

Saints At War! (Go To Meeting)

Lyll Johnston—December 1, 2023

Of course, we're on the Sabbath day and today is a day of rest, but it's never a rest from war. We know the message Jesus gave to His disciples on the Mount of Olives that we would be hearing 'wars and rumors of wars and many other things, but the end is not yet,' and neither are the trials and the tribulations of God's people.

- Are Christians pacifists? That's a good question!
- What will happen? *There are a lot of rumbles of the possibility of there being a draft*, of there being a calling up of particularly young men and even women to be conscripted to go to battle.

So, if any of us are at that age, what are we going to do? As a teenager, I had no choice, we were living at a time when compulsory military training, as it was called in New Zealand, called up every young man age 18, women were not being called up at that stage.

We went through our normal training and as a result I became a member of the New Zealand Defense Force for a period of seven years. That was terminated when I found out about God's Truths and I sent in my resignation to a commission I was holding at that time.

Very shortly after that we left for Ambassador College. But while I was serving, I was ready and prepared to go to war. I remember my brother and I, we had we been called on, we would have been off to Hungary with the problems they were having in Hungary in the 1950s.

The very real possibility of being sent up into the Malaysian theater was a very real possibility. In fact, when I was asked, when I was going through a course, I was asked by a man, 'Would your Christian religion influence whether you fight or not?' My answer at that stage was, 'No, of course not.' I had little understanding at that stage of the Biblical perspective for those who are a part of the Body of Christ.

So again, the question: Are we to be those people who would refuse to be a part of a military force to fight against the enemies of the country that we may be conscripted to their armed forces?

Well, let's have a look at John 18. Let's see what Jesus has to say about this, whether or not we should go along with being called up or drafted and generally the approach we have to military service, to serving, to fighting, to killing.

John the 18—What we find is Jesus before Pilate and He answers this question. I'm sure you're all very familiar with this, but as Solomon said, there's nothing new under the sun. So, we repeat these things over and over again so that the Truth of God little-by-little saturates more and more as it percolates into our being and becomes a part of our very life.

These are things that are so important. We know that Jesus is before Pilate here. This is just after Peter had denied Christ. The narrative then moves over to Jesus Who had been taken from the presence of Caiaphas over to Pilate.

John 18:28: "Now then, they led Jesus from Caiaphas to the Judgment Hall, and it was early. But they did not go into the Judgment Hall..."

Oh, so religious, so committed to their beliefs they did not want to go to the Judgment Hall. Why?

"...so that they would not be defiled, but that they might eat the Passover" (v 28).

Can you imagine that? *They are about to crucify the Passover Lamb of God and they're concerned about keeping the Old Covenant Passover with no knowledge!* They didn't know who Jesus was. Well, in fact, that's not true. they did:

- He was opposition to them
- He was trouble for them

because He was drawing the crowds away from them and they were jealous!

"...so that they would not be defiled, but that they might eat the Passover" (v 28).

What Passover was it? *It was the Passover of the 15th, not the 14th; so, it was not the Passover of God;* not the Passover that God had appointed through Moses.

Verse 29: "Therefore, Pilate came out to them and said, 'What accusation do you bring against this man?'"

Pilate had obviously heard about the troubles in the Jewish nation, in Judea,

Verse 30: "They answered and said to him, 'If He were not an evildoer...'"

Here are the Jews and the religious leaders, the high priests and all those high 'mucky mucks' of Judaism, calling Jesus—the One Who came to bring

salvation to the whole of mankind--they're calling Him "...an evildoer..."

Verse 30: "They answered and said to him, 'If He were not an evildoer, we would not have delivered Him up to you.'" ***This is the height of hypocrisy!***

Verse 31: "Then Pilate said to them, 'You take Him and judge Him according to your own law.' But the Jews said to him, 'It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death.'"

So, He was in their mind. They wanted the death of the Son of God. ***Their minds were blinded!*** These religious leaders, the high priests and the whole Sanhedrin, contra to God the Father, wanting to kill the Son of God Almighty.

"... 'It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death.'—*that's under the Roman law!*

Verse 32: "So that the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which He had spoken to signify by what death He was about to die. Then Pilate returned to the Judgment Hall and called Jesus, and said to Him, 'Are You the King of the Jews?' Jesus answered him, 'Do you ask...'" (vs 32-34).

Jesus is not giving an outright answer, Jesus testing Pilate who was going to allow Him to be condemned anyway!

"... 'Do you ask this of yourself, or did others say it to you concerning Me?'" (v 34). *He wasn't making it easy for Pilate!*

Verse 35: "Pilate answered Him, 'Am I a Jew?....' *Do I understand your ways and your systems and your religions?*

"...The chief priests and your own nation have delivered You up to me. What have You done?" (v 35).

Here's where we come to the answer, whether we are to be pacifists or whether we have to be warriors.

Verse 36: "Jesus answered, **'My Kingdom is not of this world....'**"

- What does that tell us?
- What Kingdom are we in?

We live in this world, ***but we do not live according to this world***, as Paul clearly outlined in his epistles. ***We remove ourselves from everything that is of this world***—in other words: ***wilderness***—to become part of the rules of the Kingdom of God, ***which are based on:***

- the Ten Commandments
- obedience to God

- becoming living sacrifices
- to live the way of that Kingdom

and not to live in the ways of this world!

Verse 36: "Jesus answered, 'My Kingdom is not of this world.... [here's His answer if we can see it] ...**If** My Kingdom were of this world, **then** would My servants fight, so that I might not be delivered up to the Jews....'" *What Jesus is saying is:*

- this isn't the time for My servants to fight
- this is not the time for my servants to deliver Me

"...However, **My Kingdom is not of this world**" (v 36)—*and we understand why all this took place!*

Verse 37: "Pilate, therefore, answered Him, 'Then You are a king?' Jesus answered, '**As you say, I am a king. For this purpose I was born, and for this reason I came into the world...**'" *Interesting!*

How was he born? Well, in Luke 1, we find that God the Father sent a physical human seed, which was Jesus Christ, and what did He do? He planted that in the womb of Mary. Jesus was fully human, born of the flesh, having given up His glory to live as you and me in this world, not as a part of this world.

As He said, **"My kingdom is not of this world."** And when his parents came looking for Him after the Passover, when he was 12 years old, what did He say? ***Did you not know that I had to be about My Father's business?*** What is His Father's business? *It's all about:*

- the Kingdom of God.
- the calling of the saints today
- the preparation of the government of God,
- the preparation of kings and priests to rule and bring peace in the world

which we do not have today! What do we have in the world today? *Wars and rumors of wars!*

- we know of those
- we have visions of those on our television screens

Of course, as we understand, most mainstream media has been purchased and it gives only what 'the deep state' says it will publish, and it comes down to being half-truths. *You never get the full truth!*

"...For this *purpose* I was born, and for this *reason* I came into the world, **that I may bear witness to the Truth. Everyone who is of the Truth hears My voice**" (v 37).

How do we hear His voice today? *Very simply, when we read the Scriptures, that's hearing the voice of God!* Even though we're reading it, ***we recognize that this is the voice of God!*** This is the written words of God. It's what God is saying to us. It's what God has said and it's what He continues to say.

Also, for those who God has called—such as His apostles in the early days and for those later who have been trained and equipped to preach the Word of God, to preach the Truth of God. ***IF*** those speakers are preaching the words of Christ faithfully, you and I will be able to recognize who is speaking the words of Christ and God the Father and who is not, who is twisting and warping the words of God.

We've got many false apostles in the world today and false prophets, even within those who call themselves to be part of the Church of God. One man, I just saw this yesterday, who I only spoke to once, now claims that he is 'not only the last apostle, but also a prophet.' He said there has been no apostle or prophet like John who wrote the book of Revelation since that time. And this man is claiming to be both apostle and prophet like John.

Well the words that came to mind when I read that was this man's a megalomaniac. This man is blowing his own trumpet. This man who is saying that:

I was thrown into prison because I didn't pay my taxes, the government was wrong because I disobeyed them. My wife and I are the two witnesses, and not only that, I'm the last apostle and prophet. God has shown me what John wrote about. John didn't understand, but you see I understand it, therefore I'm telling you these things.

It's interesting that he claims to have followed after the footsteps of HWA and at the end of this biography of him, I think it was an autobiography, here he is sitting in this leather chair with a world map or a world globe behind him, just almost identical to one we had of Herbert Armstrong.

That's what apostles seem to do, they seem to reflect it, sitting there so you can see the cufflinks. I imagine they're gold, maybe there's some diamonds on them, I don't know.

You know God is his Judge just as much as He's my Judge and your Judge.

"...For this *purpose* I was born, and for this *reason* I came into the world, that I may bear witness to the Truth. Everyone who is of the Truth hears My voice" (v 37).

So, he bears witness to the truth and as the elders and the ministers of Christ, ***we are obligated to do exactly the same thing!*** We have no license to deviate from the Word. Can we make mistakes? *Obviously! We're still human* and we need to check ourselves, we need to correct ourselves.

If somebody picks up on that mistake to inform us, if that person is correct then we must be prepared to change. But not everyone who has a notion or an idea or a doctrine, which is contrary to Scripture do we necessarily have to accept it just because they're trying to correct us or they cannot accept what the Word clearly says.

That's not our responsibility. They come under the judgment and the decisions that God will make about them as He makes for each one of us.

What did Jesus declare? ***In effect that there would be a time when you and I will fight!*** Now, primarily that is when in the Kingdom of God we're going to be involved in a battle of all battles. The greatest battle, of course, that will have been since Satan's rebellion or Lucifer's rebellion against God.

We had that incredible cosmic battle that totally up-heaved planet Earth to the point where God had to recreate the surface of the Earth before He put our first parents, Adam and Eve, on that.

Jesus said, 'My Kingdom is not of this world, but ***IF*** it were ***THEN*** my servants would fight.' What kind of fighting are we to be doing today?

Now listen, you know the drums are beating, it's being proclaimed by some sources that the government, particularly we refer here to the United States, are talking about bringing back the draft. Of course, this has happened in the Ukraine where they were drafting anyone that they could lay their hands on and multiple thousands of men have fled the country in order to get away from that conscription.

They see how many of their fellow countrymen have just been slaughtered or killed by warfare. Not putting a blame on anyone or not taking up any issues. *That's just the nature of war!*

You go back to ancient Israel and you look at some of their battles. Even when tribes are fighting other tribes, ***IF*** God was in it ***THEN*** what did God do? *God actually slaughtered by the armies of Israel or God Himself slaughtered many of those who:*

- were in error
- were sinning
- were denying Him
- were causing problems for the people of Israel

Yes, war was physical, but we haven't been called as the Body of Christ, as spiritual Israel, to fight in that kind of war. However, we have been enlisted—using the military terminology—as volunteers. God hasn't demanded that we become a part of His army along with all His angels.

We in that sense have volunteered to fight in the armies of God the Father and Jesus Christ along with the angels. We have volunteered to do that. So, what kind of battle are we involved in? We already know this but we need to repeat it because of the time that we are living in.

The outcome of any war that we are involved in as Christians is *spiritual warfare* and we don't want to get involved in the spiritual warfare that's taught in the seminaries of this world, particularly one in California where volumes of books were written.

But we're fighting in a warfare that is spiritual in nature. We don't have to turn to some seminary to find out what spiritual battles and warfare is; it's right here in the Scripture before our very eyes.

We don't have to be running around the world with stakes, driving stakes into the ground and proclaiming this piece of land or this country we're claiming that back for God. Where do you find that in the Bible?

Well, that's taught, that's taught! And as one man who had been through all those classes said to me, he said it just came to the point where you couldn't determine what was the difference between spiritual warfare as they were calling it and demonism.

What kind of war? Let's have a look at 2-Cor. 10 as our starting point for this. as we've seen, we've seen the kinds of wars that Israel was involved in and we are involved in warfare very real. ***We're in daily battles!***

2-Corinthians 10:1: "Now, I Paul am personally exhorting you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ. On the one hand, when present with you I *am* base; but on the other hand, when absent I am bold toward you. But I am beseeching *you* so that, when I am present, I may not have to be bold..." (vs 1-2).

Yes, from a distance his letters were strong and quite direct and pointed so that they would take the instruction, so that when he came he could be of a gentle nature and teaching and encouraging with a great deal of empathy and warmth and bowels of mercy and loving relationship with the brethren.

Verse 2: "But I am beseeching *you* so that, when I am present, I may not have to be bold..."

You know, I don't want to be coming to you and correcting you. So I'm doing that while I'm writing to you so you can get the point. You can see this is the will of God, this is what God wants you to do, so you'll accomplish that. So that when I can come we can really have a family spiritual relationship like brothers and sisters in the Body of Christ.

That "...I may not have to be bold with the confidence with which I intend to show boldness toward some..." (v 2).

Paul was struggling with false prophets. He was struggling with the inner workings of Satan within the Body of Christ through these false prophets and teachers who were speaking against him and trying to say:

We're just as good as Paul. You don't have to listen to Paul. You listen to us because we've got the inside scoop. We know what's going on.

But they didn't! The scoop they had came from Satan.' *To be bold with the confidence:*

"...which I intend to show boldness toward some, who think that we are walking according to *the flesh*" (v 2).

That wouldn't get Paul saying, 'Yeah, he's walking according to the flesh.' You know, he doesn't know what it means to be *walking according to the Spirit*.

However, that's not what Paul says, v 3: "For although we walk in *the flesh*..."

That's right, we've got to be living in this world. We can't deny that we're human. We've got to live and move and have our being:

- we've got to work
- we've got to produce
- we've got to provide for our families

But we're not going to get involved in the ways of this world!

"...we do not war according to *the flesh*. For the weapons..." (vs 3-4).

In a lot of Paul's writings, he talks about basically military accoutrements, armory, weapons, and so forth; *fighting! battling!*

Verse 4: "For the weapons of our warfare..."

So here we have weapons and we are in battle; we are at war! We're involved in a war; we're

at warfare! But here's the difference between the armies of this world and Christ's army.

Verse 4: "For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to the overthrowing of strongholds." *We'll come back to that!*

Ephesians 6:10: "Finally, my brethren, be strong in *the* Lord, and in the might of His strength."

You know the word *power* in Scripture comes from the Greek term 'dunatos,' which is interesting because 'dunatos' in the English, the derivation of that is dynamite, which was invented by a Swedish chemist and industrious by the name of Nobel.

Guess where the Nobel Prize originated? Well, it originated with Nobel, the inventor of dynamite back in the 1800s, which he patented by the way, and of course, he made a lot of money.

Verse 10: "Finally, my brethren, be strong in *the* Lord, and in the might of His strength. **Put on the whole armor of God** ... [here we have that military terminology again] ...so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" (vs 10-11).

- Who's the enemy? *The devil!*
- Who are we fighting against? *The devil!*
- Do we need armaments?
- Do we need weapons of attack?
- Do we need weapons of defense?

Yes, but 'not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit'!

2-Corinthians 10:3: "For although we walk in *the* flesh, we do not war according to *the* flesh." *So, we are established we're in a warfare!*

Verse 4: "For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God..."

God has made these weapons and they are weapons of might! **Mighty by His power!** You and I have access to those. Are we using them? We'll need to see what those weapons are.

"...**to the overthrowing of strongholds**" (v 4).

- What's a stronghold?
- How much of our lives have we fully committed to God the Father through Jesus Christ?
- How much of a living sacrifice are we? *Maybe a tithe, maybe 10%!*
- How about 20%? 30%? 40%? *Well, that's better!*

- How about we're sacrificed, a living sacrifice, 50% of the time?
- Are we not then Laodicean? *Neither hot nor cold, just 50%!—50% for God, 50% for the world—Laodicean!*

We've got to be more. We've got to be at least 51% and growing and building. **Strongholds are those areas of our lives that we have not yet surrendered to God!**

We have to be careful that we don't—as we're living our lives—build more strongholds. There's only one way to get rid of these strongholds: **to overthrow these strongholds with the armor, with the weapons that God has given to us!** So, we have strongholds.

Verse 5: "**Casting down vain imaginations...**"—*human reasoning:*

I think I'll solve this problem this way. God is here to do this, but I can't do that. It won't work for me. I'm just going to have to do it the way I've always done it.

"...*vain* imaginations..." **are against the mind of Christ!** Paul goes on to expand on this and add to it:

"...**and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God...**" (v 5)—**against the mind of Christ!**

Let this mind be in you, which was in Christ Jesus. Let the words of Christ dwell in you richly, so that throughout the day you can be:

"...**bringing into captivity every thought into the obedience of Christ**" (v 5).

- Have I accomplished that yet?
- Have you accomplished that yet?

No!

- Are we committed to accomplishing that with the mighty power that God supplies and with the armor and the weapons that He has given to us?

Yes!

- that's the key
- that's the secret
- that's why we will win

Not because we have confidence in ourselves. Paul says, 'I have no confidence in the flesh'

- our confidence is in Christ
- our confidence is being a member of
 - ✓ His Family
 - ✓ His army
 - ✓ His Church

Also acting according to His laws, **the laws and commandments of God!**

We have the two tablets of the Ten Commandments, and I was thinking of this. They're called the Law and the Testament. Now the Ten Commandments, as they're written, that's the Law of God. That Law, those Ten Commandments, **are the testimony of Who God is**; they're a testimony for us to demonstrate that we belong to God as we keep His laws and commandments.

So we have the written Law, which is a testimony of Who God is and what He has given for us to be doing day-by-day, hour-by-hour, moment-by-moment-bringing every thought, as it says here in 2-Cor. 10, **casting down every imagination!**

This is quite a challenge, isn't it? But we need to be thinking of this day-by-day, because in this we have success through what God can work with us. This is the inward workings of God. This is the inward actions of God:

- Who is abiding within us
- Who's dwelling within us through His Spirit

We have the very mind and Spirit of Christ here, so we understand it, and in our heart, so that we will act on it. When we do that, we're going to have peace of mind. We're going to have confidence, not in self, but:

- confidence in the Word of God
- confidence in God our Father
- confidence in Jesus Christ
- confidence in the Word of God.

That's going to take us into the Kingdom of God, where we're going to fight real battles. We will put down all rebellion against God.

Verse 5: "Casting down *vain* imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, **and bringing into captivity...** [another military term] ...**every thought**... [quite a challenge, 24/7] ...**into the obedience of Christ.**"

We need to meditate deeply on these words. We need to take them before God's Throne in prayer, and ask Him. Who is the Word of God? *Jesus Christ!*

Hebrews 4:12: "For **the Word of God is living...**"

When we obey the Word of God, when we read it, we understand it, and we're obeying it, ***it's living within us!***

That makes us—when we obey God—God's workmanship. He's our Boss, we're His servants, and we are pleased to serve Him.

"...the Word of God *is* living and powerful..." (v 12).

- *IF* that Word is within us
- *IF* our mind is filled with the Word of God
- *IF* we can't get enough of it
- *IF* we keep studying it and filling our mind
 - ✓ it's a guide to our life.
 - ✓ it's showing us the way.

The Word of God, by the power of the Holy Spirit, will speak to us. It'll bring back to our mind, our memory, the Word of God, ***showing us which way to walk!*** That's how the Spirit guides us and directs us.

So, the Spirit combined was the Word, the One, because the Spirit is Christ and the Word is Christ.

Verse 12: "For the Word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of both soul and spirit..."

Now, coming up to Passover, aren't we? *Good times!* It's only just around the corner. Approaching fast, and a good time to examine ourselves on these areas. ***The Word of God, the two-edged sword,*** in other words, is talking about cutting right down to:

- the very center of who we are
 - the very center of our being
- exposing*
- the strongholds within
 - the vain imaginations
 - every high thing that opposes the knowledge of God.

This is what the Word of God does!

God has taken us along because we're still growing and God just does not take us from Alpha to Omega with just the snap of a finger. ***It takes a lifetime,*** growing little by little every day.

Some days are great, some days are not so great, some days are terrible, particularly if we're struggling with health issues. We've got some terrible issues that our people, our brothers and sisters are going through.

Part of their healing and where the forgiveness of broken laws is concerned is in our hands to be praying for them for their healing. That if they have committed sin, that God will forgive them.

Do you realize that our prayers to God could perhaps motivate somebody who's suffering because they've broken a health law or whatever? That God can bring it to their mind and cause them to repent and be healed?

As we know, not all sickness is the result of sin, as Jesus showed us in the Gospels.

The Word of God is "...piercing even to the dividing asunder of both soul and spirit, *and* of both *the* joints and *the* marrow..." (v 12).

- What is the point of this?
- Where is the marrow? *In our bones!*

You can't get any more specific about the life force because the marrow of the bones produces the blood that combines with the urine, giving us the breath of life.

So, the Word of God here is dealing with our very breath of life. Whether we will live according to the Word of God or whether we will let it go by the wayside, *it's our choice!*

"...the dividing asunder of both soul and spirit..." (v 12).

In other words, these strongholds, these vanities and where they were, In Romans Paul tells us where they are: The sin that dwells within each one of us. Our major warfare, our major battle, our major war *is against the sin that lies within!* If we are ruling over that...

Remember that Christ, as God in the Old Testament, said to Cain, '*Sin is at the door, you must rule over it.*' Paul says that he 'brings his body into subjection' *and we have to do the same!*

- it's a daily battle
- it's a daily warfare

Life as the sons and daughters of God is not a walk in the park, but God gives us many roses and many beautiful flowers to smell, to make it delightful for us:

- to serve Him,
- to love Him
- to love each brother and sister

"...dividing asunder of both soul and spirit, *and* of both *the* joints and *the* marrow, and *is* able to discern *the* thoughts and intents of *the* heart" (v 12).

The Word of God will expose any strongholds within us. I faced some of those issues recently where I've been attempting to dig deep and just asking God that:

If there are any strongholds, please expose them to me as I'm able to handle them, and the intents of the heart.

We don't know the intents and the thoughts of our heart. God needs to expose that to us. That's why we need to go to Him and ask Him, and He will show us and will help us.

Verse 13: "And there is not a created thing that is not manifest in His sight; but all things *are* naked..."—*that includes us!*

We can dress up in the finest and most beautiful clothes, but in God's eyes we're naked:

- He sees everything
- He knows every thought

The Scriptures tell us that!

"...and laid bare before the eyes of Him to Whom we must give account" (v 13).

So, it is better that we go before God and ask Him to expose these issues to us that we've mentioned there in 2-Cor. 10, so that we can then:

- use the power of His Spirit
- use His weapons against the enemy

One enemy that dwells within is the sin that lies within! Satan will try and push the buttons of our emotions to get us to return to the sins of the past.

Of course, the world—Satan working through the world—draws and to drag us in to all the filth and the muck that you can imagine! It's getting worse and worse! And it's frightening! However, one of the weapons, one that God has given to us *is peace!* We'll have a look at that as we're closing.

Verse 14: "Having, therefore, a great High Priest, *Who* has passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, we should hold fast the confession of *our faith.*"

- confessing our sins
- obeying the Word of God
- drawing close to the Father and Christ:
 - ✓ in prayer
 - ✓ in study
 - ✓ in relationships within the Body of the Church

Verse 15: "For we do not have a High Priest Who cannot empathize with our weaknesses..." Haven't we even talked about:

- weaknesses
- the strongholds
- vain imaginations
- thoughts that can rise up against us, against the knowledge of God and the Word of God?

Yes, those are all temptations that Satan is not going to give up!

Let me just interject, comment here, Matt. 4:4, to see the weapon of the Word of God. What happened when Christ said three times to Satan? *Three times Satan tempted Christ, and Jesus*

responded with the Word of God, the Sword of the Spirit used by the Son of God! What does Satan do?

- he departed
- he failed
- he lost that skirmish

Oh, he was coming back. But Christ beat him every time, Christ overcame every time *and Satan had to leave!* When Christ was crucified, oh what joy there was in the armies of Satan. He'd be totally ruined and spoiled three days later, when Christ was resurrected, Satan had no more he could do to the Christ.

Therefore, this is the encouragement, we should come with boldness in spite of the terrible things that we have done.

Think of David, adultery and murder! ***He repented, God forgave, he's going to sit on the Throne in Jerusalem with Christ!***

Now if there's hope for David, don't you think there's hope for you and me who are much more of low estate?

Verse 16: "Therefore, we should come with boldness to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need." *So again, the Word of God is truly powerful.*

- it changes our mind
- it changes our approach
- it changes our very being
- it gives us life

Not just physical life, but life eternal!

When our bodies die, they go back to sleep in the dust, because we'll become dust again. Without that dust, somehow, someday, God is going to raise and change that dust—which was our bodies—into a powerful spiritual body that will have illumination like the stars. *Powerful thoughts!*

Verse 16: "Therefore, we should come with boldness to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

That need is day-by-day-by-day because of the battle and because we're part of God's army and every day there are skirmishes. There are campaigns against us and we have to launch campaigns of prayer and study and fasting against the enemy.

- all part of our tools
- all part of our armor
- all part of our weapons

Let's see those things that we already know of the weapons that God has given to us, the armory of God.

Ephesians 6:10: "Finally, my brethren..." *Paul is writing here to the Ephesians!*

Paul saw himself as a brother to the brethren of the Lord.

"...be strong in the Lord, and in the might..." (v 10). *That dynamic dynamite like power of His strength!*

But compared to dynamite that is a very poor example. Similar indeed, but at least it's something we understand. It's a bit like the difference between atomic and nuclear.

One of the courses that I did in the military was in the 1950s: atomic, biological and chemical warfare. No sooner had we finished that course than it was all changed to nuclear—not atomic—but *nuclear, biological and chemical warfare!*

So, in that sense, that's the kind of will-power in the spirit world that we are up against! The most powerful, and yet, God has given us weapons that are more powerful than anything that Satan can throw at us.

- we need to be assured of that
- we need to be confident of that
- we need to stand on that promise

Satan will always lose! If we resist him, what's he going to do? *He's going to leave us!* He'll come back, ***but we resist him again!***

- He's got to go
- He's got to obey the Scripture
- He's got no alternatives

You and I give him no alternative! *We resist him as Christ did and we win! **NO! Christ and God the Father within us wins through us:***

- because They are the ones that have given us the power
- because we're not trusting in our own strength

Verse 11: "Put on the whole armor of God so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." *I would suggest that you look at each one of these pieces of armor provided to us by God:*

Verse 12: **"Because we are not wrestling against flesh and blood,** but against principalities and against powers, against the world rulers..."

- presidents
- prime ministers
- the hierarchy of this world

that want to see you to the grave!

More and more information is coming out about the countless millions that have died because they were injected with poison, and people are still dropping dead and it's being recognized. It's because of what was in 'the jab.' They have to be bringing it again, so we've got some more battle, some more fights ahead of us when that occurs.

They want you and me dead. Why? *Because this is one of Satan's wiles!* He wants to kill all Christians. Did he want to kill Christ? *I tell you, he went after Christ*, and he's coming after us! But he's coming after us *through his human agencies!* So, these are—

"...the world rulers of the darkness of this age..." (v 12)

—*who are inspired and motivated by the evil forces of Satan!*

"...against the spiritual power of wickedness in high places" (v 12)—**right up to the very pinnacle of Satan!**

Verse 13: "Therefore, take up the whole armor of God so that you may be able to resist in the evil day... [for us that can be every day] ...and having worked out all things, to stand."

There is an evil day coming, we know that. That is when 'the man of sin' is revealed and when the Tribulation comes that is going to be certainly ***an evil day of all evil days!***

Verse 14: "**Stand, therefore, having your loins girded about with Truth...**"

- Where do we find the Truth of God? *In the Scriptures!*
- How are we going to stand on the Truth? *We've got to fill our minds with it so that when we have to make a decision whether to do right or to do wrong, we can **stand on the Truth** because we know what God would have us do!*

"...and **wearing the breastplate of righteousness**" (v 14).

Yes, righteousness, we are obeying the Law of God; therefore, *we are fitted with the breastplate of righteousness!*

Verse 15: "And **having your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of Peace.**"

If we are living by the Gospel, we will have a peace that passes all understanding regardless of what is going around about us.

'Ten thousand falling on our left hand, ten thousand falling on our right hand' according to the Scriptures and we will be able to stand!

- we will not give in
- we will not succumb even to the grave even to death

against those who would want us to denounce our God and Father and Christ

Verse 16: "Besides all these, **take up the shield of the faith...**"—*absolute trust in God!* No question!

We trust in Him even if it costs us our life because the next moment of our memory will be looking at Christ and Him saying to us, ***'Well done, our good and faithful servant.'***

Verse 17: "And put on **the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit...** [tie in Heb. 4:12] ...which is the Word of God."

There is our weapon of defense but also our weapon of offense. Jesus used it as a weapon of offense to Satan when He said, 'It is written...' Jesus parried and Satan had to leave. ***We can do the same and it's all tied together with prayer!***

Verse 18: "Praying at all times with all prayer and supplication in *the* Spirit, and in this very thing being watchful with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints."

There's our challenge, brethren! Passover is not too far away. We can really prepare ourselves for the Passover this year so that when the Passover comes, we will be able to have a Passover like no other Passover we've had before. We can continue to do that and grow in the grace and the knowledge of a year, bit-by-bit.

There we have it! That's the challenge! May God rest with you and bless you all for the rest of the Sabbath Day!

Scriptural References:

- 1) John 18:28-37
- 2) 2-Corinthians 10:1-4
- 3) Ephesians 6:10-11
- 4) 2-Corinthians 10:3-5
- 5) Hebrews 4:12-16
- 6) Ephesians 6:10-18

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Luke 1
- Matthew 4:4

LJ:bo
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