thou made of the king's counsel? forbear; why shouldest thou be smitten?”

In other words, if you do not shut up, I will kill you. “Then the prophet forbare, and said, I know that God hath determined to destroy thee, because thou hast done this, and hast not hearkened unto my counsel. Then Amaziah king of Judah took advice, and sent to Joash, the son of Jehoahaz, the son of Jehu, king of Israel, saying, Come, let us see one another in the face.” In other words, he was planning another war. The prophet had said, “I know that God hath determined to destroy thee.” He was going to fall because he would not listen.

“But Amaziah would not hear; for it came of God, that he might deliver them into the hand of their enemies, because they sought after the gods of Edom. So Joash the king of Israel went up; and they saw one another in the face, both he and Amaziah king of Judah, at Bethshemesh, which belongeth to Judah. And Judah was put to the worse before Israel, and they fled every man to his tent.”

Isn't it amazing that Amaziah listened to the prophet of God on one hand and was successful, but on the other hand refused to listen to the man of God and was destroyed?

You're going to find this happens over and over in Scripture. God is able to help and to destroy. In 2 Chronicles 26, you're reading about King Uzziah. King Uzziah was basically a good king, and he reigned for 52 years. Although he was a good king and godly in most aspects, he did fail in several instances. He served God until his heart was lifted up with pride. But look at what happened when he was

humble: “And God helped him against the Philistines, and against the Arabians that dwelt in Gurbaal, and the Mehunims. And the Ammonites gave gifts to Uzziah: and his name spread abroad even to the entering in of Egypt; for he strengthened himself exceedingly.” Notice this: God helped him against the Philistines, against the Arabians, and against all of his enemies. God helped him. All I am trying to show you is this: God is able to help, and God is able to destroy.

Obedience does matter. There is one truth that we must absolutely learn, absolutely embrace, absolutely believe, and absolutely apply: God does have the ability to help or destroy in the time of battle. He is the Lord of battle, the God of war, the sovereign, omnipotent ruler of all. We have to understand that our enemies are not in control. God is in control. He alone has the ability to determine the outcome, whether to help or to destroy, and this truth must govern our confidence and our obedience.

## The Example of Abijah: Reliance on the Lord

In light of everything that has just been shared, we must learn at all times to rely upon the Lord our God and His promises. Listen carefully: we cannot rely upon our plans, our schemes, our weaponry, our abilities, or our tactics. We must rely upon Him. This truth is enunciated and demonstrated very clearly in 2 Chronicles 13, when Abijah fought with Jeroboam. The key verse is verse 18: “Thus the children of Israel were brought under at that time, and the children of Judah prevailed, because they relied upon the LORD God of their fathers.” Why did they prevail? Because they relied upon the LORD God of their fathers.

This passage opens with a very disconcerting truth, evident before the battle ever began. In 2 Chronicles 13:3, we read, “And Abijah set the battle in array with an army of valiant men of war, even four hundred thousand chosen men: Jeroboam also set the battle in array against him with eight hundred thousand chosen men, being mighty men of valour.” Could someone tell me what the disconcerting truth is? Judah was outnumbered two to one.

If you lived by sight and walked by sight, when you saw that you were outnumbered two to one, what would you automatically think?

It is all over. We are defeated. We are outnumbered. We cannot win. But listen to me very carefully: sight, circumstances, nor situations can impede real faith. Genuine faith always relies upon the Lord. Real faith does not consider the circumstances, look at the situation, or look at the multitudes. Real faith simply says, "Lord, You brought them in one place to take care of them. Have at it." Real faith does not rely upon circumstances.

Now note what happens in verses 4 through 12. Abijah is preaching to Jeroboam, telling him that he is in a very precarious situation and holding a very untenable position. He explains Jeroboam's apostasy and how he has caused his people to apostatize through the golden calves. "You've got these golden calves with you. Moreover, you have cast out the real Levitical priest. You have no real genuine priest. You've got men that are pagans. Moreover, you have inaugurated a false religion. You are an idolater. You're in rebellion to God, to His Word, and to His Law. You better not enter into this fight."

While Abijah is preaching, Jeroboam causes an ambushment to come around behind Judah. He outflanks them. Suddenly Abijah sees the enemy in front and in the rear. They are caught in a pincer movement. What does he do? Look, if you would please.

When Judah looked back, behold, the battle was before and behind: and they cried unto the LORD, and the priests sounded with the trumpets. Then the men of Judah gave a shout: and as the men of Judah shouted, it came to pass, that God smote Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah and Judah. God smote them. God took care of them.

The children of Israel fled before Judah: and God delivered them into their hand. And Abijah and his people slew them with a great slaughter: so there fell down slain of Israel five hundred thousand chosen men. He came out with eight hundred thousand; only three hundred thousand were left. Why did God give the smaller army the victory? Thus the children of Israel were brought under at that time, and the children of Judah prevailed, because they relied upon the LORD God of their fathers.

## Application: Faith and Obedience in Battle

If you have to fight, if you have to go to war, it must be in absolute faith and in reliance upon the Lord God, who is the only true and living God.

Here is the first truth: “When thou goest out to battle against thine enemies, and seest horses, and chariots, and a people more than thou, be not afraid of them: for the LORD thy God is with thee.” When you go to battle and see jets and tanks and a people more than you, do not be afraid of them. Why? The LORD thy God is with thee.

How do we know that He is with us? First of all, because of His Word. Second, if we have been living obedient lives, we have His promised blessing from Deuteronomy 28 and Leviticus 26. So God says, when you see all of these multitudes and all of their weaponry, just shrug your shoulders and say, “It doesn't matter what they've got, because God is on our side.”

It is not the weapons that matter. It is not the size of the army that matters. It is not the tactics that really matter. What really matters is that we are on the side of the Lord and are a holy, godly, obedient people. The greatest fear of our enemies is fear of a holy, righteous, obedient, and godly people.

I want to show you that. Look in Joshua chapter 2. You remember that Balaam was hired to curse Israel. Of course, every time he tried to curse Israel, God turned the curse into a blessing. But when Israel went to attack Jericho, you remember Rahab the harlot. Look at her confession, beginning there with verse 9:

“And she said unto the men, I know that the LORD hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you. For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed. And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt.

“Neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: for the LORD your God, he is God in heaven above, and in

earth beneath." Note that, at this point, the people were obedient. The fear of God and the fear of a holy, righteous people fell on all the inhabitants. May I remind you that obedience does matter. Holiness does matter. Righteousness does matter. And God tells us, in 2 Chronicles 13—this is the chief point—we have to learn to rely upon Him in every situation.

I read several books just recently dealing with the War of Northern Aggression, some of the men that fought, some of the things they went through, and how God brought—it is just absolutely miraculous. Yet God is the God of miracles. We tend to think that when it comes to an all-out war, an all-out fighting, there is no way that we can prevail. But there is a way, and that is through the Lord Jesus Christ, who is King of Kings, and God of Gods, and Lord of Lords.

We need to learn to rely upon Him. It is too late to start living an obedient life when you are already in battle. You had better be living an obedient life before you ever get into battle. It is just like I told you in times past: how to pray effectively when you get into trouble is to be used to praying before you ever get into trouble. Apply this truth now in every area of reliance upon God, and it will come naturally when you get in a tight if you are used to obeying Him and relying upon Him daily. How should we fight? Always in faith, relying totally and completely upon God.

Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, we bow to Thee. We ask You for Your blessing, for Your help, and that You would teach us and prepare us for whatever is coming down the pike. Give us a biblical mindset, a biblical attitude, and a biblical mentality. Prepare our hearts to stand for truth and righteousness. In the name of Jesus Christ, we ask and pray. Amen.

Again, Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, we ask Your blessing and help. Teach and prepare us for whatever is coming. Amen.

CHAPTER 2

# How To Fight Like A Christian

*Part Two of Two*

**SCRIPTURE READING - 2 Chronicles 14:1-15 (KJV)**

## Introduction and Review

Let's open our Bibles today to 2 Chronicles chapter 14. The title of the message is "How to Fight Like a Christian." This is the second part. Hopefully it will go into a little more specifics than the introduction did last week. So let's look in 2 Chronicles chapter 14 and we're going to read all 15 verses.

2 Chronicles 14 verse 1: "So Abijah slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David."

"And Asa his son reigned in his stead. And in his days the land was quiet ten years. And Asa did that which was good and right in the eyes of the Lord his God. For he took away the altars of the strange gods in the high places, and broke down the images, and cut down the groves, and commanded Judah to seek the

> Lord God of their fathers, and to do the law and the commandment. Also, he took away out of all the cities of Judah the high places and the images, and the kingdom was quiet before him. And he built fenced cities in Judah, for the land had rest. For he had no war in those years, because the Lord had given him rest. Therefore, he said unto Judah, 'Let us build these cities and make about them walls and towers and gates and bars, while the land is yet before us. Because we have sought the Lord our God, we have sought him, and he has given us rest on every side.' So they built and prospered."
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> "And Asa had an army of men that bear targets and spears out of Judah, 300,000, and out of Benjamin that bear shields and drew bows, 280,000. All these were mighty men of valor. And there came out against them Zerah the Ethiopian with a host of 1,000,000 and 300 chariots and came to Mareshah. Then Asa went out against him, and they set the battle in array in the valley of Zephathah at Mareshah. And Asa cried unto the Lord his God and said, 'Lord, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many or with them that have no power. Help us, O Lord our God, for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude. O Lord, thou art our God. Let not man prevail against thee.' So the Lord smote the Ethiopians before Asa and before Judah, and the Ethiopians fled. And Asa and the people that were with him pursued them unto Gerar and the Ethiopians were overthrown and they could not recover themselves for that they were destroyed before the Lord and before his host and they carried away very much spoil and they smote all the cities round about Gerar for the fear

The people of Judah spoiled all the cities, for there was exceeding much spoil in them. They smote also the tents of cattle, and carried away sheep and camels in abundance, and returned to Jerusalem. I trust you remember that last week I gave you a general introduction to this message, especially based on 2 Chronicles chapter 13.

The primary verse in 2 Chronicles chapter 13 is verse 18: “Thus the children of Israel were brought under at that time, and the children of Judah prevailed because they relied upon the Lord God of their fathers.” I also told you what I meant and what I did not

mean by the title: learning to fight in a biblical manner—not only fighting the good fight of faith that the Apostle Paul speaks about in 1 Timothy chapter 6 and verse 12, but fighting real physical battles as well.

Whether we are talking about enemies, corrupt governments, or whatever else, we should always display a biblical mentality and a biblical attitude when it comes to fighting. Unhappily, most Christians are thoroughly confused on this issue. In 2 Timothy chapter 1 and verse 7, the Scripture says, “For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.” So it should be obvious and apparent that fighting requires faith.

Judah prevailed because they relied upon the Lord God of their fathers. But fighting also requires obedience. It is useless to state that we have faith unless we are obedient. Our faith is manifested by our works and by our life. So let me say it like this: obedience is simply a manifestation of our faith. James said it very clearly and simply in James 2 and verse 18: “Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works. Show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works.” Last week we also learned that the Lord is indeed a man of war.

## God Gives Peace or Raises Adversaries

That's what the Scripture calls Him. Not only is He a man of war, but He is also the God of battle. It is impossible to have victory apart from God. He is the one that either gives victory or defeat. We cannot expect victory in Him if we are disobedient or rebellious. When God gives peace in the land, none can make us afraid. You remember the passage from Leviticus 26 and verse 6, where God said, "And I will give peace in the land, and ye shall lie down, and none shall make you afraid, and I will rid evil beasts out of the land, neither shall the sword go through your land." So when God gives peace, none can make us afraid. God is the one who gives peace and prosperity.

But there is an opposite truth: when God raises up an enemy, when God raises up an adversary, none can give us peace. There will always be trouble and confusion. Solomon was a very wise man, and for years he served the Lord, and the Lord blessed him. But in his

latter years, he departed from the Lord and disobeyed God. The Bible tells us in 1 Kings chapter 11, verse 14, "And the LORD stirred up an adversary unto Solomon, Hadad the Edomite."

The Bible says, "The LORD stirred up an adversary unto Solomon." Solomon had been a man of peace; he had had much peace during his reign. But now that he had rebelled against God and sinned against God, God raised up an adversary. Verse 23 says, "And God stirred him up another adversary, Rezon, the son of Eliadah, which fled from his lord, Hadadezer, king of Zobah." Verse 25 says, "And he was an adversary to Israel all the days of Solomon beside the mischief that Hadad did and he abhorred Israel and reigned over Syria." So the very fact is that God can either give peace or trouble. God can either subdue our enemies and our adversaries, or God can raise them up. He always delivers a rebellious people into the hands of their enemies.

All you have to do is read the book of Judges. As you read through the book of Judges, you will see how Israel sinned against God, rebelled against God, and God delivered them into the hands of their enemies over and over. The same truth appears in 2 Chronicles chapter 28 in the account of King Ahaz.

**SCRIPTURE READING - 2 Chronicles 28:5-8, 17-20 (KJV)**

The God who can give peace is also the God who can raise up trouble. Concerning King Ahaz, the Bible says:

"Wherefore the Lord his God delivered him into the hand of the king of Syria, and they smote him, and carried away a great multitude of them captives, and brought them to Damascus. And he was also delivered into the hand of the king of Israel, who smote him with a great slaughter. For Pekah, the son of Remaliah, slew in Judah a hundred and twenty thousand in one day, which were all valiant men. Why? Because they had forsaken the Lord God of their fathers. And Zechariah, a mighty man of Ephraim, slew Maaseiah, the king's son, and Azrikam, the governor of the house, and Elkanah, that was next to the king. And the children of Israel carried away captive of their brethren, 200,000 women, sons, and daughters, and took away much spoil from them, and brought the spoil to Samaria."

> "The Lord his God delivered him into the hand of the king of Syria." Moreover, he delivered him into the hands of Pekah, the son of Remaliah. And 120,000 were slain in one day.
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> "For again the Edomites had come and smitten Judah, and carried away captives. The Philistines also had invaded the cities of the low country, and of the south of Judah, and had taken Beth-shemesh, and Aijalon, and Gederoth, and Socoh, with the villages thereof, and Timnah with the villages thereof, Gimzo also with the villages thereof, and they dwelt there. For the LORD brought Judah low, because of Ahaz king of Israel. For he made Judah naked, and transgressed sore against the LORD."
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> "And Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria came unto him, and distressed him, but strengthened him not." In each of these passages, God is bringing a people low because of their disobedience, because of their rebellion.

## An Excellent Example of How to Fight Like a Christian

There are two truths that you will find over and over in the Bible. The first is that blessings always follow obedience. The second is equally true: curses always follow disobedience. That is true in every area of life—not only in your personal life and church life, but also in the military arena. No one ever prospers by disobedience. No one has ever worked out his problems by continuing to disobey God. Every time you disobey, you complicate and enhance your problems.

One can fight militarily, or fight the good fight of faith spiritually, mentally, emotionally, or even financially. You can fight in obedience to God, honoring God and trusting God, or you can fight against God and against His truth as an enemy, and be cursed of God.

## King Asa's Preparation in Peace

You will find an excellent example of how to fight like a Christian in 2 Chronicles chapter 14, during the life of King Asa. King Asa followed his father, King Abijah. Asa had learned obedience and feared the Lord greatly. The first seven verses read:

"So Abijah slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David. And Asa his son reigned in his stead. In his days the land was quiet ten years. For he took away the altars of the strange gods in the high places, and break down the images, and cut down the groves. and commanded Judah to seek the Lord God of their fathers, and to do the law and the commandment. And he took away out of all the cities of Judah, and the high places, and the images, and the kingdom was quiet before him. And he built fenced cities in Judah, for the land had rest, for he had no war in those years, because the Lord had given him rest. Therefore, he said unto Judah, 'Let us build these cities and make about them walls and towers and gates and bars, while the land is yet before us. Because we have sought the Lord our God, we have sought Him, and He has given us rest on every side,' so they built and prospered."

God had given King Asa rest for ten years. For ten years they experienced peace and prosperity.

Asa was a wise individual, and he used that time very wisely. One of the first things he did was destroy the various forms of idolatry that existed in the land. He broke down the images, and he cut down the groves.

Every time you see the word “groves” in the Bible, with the exception of one—when Abraham planted a grove, which spoke about a grove of trees—all the other instances outside of the book of Genesis refer to the worship of Asherah. When Asa cut down the groves, he was cutting down the images of Asherah.

Notice what else he did. He not only destroyed idolatry, but he also commanded Judah to obey the Lord and His commandments. So he, on the one hand, destroyed that which was contrary to God. On the other hand, he elevated God and taught God’s law. In the time of peace, he built fenced cities, cities capable of being defended. Moreover, he added defensive walls, towers, gates, and bars.

In all of this, the Bible says that he prospered. Note especially verse 7: “Therefore, he said to Judah, ‘Let us build these cities, and make about them walls and towers and gates and bars, while the land is yet before us. Because we have sought the Lord our God, we

have sought Him, and He has given us rest on every side.' So they built and prospered." Understand what Asa is doing.

Asa is preparing for war in a time of peace. He is making sure that his land, his people, and his family are in a defensive position and able to fight. It is too late to prepare when war is upon you. It is too late to learn how to fight when you must fight, or to learn how to shoot when you have to shoot. Asa is using his time wisely, and not only wisely, but biblically, because God gave him a great deal of rest.

## The Battle Against Zerah the Ethiopian

"And Asa had an army of men that bear targets and spears out of Judah, 300,000, and out of Benjamin that bear shields and drew bows, 280,000, all these were mighty men of valor." Thus, he had 580,000 fighting men, a little more than a half a million. He had trained them and prepared them.

After ten years of peace and preparation, "there came out against them Zerah the Ethiopian, with a host of a thousand thousand and three hundred chariots, and came to Mareshah. Then Asa went out against him, and they set the battle in array in the valley of Zephathah at Mareshah." Asa had 580,000 men, while Zerah came against him with a million men and 300 chariots. Yet Asa went out to meet him.

Nowhere do we read about Asa having any chariots. Chariots in those days would have been considered tanks: armored implements, often with knives on the wheels or sides. If they rode through the men, those standing there were cut down; if they were on the ground, their heads were cut off. The chariots moved quickly and had archers in them. Zerah had 300 chariots; Judah had none. Asa was already outnumbered two to one. He was not only outnumbered, but, so to speak, outgunned.

Let's put it like this: Zerah had 50-caliber machine guns, and Asa just had AR-15s. He was outgunned because of these chariots, yet he was still willing to face the enemy.

When Asa saw this multitude—when he was outnumbered and outgunned—he cried unto the Lord his God and said, "Lord, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many or them that have no

power. Help us, O Lord our God, for we will rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude. O Lord, thou art our God, let not man prevail against thee." So the Lord smote the Ethiopians before Asa and before Judah, and the Ethiopians fled.

## Asa's Prayer and God's Victory

Before commenting on these things, understand this: God gave them the victory. Asa committed his cause unto the Lord. He engaged in the conflict and completely routed his enemy. He not only obtained a victory, but also gained a great deal of spoil. Asa and the people with him pursued the Ethiopians unto Gerar. "And the Ethiopians were overthrown, and they could not recover themselves, for they were destroyed before the Lord and before His host, and they carried away very much spoil." They smote all the cities round about Gerar, and the fear of the Lord came upon them. They spoiled the cities, for there was exceeding much spoil in them, and carried away sheep and camels in abundance. Obviously, God gave them the victory, and they delighted themselves in the spoil.

What are we to learn from this? Let me show you some elements of relying upon the Lord. Last week, in 2 Chronicles 13:18, we saw that Judah, though outnumbered two to one, won the battle because they relied upon the Lord. Stop and think about this. Everywhere you look today, you hear about secret weapons that various countries, even our government, possess. People have said to me repeatedly, "It looks as if they're going to take us all." That might be so if you go by looks, but not if you go by faith. When Asa was outnumbered two to one and outgunned, he prayed, "Lord, it is nothing with Thee to help."

## Elements of Relying on the Lord

"With many or with them that have no power. O Lord, we rest on Thee and in Thy name we go against this multitude." Let me show you what is involved in relying upon the Lord and trusting in the God of battle. First of all, there is a confession of God's absolute power and sovereignty. What did he say in verse 11? "And Asa cried to the Lord his God and said, 'Lord, it is nothing with Thee to help, whether with many or them that have no power. Help us, O Lord our

God, for we rest on Thee, and in Thy name we go against this multitude.'"

Asa recognized, first and foremost, that his only help was in the Lord. He ascribed glory to God by acknowledging His infinite power and sovereignty when he said, "It's nothing with You to help with those who have many, or few, or those who have no power."

Arthur W. Pink defines God's sovereignty in this way: "The sovereignty of God. What do we mean by this expression? We mean the supremacy of God, the kingship of God, the Godhood of God. To say that God is sovereign is to declare that God is God. To say that God is sovereign is to declare that He is the Most High, doing according to His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, so that none can stay His hand or say unto Him, 'What doest Thou?' To say that God is sovereign is to declare that He is the Almighty, the Possessor of all power in heaven and in earth, so that none can defeat His counsels, thwart His purpose, or resist His will. To say that God is sovereign is to declare that He is the governor among the nations, setting up kingdoms, overthrowing empires, and determining the course of dynasties as pleaseth to Him."

"To say that God is sovereign is to declare that He is the only Potentate, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords." Such is the God of the Bible. He is absolutely sovereign. This is what Asa meant: Lord, since You are sovereign, nothing can hinder You from helping us. No one can thwart You. No one can stop You. Your power, Your supremacy, Your sovereignty—you are above and superior to any and all other.

You rule according to Your will. You do that which You determine to be best. When you stop and think that God is absolutely sovereign and none can stop Him, certainly Asa was wise to appeal to the sovereign God of heaven and earth.

David also acknowledged God's sovereignty. In 1 Chronicles 29:11-12, he confessed: "Thine, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty. For all that is in the heaven and in the earth is Thine. Thine is the kingdom, O Lord. Thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honour come of

Thee. And Thou reignest over all. In Thine hand is power and might. And in Thy hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all."

Notice what he is doing. He is acknowledging God's sovereignty—the fact, just like Asa, that God is able to give victory or defeat. It is in His hands. Numbers do not count. Multitudes do not matter. Weaponry is not a factor. It does not matter how strong or how feeble the enemy is. God is far superior and is able to work in His own strength, not just in the strength of others. God may help the weakest as well as the strongest, the underdog as well as the dog that is on top. It is up to God.

You remember what Jonathan said in 1 Samuel 14:6? When Jonathan saw these Philistines, and most of Israel were hiding themselves, he said to the young man that bare his armour, "Come, and let us go over unto this garrison of these uncircumcised: it may be that the Lord will work for us: for there is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few." And Jonathan and his armourbearer cut them down left and right.

You can go through the Bible and find that every time there was a glorious and great victory, it was because the people trusted in the sovereign God of heaven and earth.

Turn to 2 Chronicles chapter 32. Good King Hezekiah was encouraging his people against Sennacherib the Assyrian. Beginning with verse 6, we read that he set captains of war over the people, gathered them together in the street of the gate of the city, and spoke comfortably unto them, saying, “Be strong and courageous. Be not afraid nor dismayed for the king of Assyria, nor for all the multitude that is with him, for there is more with us than with him.”

Now notice what Hezekiah said: “With him is the arm of the flesh. But with us is the Lord our God to help us, and to fight our battles.” The people rested upon the words of Hezekiah, king of Judah. “With him is the arm of the flesh. But with us is the Lord our God to help us, and to fight our battles.” Certainly, he was outnumbered. The Assyrians were very wicked people, yet they were a fighting people.

They were known for their atrocities and for skinning people alive. They were the ones who came up with crucifixion, though not in the way our Lord was crucified. Theirs was even more brutal. The

Roman crucifixion was not designed to make it more easy, but to make it more difficult. When the Assyrians crucified you, you usually died within a few hours of that day. When the Romans crucified you, it took several days to die in pain and agony.

But notice again: “With him is the arm of the flesh.” Go back in your Bibles to 2 Kings chapter 6. The Syrians had come for Elisha, the man of God, and completely surrounded Dothan where he was. Elisha understood God's sovereignty as well. He understood that God was sufficient in and of Himself. In 2 Kings chapter 6, begin reading with verse 8.

**SCRIPTURE READING - 2 Kings 6:8-15 (KJV)**

> "Then the king of Syria warred against Israel and took counsel with his servants, saying, 'In such and such place shall be my camp.' And the man of God sent unto the king of Israel, saying, 'Beware that thou pass not such a place, for thither the Syrians are come down.' And the king of Israel sent to the place which the man of God told him and warned him of, and saved himself there not once or twice. Therefore, the heart of the king of Syria was sore troubled for this saying. And he called his servants and said to them, 'Will you not show me which of us is for the king of Israel?' And one of his servants said, 'None, my lord or king, but Elisha the prophet that is in Israel. Telleth the king of Israel the words that are spoken in thy bedchamber.'
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> "And he said, 'Go and spy where he is that I may send and fetch him.' It was told him, saying, 'Behold, he is in Dothan.' Therefore sent he thither horses and chariots, a great host. And they came by night and compassed the city round about. And when the servant of the man of God was risen early and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with the horses and chariots. And the servant said unto him, 'Alas, my master, how shall we do?'"

## Acknowledging Our Helplessness

Elisha answered, “Fear not, for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.” Then Elisha prayed, “Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes that he may see.” The Lord opened the young man’s eyes, and he saw that the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire

round about Elisha. When they came down to him, Elisha prayed unto the Lord, “Smite this people, I pray thee, with blindness.” And he smote them with blindness, according to the word of Elisha. Elisha then took them to the king of Samaria.

Notice what he said: the Lord opened the young man’s eyes that he might see. What did he see? Mountains filled with chariots of fire. Certainly there was far more with Elisha, although Elisha was alone, than with the king of Syria. So if we are going to fight biblically, we have to acknowledge God’s absolute sovereignty. He is in charge.

Secondly, if we are going to fight biblically, we must also acknowledge our absolute and utter helplessness. In 2 Chronicles 14:11, “And Asa cried unto the Lord his God, and said, Lord, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power.” Asa was confessing and acknowledging his own helplessness and powerlessness.

Has it ever really dawned upon you? Has it really sunk into your being that without Him we can do nothing? We cannot even live through the night without Him. We cannot move without Him. In Him we live and move and have our being. There should be a recognition of our own lack of ability, our own lack of power, and our own helplessness.

Yet recognizing our inability and helplessness does not lead to apathy, lethargy, or inactivity. On the contrary, it leads us, and drives us, to seek God, His power, and His help. In and of ourselves, we can do absolutely nothing. But in Him, we are more than conquerors. In Him, we can do whatever needs to be done.

The Apostle Paul recognized this principle. In 2 Corinthians 12:10 he said, “Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ’s sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.” What did Paul mean when he said, “when I am weak, then I am strong”?

In my weakness, I recognize that I cannot. I have no ability. That drives me to trust in the God who can. Our strength is really our weakness: a recognition of our inability. It is our weakness that forces us to depend upon God, His grace, and His mercy.

Look in 2 Chronicles chapter 20 and verse 12 at what King Jehoshaphat said. He faced a battle as well. This is a confession of helplessness, powerlessness, and inability. King Jehoshaphat says, “O our God, wilt thou not judge them? For we have no might against this great company that cometh against us, neither know we what to do, but our eyes are upon thee.” What is he doing? He is confessing his absolute inability and helplessness.

He is saying, “We’re insufficient. We do not even know which way to go. We do not know which way to turn. We do not know how to commence the battle. We do not know what to do.” But he ends by saying, “Our eyes are upon Thee.” You are going to find this true in every area of life. Whenever we become full of pride, arrogance, and haughtiness, and begin to boast in ourselves, our abilities, our weaponry, and our tactics, we are going to fall and fail. Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall. He that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

When we become full of pride and arrogancy, lift up ourselves, and think that we can do it, we bring ourselves under the curse of God. Jeremiah chapter 17, beginning with verse 5, says, “Thus saith the Lord, ‘Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, whose heart departed from the Lord. For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh, but shall inhabit the parched places, and the wilderness in a salt land, and not inhabit it.’” Note what God says: “Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, whose heart departeth from the Lord.” Can you not see that in Goliath of Gath?

Don't you remember how he mocked young David? He said, "What am I but a dog that you're sending this kid out to fight me?" Then he said, "Come on to me, young man. I'll give your flesh to the fowls of the air. I'll feed you to the dogs." Look at the pride and the arrogancy. And what did David say? "I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts." So there is a curse upon those who trust in the flesh.

"Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat

cometh. But her leaves shall be green, and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit."

What is God saying? God is saying you're going to prosper as long as you obey Me and trust in Me and not in yourself. If we're going to fight any battle, I don't care what kind of battle it is, there must be an acknowledgement and confession and trust in the absolute sovereignty of God, together with an acknowledgement and confession of our own inability, helplessness, and powerlessness. This will drive us to trust in God.

Thirdly, there has to be a declaration of faith and trust in God alone. It is not just that we acknowledge God's sovereignty and our own helplessness. We are declaring that our faith and our trust is in God alone. In 2 Chronicles 14:11, Asa cried unto the Lord his God and said, "Lord, it is nothing with Thee to help, whether with many or with them that have no power. Help us, O Lord our God, for we rest on Thee."

"We rest on Thee." Such words express faith in God and demonstrate that we're expecting help from Him. At the same time, we're encouraging ourselves and strengthening ourselves in Him. We're not going forth in our name or in our strength. We're going forth in His name and His strength. When we know Him, delight in Him, lean upon Him, and trust Him, it pleases the Lord and delights the Lord. Of course, it is an honor to the Lord and a worship to the Lord.

There should be a confession and acknowledgement of our absolute trust and faith in God: "Thus saith the Lord, 'Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, nor let the rich man glory in his riches. But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For these things I delight,' saith the Lord."

What do we do? We delight the Lord by trusting in Him and acknowledging that we are looking unto Him for His blessings upon us. The Bible says in Psalm 147 and verse 10, "for He delighteth not in the strength of the horse. He taketh not pleasure in the legs of a

man." Does it matter the swiftness of man or the power of man? That is not what delights God. It is faith in Himself that delights God. In Proverbs 21 and verse 31, the Bible says, "The horse is prepared for the day of battle, but safety is the Lord." You can have all the armament, tactics, and strategies that you want, but if God does not protect you and help you, you are done for.

If we are going to fight biblically, we must fight depending upon God's absolute sovereignty and our own inability. We must fight in faith, encouraging ourselves in Him. Fourthly, we must fight because there is identification with, and reminder of, the covenantal obligations on both parties. In 2 Chronicles chapter 14, verse 11, he says, "O LORD, thou art our God, let not man prevail against thee. O LORD, thou art our Lord, let not man prevail against thee." Now, if God is our Lord, then obviously we are His people. A covenantal bond exists between God and His people.

We have an obligation and a duty to trust Him and obey Him. According to His Word, He blesses those that trust Him and obey Him. There is a covenantal obligation on His part. This covenantal obligation is recognized not only in the Old Testament but in the New Testament as well. In 1 Kings 8, verses 23 and 24, Solomon is dedicating the temple and says, "O Lord God of Israel, there is no God like Thee in heaven above or on earth beneath who keepeth covenant and mercy with thy servants, and walk before thee with all their heart."

"Who has kept with thy servant David my father, that thou hast promised him, and thou spakest also with thy mouth, and hast fulfilled with thine hand as it is this day." Notice what Solomon prayed: that God is the God who keeps covenant and mercy with His servants who walk before Him.

He continued, "If thy people go out to battle against their enemy, whithersoever thou shalt send them, and shalt pray unto the Lord toward this city which thou hast chosen, and toward the house that I have built for thy name, then hear thou in heaven their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause." Why would God do that? Because of covenantal obligations. God has covenanted Himself with us in Jesus Christ. He has promised that if we obey, He will bless; and if we disobey, He will curse.

Just as Solomon appealed to God through the Davidic covenant, we appeal to God through the covenant of grace, which is the fulfillment of that Davidic covenant. Principles do not change. God's covenantal faithfulness does not change, and God does not change. He said in Malachi 3:6, "I the Lord change not." He is immutable.

Hebrews 13:20-21 says, "Now the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well pleasing in His sight through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen." Jesus Christ is our covenant, and it is an eternal covenant.

It was entered into before the world ever began. We can come to God, our Heavenly Father, through the covenantal mercies of Jesus Christ. We may rightly plead our relationship: we are His children, and He is our Father. We may claim the promises He has given us. As 2 Corinthians 1:20 says, "For all the promises of God in Him," that is, in Jesus Christ, "for all the promises of God in Him are yea and in Him amen to the glory of God." All the promises of God in Him are yea and amen to the glory of God by us.

So we must acknowledge that we are His people and He is our God. A covenantal relationship exists, with covenantal duties on both parts. Our part is to trust and obey. Fifthly, note the last point in 2 Chronicles chapter 14, found in verse 11: “For we rest on thee, And in Thy name we go against this multitude. O Lord our God, Thou art our God, let not man prevail against Thee.”

I thought the Ethiopians were fighting against Judah. He did not say, “Let not man prevail against us.” He said, “Let not man prevail against Thee.” Here is what he was praying: “O Lord, Thou art our God, and Thou only. We know and serve no other God. We are Thy people, called by Thy name. Let not man prevail against Thee, for if the enemy should prevail against us, it would be interpreted as prevailing against Thee.” Asa was praying, “Lord, our enemy is mortal. Thou art immortal. Let him see that he cannot prevail against Thee. Maintain our cause. Maintain Thy honor.”

You cannot attack my children without attacking me. My children are my flesh and blood. The same is true with our Heavenly Father. We are His children, and the enemy cannot attack us without attacking Him.

Psalm 9, verse 19, gives us exactly what Asa was praying when he said, "prevail against Thee." David prays, "Arise, O Lord, let not man prevail. Let the heathen be judged in thy sight." Then he says, "Put them in fear, O Lord, that the nations may know themselves to be but men." They are mortal, not God; they have no right to reign over us, control us, and order us. We need to learn to pray this daily: "Arise, O Lord, let not man prevail. Let the heathen be judged in Thy sight."

Psalm 58 shows what Asa meant when he said, "Let not man prevail." He is praying against the wicked: "Break their teeth, O God, in their mouth. Break out the great teeth of the young lions, O Lord. Let them melt away as waters which run continually. When He bendeth His bow to shoot His arrows, let them be as cut in pieces. As a snail which melteth, let every one of them pass away like the untimely birth of woman, that they may not see the sun. Before your pots can feel the thorns, He shall take them away with a whirlwind, both living in His wrath."

"The righteous shall rejoice when He seeth the vengeance. He shall wash His feet in the blood of the wicked, so that a man shall say, 'Verily, there is a reward for the righteous. Verily, He is a God that judgeth in the earth.'" Let not man prevail. You cannot attack God's children without attacking God. So David prayed in Psalm 17:8, "Keep me as the apple of thine eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wings." The apple of the eye is the pupil. Have you ever noticed how quickly your eyelids can shut and cover your eye? I've had limbs come back at me, and instantly my eyes would shut. My hand would go up so quickly it would make your head swim, because it is natural to protect your eyes.

David is saying, "Keep me as the apple of thine eye." In Zechariah 2:8, the Bible says, "After the glory had they sent me into the nations which spoiled you, for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of my eye." God said, if you touch My people, you are touching Me.

We have to understand that when we fight, more than just us is involved in the battle. Look at what is going on in this country. It is humanism versus Christianity. It is Mohammed versus Christ. We do not want man to prevail against us; we do not want man to prevail against God. If we fight like a Christian, we fight in faith, in obedience, trusting the Lord, and recognizing our own helplessness and the greatness of His power, the power of the one true and living God. Yes, we still have to fight.

## Conclusion and Application

As the adage says, "Trust in the Lord and keep your powder dry." But you do not just trust in your powder; you have to trust in the Lord. For He is the God of war and the God of battles. He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords and God of Gods. He has not been defeated yet, and He is not going to be. We are more than conquerors through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, we bow to Thee. We thank You for Your Word and Your truth. Lord, I pray that You would help and enable us to bring our lives into conformity to Your Word. Give us the grace to be submissive, obedient, to lean upon Thee, look to Thee, and trust Thee. In the name of Jesus Christ, we ask and pray. Amen.

# Source Notes

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JW01381 | YouTube

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