

**THE
BANNER AND
BREAKTHROUGH OF THE
BELIEVER IN
BATTLE**

A Teaching On Spiritual Warfare

by Jonathan

CONTENTS

- * THE BATTLEFIELDS OF THE BELIEVER**
- * THE STRONGHOLDS OF THE MIND**
- * THE HEART IS THE WELLSPRING OF LIFE**
- * THE POWER OF OUR CONFESSION**
- * THE NAME OF JESUS AS OUR BANNER OF PRAISE**
- * THE WORD OF OUR TESTIMONY RELEASES THE
BREAKTHROUGH IN FULFILLING GOD'S DESTINY FOR OUR
LIVES**

THE BANNER AND BREAKTHROUGH OF THE BELIEVER IN BATTLE

by Jonathan

THE BATTLEGROUND OF THE BELIEVER

“Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of *this* life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier” (2 Timothy 2:3-4).

=====

Just as the true-blue soldier pledges allegiance to the state and is willing to lay down his life should the call of duty demands, the believer must likewise devote faithful and wholehearted commitment to the Commander in Chief, the Lord Jesus Christ, “And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death” (Revelation 12:11).

Though it may cost martyrdom for some, most of us are called to be active, living sacrifices, “I BESEECH you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service” (Romans 12:1).

Ministry is essentially servanthood and warfare. It is manifesting a portion of the Shepherd’s heart with the spirit of a lion, “THE wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion” (Proverbs 28:1). The Apostle Paul identified himself as a “ ... debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jews first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith”

(Romans 1:14-17). As a servant of God, he felt the obligation to preach the gospel to every kind of person. The greatest measure of our service to God is primarily to seek the lost and win souls, to “...preach deliverance to the captives...” (Luke 4:18). By His Spirit and through prayer warfare, we hold the key to the destiny of households, cities and nations, “And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force” (Matthew 11:12).

Even though Jesus Christ has won the ultimate victory on the cross of Calvary, the conflict between the kingdom of God and the powers of darkness continues to contend for the souls of men and women. As much as we thank God for raising up apostolic and prophetic voices in calling the Church to corporate prayer and intercession in possessing cities and nations for God, we are actually just as “sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal” (1 Corinthians 13:1) if we fail to primarily demolish the strongholds that are battling within our own lives, “Dearly beloved, I beseech *you* as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul” (1 Peter 2:11). The conflict between the new nature and the old continues to rage even after we are saved but the provision of victory on the basis of the blood and the cross is greater than our struggles, “But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin” (Romans 7:23-25).

As necessary as it is to go up to the high places and storm the gates of hell where evil angelic “princes”, principalities and rulers of darkness influence territories and nations (read Daniel 10:13 and Ephesians 6:12), spiritual warfare is not just casting out demons in the heavenlies, but also having the Spirit-filled rule and reign of God over our minds,

hearts and confession of faith, “WHEREFORE seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset *us*, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of *our* faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin” (Hebrews 12:1-4).

THE STRONGHOLDS OF THE MIND

“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ” (2 Corinthians 10:3-5).

=====

The “strongholds” of the mind include unbelief, fear, thoughts of inferiority and condemnation.

It may be inspired by man or Satan. We are either under God’s delegated authority of righteousness, “Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine” (1 Timothy 5:17) or else fall under the influence of the spirit of witchcraft, “For rebellion *is as* the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness *is as* iniquity and idolatry...” (1 Samuel 15:23).

Many people, including Christians, can be manipulated or else intimidated. Which is why the judgment of God comes to the unrepentant wife who enjoys finding fault with her husband or the church member who readily criticize the pastor, just to cite two possible

examples. On the other hand, the husband or the spiritual leader can also be guilty of witchcraft when manipulation of his wife or his congregation takes place respectively.

But you ask, “How then can I be obedient to God’s delegated authority without being manipulated?” Now, simply remember this truth, while “the fear of man bringeth a snare...” (Proverbs 29:25), “the fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy *is* understanding” (Proverbs 9:10). When we walk in the holiness, reverence and wisdom of God, we will be able to apply truth to any given situation and “if the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed” (John 8:36). As we cooperate with church leadership as they follow the Holy Spirit and pray for them faithfully, “obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that *is* unprofitable for you” (Hebrews 13:17), we can and should expect to recognize these fruits in their lives and ministries, “Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith” (Hebrews 13:7; NIV).

When strongholds come straight out of hell, be aware and vigilant that Satan is “the father of lies” (according to John 8:44) and the “accuser of our brethren” (Revelation 12:10). If he cannot get us to slander our spouse or our spiritual leader and destroy relationships, he will seek to attack our minds with condemnation or shame over some past failures or sins even though they were already confessed and cleansed by the Lord. Or else he might work through legalism and a performance-based form of self-righteousness, saying in essence, “You are not spiritual enough, you did not pray and read your Bible as much as you should”. While there are obviously tremendous benefits in extended prayer and the studying of God’s Word, keeping precious rules will not make us more righteous in the sight of God.

What then should be our response? When thoughts of condemnation come, we need to be able to recognize them and take a stand, saying, “...Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men” (Matthew 16:23) and “Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you” (James 4:7). Hallelujah!

THE HEART IS THE WELLSPRING OF LIFE

“Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life” (Proverbs 4:23; NIV).

=====

Our attitudes, emotions and wills are like the roots of trees, which either produce good or evil fruit, “A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither *can* a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them” (Matthew 7:18-20). They are the foundation that produces the fruit of character in our lives. When we are born again and are forgiven of our sins, the Scripture says we are “as white as snow...” (Isaiah 1:18). But the spirit person needs to be filled with the Word of God and communion with the Father through prayer and worship. We must allow the Holy Spirit to “put a new spirit within [us]; and [He] will take the stony heart out of [our] flesh, and will give [us a] heart of flesh: That [we] may walk in [His] statutes, and keep [His] ordinances, and do them: and [we] shall be [His] people, and [He] will be [our] God” (Ezekiel 11:19-20). Otherwise, we will become a part of an open valley full of dry bones (read Ezekiel Chapter 37). Without the continuous infilling of the Holy Spirit, we within ourselves are really no match for the works of the flesh and the powers of darkness (read Romans 8:13, Ephesians 5:18 and Colossians 3:5). We need to take time to acquire and meditate on His Word in spirit or else our deliverance will not be maintained. Listen

closely to what Jesus said concerning the principles of “spiritual housekeeping”, “When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils. He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth. WHEN THE UNCLEAN SPIRIT IS GONE OUT OF A MAN, HE WALKETH THROUGH DRY PLACES, SEEKING REST; AND FINDING NONE, HE SAITH, I WILL RETURN UNTO MY HOUSE WHENCE I CAME OUT. And when he cometh, he findeth *it* swept and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh *to him* seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there: AND THE LAST *STATE* OF THAT MAN IS WORSE THAN THE FIRST” (Luke 11:21-26; notice I have given the key points in CAPITAL LETTERS for the purpose of emphasis).

Two of the most insidious threats to spiritual health (which no doubt includes physical, mental and emotional aspects as well) are our tolerance of anger and bitterness. We need to watch out for anger, “Be ye angry and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: Neither give place to the devil” (Ephesians 4:26-27); “And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses” (Matthew 18:34-35) and “Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls” (James 1:19-21). Why do you think we get angry? Because we are arrogant and insist on *our* rights (which is Pharisaical and self-righteous), “And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother’s eye, but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye?” (Luke 6:41).

Bitterness arises when we do not release forgiveness and love to individuals who have hurt, misunderstood or offended us and this may cause illness and is a sure slippery slide to spiritual burnout. Once recognized, it must be dealt with immediately, “Follow peace with all *men*, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble *you*, and thereby many be defiled” (Hebrews 12:14-15). The answer and the way to deal with bitterness requires humility, being sober and casting our cares on the Lord, “Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world” (1 Peter 5:6-9) and “Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:6-7).

Beloved, through our sins, all of us have been guilty of offending God. Now, He could have dealt with us after our sins with His awesome righteous anger, but the Lord is “merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy ... For as the heavens is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him” (Psalm 103:8, 11). The Father’s heart is really more grieved at our sins than He is angry with us, if ever. Though He hates sins, “...[His] lovingkindness *is* better than life...” (Psalm 63:3). Do we see it this way? As we do, then we will have to recognize that any inclinations to get angry and bitter with others actually springs out of a heart of pride and selfishness, which are sins God righteously detests, “Pride *goeth* before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall” (Proverbs 16:18).

THE POWER OF OUR CONFESSION

“Death and life *are* in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof” (Proverbs 18:21).

=====

The Epistle of James 1:26 and 3:1-9 speaks of the power of the tongue. The fruit of our lips has tremendous creative and spiritual power, power to produce either life or death, faith or unbelief, blessing or cursing. With the same mouth, we bless and praise God and yet, if we do not keep a tight rein with this part of our body, we can give place to the devil when we attack people with words of accusation, criticism, gossip, judgment and slander.

Though it includes every Christian, those of us who preach, prophesy or teach the Word of God especially must be extremely careful with our words or else we will stumble those who are weak in faith, “Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly” (James 3:1; NIV).

Which is why we are to offer positive encouragement even in the process of imparting the “teaching of doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness” (according to 2 Timothy 3:16), “But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin” (Hebrews 3:13).

One powerful remedy for victory is to pray always with “...all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints” (Ephesians 6:18) and “...beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost” (Jude 20). As we do, we will experience greater anointing and victory in our prayers and worship as we speak the Word of God and then we will deny the devil access to our lives, households, cities and even entire nations, “For the word of God *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the

dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12). When Joshua and Caleb were able to “go up at once, and possess it (the land); for we are well able to overcome it” (Numbers 13:30), it was only because they had already gotten victory over the “giants” of their own hearts by refusing to believe the faithless report of the ten spies (read Numbers 13:32). I trust that you can now see and understand why I mentioned earlier that winning in the fight against spiritual darkness in our communities and governments must first begin with the victory we have in our own personal spiritual warfare, especially in our minds, hearts and mouths. Praise God!

THE NAME OF JESUS AS OUR BANNER OF PRAISE

“And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Je-ho’-vah-nis’-si (or in the NIV translation, it reads “The LORD is my Banner”): For he said, Because the LORD hath sworn *that* the LORD *will have* war with Am’-a-lek from generation to generation” (Exodus 17:15-16).

“And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed singers unto the LORD, and that should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army, and to say, Praise the LORD; for his mercy *endureth* for ever. And when they began to sing and to praise, the LORD set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Se’-ir, which were come against Judah; and they were smitten” (2 Chronicles 20:21-22).

=====

When King Jehoshaphat and the Kingdom of Judah went forth to battle and were outnumbered, a word of confession was made, “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... ” (2 Chronicles 20:12). Thankfully, they knew that power and might lie in

Him, not in human strength or wisdom, “...our eyes *are* upon thee” (2 Chronicles 20:12).

The key here is that praise is a powerful weapon of our warfare. Lifting high the name of Jesus is our banner of worship. We can either focus on our difficult situations and be subject to fear or we can maintain an attitude of praise and see the enemies of our lives flee before the Presence of God. As we decide to praise, God will release the positive power of faith to prevail over the enemy, “LET God arise, let his enemies be scattered: let them also that hate him flee before him. As the smoke is driven away, *so* drive *them* away: as wax melteth before the fire, *so* let the wicked perish at the presence of God. But let the righteous be glad; let them rejoice before God: yea, let them exceedingly rejoice. Sing unto God, sing praises to his name: extol him that rideth upon the heavens by his name JAH, and rejoice before him” (Psalm 68:1-4) and “Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds. *Let* the high *praises* of God *be* in their mouth, and a twoedged sword in their hand; To execute vengeance upon the heathen, *and* punishments upon the people; To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; To execute upon them the judgment written: this honour have all his saints. Praise ye the LORD” (Psalm 149:5-9).

David is a classic and valid example of being a worshiper and a warrior. His confidence in defeating mighty Goliath came out of his intimate relationship with the Lord. Likewise, the strength of our victory in spiritual warfare is directly related to the anointing we receive out of being in God’s presence. Communion with God precedes dominion over the forces of our enemies! The delight, desire and devotion we have with Him releases the awesome power of God in breaking the onslaught of the enemy in our lives, “One *thing* have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the LORD, and to inquire in his temple. For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his

tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock. And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the LORD” (Psalm 27:4-6). Praise the mighty name of Jesus!

THE WORD OF OUR TESTIMONY RELEASES THE BREAKTHROUGH IN FULFILLING GOD’S DESTINY FOR OUR LIVES

“He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil” (1 John 3:8).

=====

The Presence of God in our lives is our sanctuary. As He becomes “...[our] refuge and [our] fortress...” (Psalm 91:2), the strength of our witness unto Christ will be discovered. “...If thy presence go not *with me*, carry us not up hence” (Exodus 33:15) should be our statement in ministry. The glory of the Lord must be revealed until Jesus alone becomes our hunger and thirst!

We can join the church and yet be selfish. We can have human approval and yet be rebellious against God. When Paul said, “AM I not an apostle? am I not free? have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? are not ye my work in the Lord?” (1 Corinthians 9:1), he wants us to know that we can be in ministry and yet be outside of the covering of God, “I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any *man* preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. For do I now

persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men, I should not be the servant of Christ” (Galatians 1:6-10).

The Apostle Paul declared that the foundation of spiritual authority lies in intimacy with Jesus and submission to His Lordship, “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me” (Galatians 2:20). Our Lord Himself said it this way, “If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me” (Luke 9:23).

Even if we receive a specific calling of God and move mightily in the gifts of the Spirit, we need to submit to the godly counsel and covering of our spiritual elders, “Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all *of you* be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble” (1 Peter 5:5) and “Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall” (1 Corinthians 10:12). In response, mature spiritual leadership will have a responsibility of being accountable to God for the protection of the flock of God, “THE elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight *thereof*, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind: Neither as lords over *God’s* heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away” (1 Peter 5:1-4).

One of the great tests of spiritual warfare in the hearts of anointed servants of God is to experience persecution in spite of living out a blameless life, “Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time” (1 Peter 5:6). When we deny ourselves and are ready to exchange the greed, the lust and the pride of the flesh for the power of the cross, “Resist him, standing firm in the

faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings” (1 Peter 5:9; NIV), our breakthrough in prayer and spiritual warfare will be assured, “And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and *I pray God* your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful *is* he that calleth you, who also will do *it*” (1 Thessalonians 5:23-24).

Stand and speak the Word! Declare God’s promises! We are in a position to overcome by the word of our testimony and the blood of the Lamb! Hallelujah! Glory be to God!

~~~~~  
COPYRIGHT (C) 1996 WORLD HARVEST GOSPEL PRESS  
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED  
~~~~~

B-0012

ATTENTION, FRIEND: THIS IS GOOD NEWS!

Dear Friend,

We want to take this opportunity to show you God's plan of salvation, according to the Bible. We believe the Bible is the inspired and only infallible and authoritative written Word of God.

If you are not a Christian and you read this, here's an appeal for you to accept Jesus as your Lord and Saviour. To be included in this invitation, you must have a relationship with Jesus Christ, the King of kings and the Lord of lords. The choice is yours. If you say "yes" to Jesus, here's what you must do,

Admit the fact that you are a sinner, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23);

Be willing to repent from disobedience and rebellion against God, "...except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3);

Believe that Jesus is your only Saviour, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16);

Confess, trust and receive Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Romans 10:9-10).

Please pray this prayer and do mean it with all of your heart:

"Dear Lord Jesus, I now recognize that I am a sinner and I am in need of salvation. I accept the sacrifice You paid for me on the cross of Calvary and I allow Your precious shed blood to cleanse me. I now surrender myself to You and invite You to be my Lord and Saviour. Please come into my heart. Take full control of my life and help me to live and serve You from this moment forward. I ask in the name of Jesus. Amen."

If you prayed this prayer in all sincerity, you are now a child of God. We encourage you to find fellowship in a Bible-believing, Spirit-filled church and obtain a copy of the Bible and that you read it diligently so that you will be the kind of Christian God wants you to be.

THE BANNER AND BREAKTHROUGH OF THE BELIEVER IN BATTLE

Spiritual warfare is not just casting out demons in the heavenlies, but also having the Spirit-filled rule and reign of God over our minds, hearts and confession of faith.

Through the pages of this book, you will discover:

- * THE BATTLEFIELDS OF THE BELIEVER
- * THE STRONGHOLDS OF THE MIND
- * THE HEART IS THE WELLSPRING OF LIFE
- * THE POWER OF OUR CONFESSION
- * THE NAME OF JESUS AS OUR BANNER OF PRAISE
- * THE WORD OF OUR TESTIMONY RELEASES THE
BREAKTHROUGH IN FULFILLING GOD'S DESTINY FOR OUR
LIVES

Stand and speak the Word! Declare God's promises! We are in a position to overcome by the word of our testimony and the blood of the Lamb! Hallelujah! Glory be to God!

~~~~~  
WORLD HARVEST GOSPEL PRESS  
~~~~~

B-0012