

Discipleship Training Course

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- The Old Testament tetragrammaton name of God (derived from the four Hebrew letters translated into English as YHWH) has been rendered LORD unless translated Jehovah or Yahweh
- Pronouns referring to the Trinity and some specific terms relating to the Trinity (such as Name and Word) have been capitalized
- Speech marks around entire quotes and at the beginning of new paragraphs have been omitted
- Anglicised spellings have been used
- All quotes begin with a capital letter and end with a full stop
- Some weights, measures and times have been replaced with easier to understand terms given in the footnotes using square brackets
- All verse numbers, footnote numbers and symbols have been removed
- Poetry has been indented and only new sentences start with a capital letter

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Chapter 18. Spiritual warfare

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1. Introduction

Spiritual warfare refers to the battle between the forces of good and evil in the spiritual realm. As children of the light we are born into this unseen conflict. There are many Scriptures in the Bible which describe physical or spiritual battles, or provide us with insight or encouragement about how we can overcome the powers of darkness. The last chapters of Revelation clearly show that God and the forces of light will eventually win the war but there are many battles which need to be fought along the way.

This chapter provides an introduction to this subject. The Scriptures that are quoted are taken in Biblical order.

2. Old Testament teaching

The first Old Testament passage refers to the blessing upon Abraham and his family which made them effective warriors in rescuing his nephew, Lot, and his family:

The Valley of Siddim was full of tar pits. When the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, they fell into the tar pits, but the rest escaped into the mountains. The four kings captured all the possessions of Sodom and Gomorrah, all their food and equipment, and went on their way. They captured Lot, Abram's nephew who was living in Sodom at the time, taking everything he owned with them.

A fugitive came and reported to Abram the Hebrew. Abram was living at the Oaks of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol and Aner. They were allies of Abram. When Abram heard that his nephew had been taken prisoner, he lined up his servants, all of them born in his household – there were 318 of them – and chased after the captors all the way to Dan. Abram and his men split into small groups and attacked by night. They chased them as far as Hobah, just north of Damascus. They recovered all the plunder along with nephew Lot and his possessions, including the women and the people.

Genesis 14:10-16 (MSG)

The exodus of the Israelites from Egypt involved a confrontation between Israel and Egypt over the lives of their first born sons. God's main purpose in demanding Pharaoh to release Israel was to allow them to worship the LORD. This can be also taken figuratively to represent God's purpose in demanding that Satan release all God's children so that they can worship the LORD.

Then you will tell him, "This is what the LORD says: Israel is My firstborn son. I commanded you, 'Let My son go, so he can worship Me.' But since you have refused, I will now kill your firstborn son!"

Exodus 4:22-23 (NLT)

Then the LORD said to Moses, 'Go to Pharaoh and say to him, "This is what the LORD says: let My people go, so that they may worship Me."

Exodus 8:1 (NIVUK)

The LORD told Moses that he was like God unto Pharaoh, representing Satan. We can claim this promise in spiritual warfare as well.

*The LORD said to Moses, “**Behold, I have made you as God to Pharaoh; and Aaron your brother shall be your prophet.**”*

Exodus 7:1 (WEBPB)

After the death of the firstborn of Egypt Pharaoh let Israel go but he later changed his mind and pursued them. This led to the final battle in which the LORD gained glory for Himself by parting the Red Sea and destroying Pharaoh and his army in it. Moses and Miriam then praised and worshipped the LORD for working this great victory for the Israelites.

When Pharaoh came near, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and behold, the Egyptians were marching after them; and they were very afraid. The children of Israel cried out to the LORD. They said to Moses, “Because there were no graves in Egypt, have you taken us away to die in the wilderness? Why have you treated us this way, to bring us out of Egypt? Isn’t this the word that we spoke to you in Egypt, saying, ‘Leave us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians?’ For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness.”

*Moses said to the people, “**Don’t be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which He will work for you today; for you will never again see the Egyptians whom you have seen today. The LORD will fight for you, and you shall be still.**”*

The LORD said to Moses, “Why do you cry to Me? Speak to the children of Israel, that they go forward. Lift up your rod, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it. Then the children of Israel shall go into the middle of the sea on dry ground. Behold, I Myself will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they will go in after them. I will get Myself honour over Pharaoh, and over all his armies, over his chariots, and over his horsemen. The Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD when I have gotten Myself honour over Pharaoh, over his chariots, and over his horsemen.” The angel of God, who went before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from before them, and stood behind them. It came between the camp of Egypt and the camp of Israel. There was the cloud and the darkness, yet gave it light by night. One didn’t come near the other all night.

Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. The children of Israel went into the middle of the sea on the dry ground, and the waters were a wall to them on their right hand, and on their left. The Egyptians pursued, and went in after them into the middle of the sea: all of Pharaoh’s horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. In the morning watch, the LORD looked out on the Egyptian army through the pillar of fire and of cloud, and confused the Egyptian army. He took off their chariot wheels, and they drove them heavily; so that the Egyptians said, “Let’s flee from the face of Israel, for the LORD fights for them against the Egyptians!”

The LORD said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the sea, that the waters may come again on the Egyptians, on their chariots, and on their horsemen.” Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its strength when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled against it. The LORD overthrew the Egyptians in the middle of the sea. The waters returned, and covered the chariots and the horsemen, even all Pharaoh’s army that went in after them into the sea. There remained not so much as one of them. But the children of Israel walked on dry land in the middle of the sea, and the waters were a wall to them on their right hand, and on their left. Thus the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. Israel saw the great work which the LORD did to the Egyptians, and the people feared the LORD; and they believed in the LORD and in His servant Moses.

Then Moses and the children of Israel sang this song to the LORD, and said,

"I will sing to the LORD, for He has triumphed gloriously.

He has thrown the horse and his rider into the sea.

The LORD is my strength and song.

He has become my salvation.

This is my God, and I will praise Him;

my father's God, and I will exalt Him.

The LORD is a man of war.

The LORD is His Name.

He has cast Pharaoh's chariots and his army into the sea.

His chosen captains are sunk in the Red Sea.

The deeps cover them.

They went down into the depths like a stone.

Your right hand, LORD, is glorious in power.

Your right hand, LORD, dashes the enemy in pieces.

In the greatness of Your excellency, You overthrow those who rise up against You.

You send out Your wrath. It consumes them as stubble.

With the blast of Your nostrils, the waters were piled up.

The floods stood upright as a heap.

The deeps were congealed in the heart of the sea.

The enemy said, 'I will pursue. I will overtake. I will divide the plunder.

My desire will be satisfied on them.

I will draw my sword. My hand will destroy them.'

You blew with Your wind.

The sea covered them.

They sank like lead in the mighty waters.

Who is like You, LORD, amongst the gods?

Who is like You, glorious in holiness,

fearful in praises, doing wonders?

You stretched out Your right hand.

The earth swallowed them.

You, in Your loving kindness, have led the people that You have redeemed.

You have guided them in Your strength to Your holy habitation.

The peoples have heard.

They tremble.

Pangs have taken hold of the inhabitants of Philistia.

Then the chiefs of Edom were dismayed.

Trembling takes hold of the mighty men of Moab.

All the inhabitants of Canaan have melted away.

Terror and dread falls on them.

By the greatness of Your arm they are as still as a stone,

until Your people pass over, LORD,

until the people You have purchased pass over.

You will bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of your inheritance,

the place, LORD, which You have made for Yourself to dwell in;

the sanctuary, LORD, which Your hands have established.

The LORD will reign forever and ever."

For the horses of Pharaoh went in with his chariots and with his horsemen into the sea, and the LORD brought back the waters of the sea on them; but the children of Israel walked on dry land in the middle of the sea. Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a tambourine in her hand; and all the women went out after her with tambourines and with dances. Miriam answered them,

***“Sing to the LORD, for He has triumphed gloriously.
The horse and his rider He has thrown into the sea.”***

Exodus 14:10 – 15:21 (WEBPB)

When the Amelkites attacked Israel the battle was won through **a combination of intercession and action**. When Moses' hands grew faint he was assisted by Aaron and Hur causing the LORD to win a victory through them. This victory led to the revelation of God's name, **Jahweh-Nissi: The LORD is my Banner**.

While the people of Israel were still at Rephidim, the warriors of Amalek attacked them. Moses commanded Joshua, “Choose some men to go out and fight the army of Amalek for us. Tomorrow, I will stand at the top of the hill, holding the staff of God in my hand.”

So Joshua did what Moses had commanded and fought the army of Amalek. Meanwhile, Moses, Aaron, and Hur climbed to the top of a nearby hill. As long as Moses held up the staff in his hand, the Israelites had the advantage. But whenever he dropped his hand, the Amalekites gained the advantage. Moses' arms soon became so tired he could no longer hold them up. So Aaron and Hur found a stone for him to sit on. Then they stood on each side of Moses, holding up his hands. So his hands held steady until sunset. As a result, Joshua overwhelmed the army of Amalek in battle.

*After the victory, the LORD instructed Moses, “Write this down on a scroll as a permanent reminder, and read it aloud to Joshua: I will erase the memory of Amalek from under heaven.” **Moses built an altar there and named it Yahweh-Nissi (which means “the LORD is my Banner”).** 16 He said, “They have raised their fist against the LORD's throne, so now the LORD will be at war with Amalek generation after generation.”*

Exodus 17:8-16 (NLT)

When Joshua was about to attack Jericho he was met by the captain of the LORD's army:

Now when Joshua was near Jericho, he looked up and saw a man standing in front of him with a drawn sword in his hand. Joshua went up to him and asked, “Are you for us or for our enemies?”

“Neither,” he replied, “but as commander of the army of the LORD I have now come.” Then Joshua fell face down to the ground in reverence, and asked him, “What message does my Lord have for His servant?”

The commander of the LORD's army replied, “Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy.” And Joshua did so.

Joshua 5:13-15 (NIVUK)

When the LORD anointed Saul He also touched the hearts of some valiant men who preferred to go home with Saul than to their own homes. When God raises up a deliverer leader He also touches the hearts of valiant followers to support him or her.

Saul also went home to Gibeah; and there went with him a band of valiant men whose hearts God had touched.

1 Samuel 10:26 (AMPC)

David was sent to bring supplies to his older brothers who were fighting in Saul's army against the Philistines. He came with faith, anointing and an experience of victory in his role as a shepherd and was shocked to discover the Israelites' fear of the Philistine champion, Goliath. Despite the criticism of his brothers his spoken faith was reported to King Saul who called for him and recognised the anointing of God upon him to defeat Goliath. David was not intimidated by Goliath's contempt but spoke out his faith in the LORD to defeat him and won a great victory for the LORD and for Israel. This led to a change in heart in Israel – the army suddenly became encouraged and rose up against the Philistines and routed them.

David rose up early in the morning, and left the sheep with a keeper, and took and went, as Jesse had commanded him. He came to the place of the wagons, as the army which was going out to the fight shouted for the battle. Israel and the Philistines put the battle in array, army against army. David left his baggage in the hand of the keeper of the baggage, and ran to the army, and came and greeted his brothers. As he talked with them, behold, the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, came up out of the ranks of the Philistines, and said the same words; and David heard them. All the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him, and were terrified. The men of Israel said, "Have you seen this man who has come up? He has surely come up to defy Israel. The king will give great riches to the man who kills him, and will give him his daughter, and make his father's house free in Israel."

David spoke to the men who stood by him, saying, "What shall be done to the man who kills this Philistine, and takes away the reproach from Israel? **For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?**"

The people answered him in this way, saying, "So shall it be done to the man who kills him." Eliab his oldest brother heard when he spoke to the men; and Eliab's anger burnt against David, and he said, "Why have you come down? With whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your pride, and the naughtiness of your heart; for you have come down that you might see the battle."

David said, "What have I now done? Is there not a cause?" He turned away from him towards another, and spoke like that again; and the people answered him again the same way. When the words were heard which David spoke, they rehearsed them before Saul; and he sent for him. David said to Saul, "Let no man's heart fail because of him. Your servant will go and fight with this Philistine."

Saul said to David, "You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you are but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth."

David said to Saul, "Your servant was keeping his father's sheep; and when a lion or a bear came, and took a lamb out of the flock, I went out after him, and struck him, and rescued it out of his mouth. When he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and struck him, and killed him. Your servant struck both the lion and the bear. This uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, since he has defied the armies of the living God." David said, "**The LORD who delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, He will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine.**"

Saul said to David, "Go! The LORD will be with you." Saul dressed David with his clothing. He put a helmet of bronze on his head, and he clad him with a coat of mail. David strapped his sword on his clothing, and he tried to move; for he had not tested it. David said to Saul, "I can't go with these; for I have not tested them." Then David took them off.

He took his staff in his hand, and chose for himself five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in the pouch of his shepherd's bag which he had. His sling was in his hand; and he came near to the Philistine. The Philistine walked and came near to David; and the man who bore the shield went before him. When the Philistine looked around, and saw David, he disdained him; for he was but a youth, and ruddy, and had a good looking face. The Philistine said to David, "Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?" The Philistine cursed David by his gods. The Philistine said to David, "Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the sky, and to the animals of the field."

Then David said to the Philistine, "**You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin; but I come to you in the name of the LORD of Armies, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. Today, the LORD will deliver you into my hand. I will strike you, and take your head from off you. I will give the dead bodies of the army of the Philistines today to the birds of the sky, and to the wild animals of the earth; that**

all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, and that all this assembly may know that the LORD doesn't save with sword and spear; for the battle is the LORD's, and He will give you into our hand."

When the Philistine arose, and walked and came near to meet David, David hurried, and ran towards the army to meet the Philistine. David put his hand in his bag, took a stone, and slung it, and struck the Philistine in his forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, and he fell on his face to the earth. So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and struck the Philistine, and killed him; but there was no sword in the hand of David. Then David ran, stood over the Philistine, took his sword, drew it out of its sheath, killed him, and cut off his head with it. When the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled. The men of Israel and of Judah arose and shouted, and pursued the Philistines as far as Gai and to the gates of Ekron. The wounded of the Philistines fell down by the way to Shaaraim, even to Gath and to Ekron. The children of Israel returned from chasing after the Philistines and they plundered their camp.

1 Samuel 17:20-53 (WEBPB)

Abigail encouraged David that he fought the LORD's battles:

Please forgive me if I have offended you in any way. The LORD will surely reward you with a lasting dynasty, for you are fighting the LORD's battles. And you have not done wrong throughout your entire life.

Even when you are chased by those who seek to kill you, your life is safe in the care of the LORD your God, secure in His treasure pouch! But the lives of your enemies will disappear like stones shot from a sling!

1 Samuel 25:28-29 (NLT)

Later, the LORD gave David different strategies to defeat the Philistines. On the first occasion this led to God revealing His name, **Baal Perazim: Lord of my Breakthrough**. On the second occasion David was instructed to wait until he heard the marching of God's heavenly army before moving out.

*When the Philistines heard that David had been anointed king over Israel, all the Philistines went up to search for David. But David heard of it and went down to the stronghold. Now the Philistines had come and spread out in the Valley of Rephaim. And David enquired of the LORD, "Shall I go up against the Philistines? Will you give them into my hand?" And the LORD said to David, "Go up, for I will certainly give the Philistines into your hand." And David came to Baal-perazim, and David defeated them there. And he said, "**The LORD has burst through my enemies before me like a bursting flood.**" **Therefore the name of that place is called Baal-Perazim.** And the Philistines left their idols there, and David and his men carried them away.*

*And the Philistines came up yet again and spread out in the Valley of Rephaim. And when David enquired of the LORD, He said, "You shall not go up; go round to their rear, and come against them opposite the balsam trees. **And when you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees, then rouse yourself, for then the LORD has gone out before you to strike down the army of the Philistines.**" And David did as the LORD commanded him, and struck down the Philistines from Geba to Gezer.*

2 Samuel 5:17-25 (ESVUK)

The king of Aram once tried to kill Elisha but he was unable because of the hidden angelic forces surrounding him. Instead of fighting him, Elisha simply prayed for him to be struck with blindness.

Now the king of Syria was at war against Israel; and he took counsel with his servants, saying, "My camp will be in such and such a place."

The man of God sent to the king of Israel, saying, "Beware that you not pass this place; for the Syrians are coming down there." The king of Israel sent to the place which the man of God told him and warned him of; and he saved himself there, not once or twice. The king of Syria's heart was very troubled about this. He called his servants, and said to them, "Won't you show me which of us is for the king of Israel?"

One of his servants said, "No, my lord, O king; but Elisha, the prophet who is in Israel, tells the king of Israel the words that you speak in your bedroom."

He said, "Go and see where he is, that I may send and get him."

He was told, "Behold, he is in Dothan."

Therefore he sent horses, chariots, and a great army there. They came by night, and surrounded the city. When the servant of the man of God had risen early, and gone out, behold, an army with horses and chariots was around the city. His servant said to him, "Alas, my master! What shall we do?"

*He answered, **"Don't be afraid; for those who are with us are more than those who are with them."** Elisha prayed, and said, **"LORD, please open his eyes, that he may see."** the **LORD opened the young man's eyes; and he saw: and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire around Elisha.** When they came down to him, Elisha prayed to the LORD, and said, "Please strike this people with blindness."*

He struck them with blindness according to Elisha's word. Elisha said to them, "This is not the way, neither is this the city. Follow me, and I will bring you to the man whom you seek." He led them to Samaria. When they had come into Samaria, Elisha said, "LORD, open these men's eyes, that they may see."

The LORD opened their eyes, and they saw; and behold, they were in the middle of Samaria.

2 Kings 6:8-20 (WEBPB)

Jehoshaphat was a godly king who sought the LORD. Therefore when his enemies once banded together to attack him he resolved first to inquire of the LORD. When the LORD answered the people praised the LORD with a very loud voice. The next day the army was also led by praise. The LORD then fought for Israel and defeated their enemies. This great victory led to the other nations surrounding Israel to fear the LORD as well.

After this, the children of Moab, the children of Ammon, and with them some of the Ammonites, came against Jehoshaphat to battle. Then some came who told Jehoshaphat, saying, "A great multitude is coming against you from beyond the sea from Syria. Behold, they are in Hazazon Tamar" (that is, En Gedi). Jehoshaphat was alarmed, and set himself to seek to the LORD. He proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. Judah gathered themselves together to seek help from the LORD. They came out of all the cities of Judah to seek the LORD.

Jehoshaphat stood in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem, in the LORD's house, before the new court; and he said, "LORD, the God of our fathers, aren't You God in heaven? Aren't You ruler over all the kingdoms of the nations? Power and might are in Your hand, so that no one is able to withstand You. Didn't You, our God, drive out the inhabitants of this land before Your people Israel, and give it to the offspring of Abraham Your friend forever? They lived in it, and have built You a sanctuary in it for Your Name, saying, 'If evil comes on us – the sword, judgement, pestilence, or famine – we will stand before this house, and before You (for Your Name is in this house), and cry to You in our affliction, and You will hear and save.' Now, behold, the children of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir, whom You would not let Israel invade when they came out of the land of Egypt, but they turned away from them, and didn't destroy them; behold, how they reward us, to come to cast us out of Your possession, which You have given us to inherit. Our God, will You not judge them? For we

*have no might against this great company that comes against us. **We don't know what to do, but our eyes are on You.***

All Judah stood before the LORD, with their little ones, their wives, and their children.

*Then the LORD's Spirit came on Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, the Levite, of the sons of Asaph, in the middle of the assembly; and he said, "Listen, all Judah, and you inhabitants of Jerusalem, and you, king Jehoshaphat. The LORD says to you, 'Don't be afraid, and don't be dismayed because of this great multitude; **for the battle is not yours, but God's.** Tomorrow, go down against them. Behold, they are coming up by the ascent of Ziz. You will find them at the end of the valley, before the wilderness of Jeruel. **You will not need to fight this battle. Set yourselves, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD with you, O Judah and Jerusalem. Don't be afraid, nor be dismayed. Go out against them tomorrow, for the LORD is with you.**"*

Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground; and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell down before the LORD, worshipping the LORD. The Levites, of the children of the Kohathites and of the children of the Korahites, stood up to praise the LORD, the God of Israel, with an exceedingly loud voice.

*They rose early in the morning, and went out into the wilderness of Tekoa. As they went out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, "Listen to me, Judah, and you inhabitants of Jerusalem! **Believe in the LORD your God, so you will be established! Believe his prophets, so you will prosper.**"*

*When he had taken counsel with the people, he appointed those who were to sing to the LORD, and give praise in holy array, as they go out before the army, and say, "**Give thanks to the LORD; for his loving kindness endures forever.**" When they began to sing and to praise, the LORD set ambushers against the children of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah; and they were struck. For the children of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of Mount Seir to utterly kill and destroy them. When they had finished the inhabitants of Seir, everyone helped to destroy each other.*

When Judah came to the place overlooking the wilderness, they looked at the multitude; and behold, they were dead bodies fallen to the earth, and there were none who escaped. When Jehoshaphat and his people came to take their plunder, they found amongst them in abundance both riches and dead bodies, and precious jewels, which they stripped off for themselves, more than they could carry away. They took plunder for three days, it was so much. On the fourth day, they assembled themselves in Beracah Valley, for there they blessed the LORD. Therefore the name of that place was called "Beracah Valley" to this day. Then they returned, every man of Judah and Jerusalem, with Jehoshaphat in front of them, to go again to Jerusalem with joy; for the LORD had made them to rejoice over their enemies. They came to Jerusalem with stringed instruments, harps, and trumpets to the LORD's house. The fear of God was on all the kingdoms of the countries, when they heard that the LORD fought against the enemies of Israel. So the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet, for his God gave him rest all around.

2 Chronicles 20:1-30 (WEBPB)

Psalm 149 describes **the power of praise and the word of God** (represented by a double-edged sword) to bind up kings with fetters and nobles with shackles of iron in order to execute God's written judgment against them. We may take this figuratively in spiritual warfare to represent the power of praise and the word of God to bind up spiritual principalities and powers.

Praise the LORD!

Sing to the LORD a new song,

His praise in the assembly of the saints.

*Let Israel rejoice in him who made them.
Let the children of Zion be joyful in their King.
Let them praise his name in the dance!
Let them sing praises to him with tambourine and harp!
For the LORD takes pleasure in His people.
He crowns the humble with salvation.
Let the saints rejoice in honour.
Let them sing for joy on their beds.
**May the high praises of God be in their mouths,
and a two-edged sword in their hand,
to execute vengeance on the nations,
and punishments on the peoples;
to bind their kings with chains,
and their nobles with fetters of iron;
to execute on them the written judgement.***

All His saints have this honour.

Praise the LORD!

Psalm 149 (WEBPB)

Isaiah 54 contains an encouraging promise in spiritual warfare, that no weapon formed against us will prosper and that we shall refute every accusing tongue. Furthermore, God can be seen as the blacksmith, Satan as the blacksmith's assistant and we can be seen as the weapon being forged. When we are attacked, God is allowing Satan to hit us with his hammer in order to strengthen our imperfections so that we become more effective weapons against Satan's kingdom. In effect, **when we walk in God's will, Satan's attacks against us are only permitted by God and are causing us to be forged into a weapon against him.** We can then agree with James 1:2-3 (NIVUK), "*Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance*":

"You will be established in righteousness.

You will be far from oppression,

for you will not be afraid,

and far from terror,

for it shall not come near you.

Behold, they may gather together, but not by Me.

Whoever gathers together against you will fall because of you.

Behold, I have created the blacksmith who fans the coals into flame,

and forges a weapon for his work;

and I have created the destroyer to destroy.

No weapon that is formed against you will prevail;

and you will condemn every tongue that rises against you in judgement.

This is the heritage of the LORD's servants,

and their righteousness is of Me," says the LORD.

Isaiah 54:14-17 (WEBPB)

Obadiah encourages us of the LORD's deliverance:

But on Mount Zion there shall be deliverance,

And there shall be holiness;

The house of Jacob shall possess their possessions.

Obadiah 17 (NKJV)

Finally, Nahum gives us a promise of the LORD being a stronghold in trouble and knowing all who turn to Him for help:

The LORD is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and He knows those who take refuge in Him.

Nahum 1:7 (WEBPB)

3. New Testament teaching

When Jesus cast out a demon from a man he also taught about how **the kingdoms of Satan and God are ordered** and that in order to plunder a strong man's house it is necessary to **first bind the strong man**.

Then a demon-oppressed man who was blind and mute was brought to Him, and He healed him, so that the man spoke and saw. And all the people were amazed, and said, "Can this be the Son of David?" But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, "It is only by Beelzebul, the prince of demons, that this man casts out demons." Knowing their thoughts, He said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and no city or house divided against itself will stand. And if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? And if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges. But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. Or how can someone enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? Then indeed he may plunder his house.

Matthew 12:22-29 (ESVUK)

Paul taught the Corinthians about how the weapons of spiritual warfare operating with divine power to destroy spiritual strongholds. A stronghold is **a mental attitude that is full of hopelessness which accepts as unchangeable a situation, condition or form of behaviour that is contrary to the word of God**. Our authority to demolish strongholds in others follows from our working with God to destroy the strongholds in our own lives.

For though we live in the body, we do not wage war in an unspiritual way, since the weapons of our warfare are not worldly, but are powerful through God for the demolition of strongholds. We demolish arguments and every high-minded thing that is raised up against the knowledge of God, taking every thought captive to obey Christ. And we are ready to punish any disobedience, once your obedience has been confirmed.

2 Corinthians 10:3-6 (HCSB)

Paul taught the Ephesians about wearing the armour of God. The Greek verb for "put on" is continuous, indicating that this armour should be kept on at all times. The armour of God begins with the **belt of truth**, symbolising **integrity**. The only part of the armour which is offensive as well as defensive is the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power. Put on the full armour of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armour of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled round your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Chapter 18. Spiritual warfare

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.

Ephesians 6:10-18 (NIVUK)

Paul encouraged Timothy to fight the good fight of faith:

*But you, Timothy, are a man of God; so run from all these evil things. **Pursue righteousness and a godly life, along with faith, love, perseverance, and gentleness. Fight the good fight for the true faith.** Hold tightly to the eternal life to which God has called you, which you have declared so well before many witnesses. And I charge you before God, who gives life to all, and before Christ Jesus, who gave a good testimony before Pontius Pilate, that you obey this command without wavering. Then no one can find fault with you from now until our Lord Jesus Christ comes again. For,*

At just the right time Christ will be revealed from heaven by the blessed and only Almighty God, the King of all kings and Lord of all lords. He alone can never die, and He lives in light so brilliant that no human can approach Him. No human eye has ever seen Him, nor ever will. All honour and power to Him forever! Amen.

1 Timothy 6:11-16 (NLT)

John gave us the promise that the One who is in us is greater than the one who is in the world:

*Beloved, do not believe every spirit [speaking through a self-proclaimed prophet]; instead test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets and teachers have gone out into the world. By this you know and recognize the Spirit of God: every spirit that acknowledges and confesses [the fact] that Jesus Christ has [actually] come in the flesh [as a man] is from God [God is its source]; and every spirit that does not confess Jesus [acknowledging that He has come in the flesh, but would deny any of the Son's true nature] is not of God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming, and is now already in the world. **Little children (believers, dear ones), you are of God and you belong to Him and have [already] overcome them [the agents of the antichrist]; because He who is in you is greater than he (Satan) who is in the world [of sinful mankind].***

1 John 4:1-4 (AMP)

Revelation 12 describes how Satan and his fallen angels fought against the Archangel Michael but lost and were cast out of heaven. It also explains how the saints are able to overcome him: through the blood of Jesus, through testifying to their true experience of God and by being willing to sacrifice themselves completely:

Then there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon and his angels. And the dragon lost the battle, and he and his angels were forced out of heaven. This great dragon – the ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, the one deceiving the whole world – was thrown down to the earth with all his angels.

Then I heard a loud voice shouting across the heavens,

*“It has come at last –
salvation and power
and the Kingdom of our God,
and the authority of his Christ.*

*For the accuser of our brothers and sisters
has been thrown down to earth –
the one who accuses them
before our God day and night.*

And they have defeated him by the blood of the Lamb

***and by their testimony.
And they did not love their lives so much
that they were afraid to die.***

*Therefore, rejoice, O heavens!
And you who live in the heavens, rejoice!
But terror will come on the earth and the sea,
for the devil has come down to you in great anger,
knowing that he has little time."*

Revelation 12:7-12 (NLT)

Finally, Revelation 19 describes an image of Jesus as the rider on a white horse, judging with justice and waging war on the enemy. Let us gain courage that the Captain of the Lord's army is riding ahead of us in every battle we face in His name and also rely on Him for strategy and direction.

I saw the heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True. In righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many crowns. He has names written and a name written which no one knows but He Himself. He is clothed in a garment sprinkled with blood. His name is called "The Word of God." The armies which are in heaven followed Him on white horses, clothed in white, pure, fine linen. Out of His mouth proceeds a sharp, double-edged sword, that with it He should strike the nations. He will rule them with an iron rod. He treads the wine press of the fierceness of the wrath of God, the Almighty. He has on His garment and on His thigh a name written, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."

I saw an angel standing in the sun. He cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in the sky, "Come! Be gathered together to the great supper of God, that you may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and slave, small and great." I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse, and against His army. The beast was taken, and with him the false prophet who worked the signs in his sight, with which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshipped his image. These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulphur. The rest were killed with the sword of Him who sat on the horse, the sword which came out of His mouth. All the birds were filled with their flesh.

Revelation 19:11-21 (WEBPB)