

26 Greatest Victory, Sun Stands Still – Part 3

The Battle for the Bible

One of Satan’s choicest strategies is to cast doubt on God’s Word. Many young Christians have “lost their faith” at the hands of university professors who seek to show supposed errors and mistakes in the Bible. Satan seeks to undermine the authority of the Bible. Decades ago, Harold Lindsell, then editor-in-chief of *Christianity Today*, saw all the liberal attacks on the Bible and called for Christians to respond in defense of the Scriptures. Many seminaries had turned their backs on the issue of Biblical inerrancy – and God raised up leaders who took a stand for the Bible – and won the day.

The battle for the Bible is one that every generation will face, because Satan continues his attacks with each new generation. He even used this tactic against the Lord Jesus, when he tempted Him by saying, “*Has God not said...*” and then mis-quoted Scripture in an attempt to derail Jesus from His mission.



The battle for the Bible is a major battle that every believer must win if he is to be effective in spiritual warfare.

The world would call you foolish to believe that God stopped the sun in answer to Joshua’s prayer of faith. They would call it myth, or only poetic language not to be taken literally. They seek to shame you if you believe the entire Bible as the Word of God. While they may call us foolish, we remember that God has chosen the foolish things to confound the supposed wise of this world.

We do not have to be embarrassed about the many miracles of Scripture. We should boldly proclaim them, for it is the Holy Spirit that bears witness to the truth of the Bible.

Warren Wiersbe says it well, “*If God can’t perform the miracle described in Joshua 10, then He can’t perform any miracle and is imprisoned in His own creation, unable to use or suspend the very laws He built into it. I have a difficult time believing in that kind of a God.*”²⁸

²⁸ Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *Be Strong* (p. 115). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

Satan comes to every believer to seek to cause them to question and then doubt certain portions of the Bible. His goal is to move us from the Bible as a source of faith and the strong foundation for our Christian walk.

The Devil seeks to make us doubt a miracle like this. If he can get you to give up just one inch then he moves on to other parts of the Bible until you have cut out portions of our Bible. The first temptation recorded in the Bible begins with Satan casting doubt on God's Word as he says to Eve: *"Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?"* (Genesis 3:1).

That first temptation has echoed down through the centuries to every believer, "Did God really say that? Did God really mean that? How can you be sure that the Bible is true after so many years of translation?" Satan's questions and assaults can be endless until you win in your mind the battle for the Bible.

- Do you really believe the lost ax head floated when Elisha prayed (2 Kings 6:3)?
- Do you really believe that a dumb donkey reproved the false prophet Balaam (Numbers 32; 2 Peter 2:16)?
- Do you really believe that a great fish swallowed Jonah and that he survived for three days (Jonah 1, 2; Matthew 12:39-41; Matthew 16:4; Luke 11:29-32)?

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If you give in to this world's philosophy and Satan's temptations, that you can only believe that which you can explain, then he will move on to more deadly suggestions.

- Do you believe that Jesus was really born of a virgin?
- Do you really believe that he rose from the dead?
- Do you really believe in an eternal hell?
- Do you really believe in demons and a real devil?
- Do you really believe that there is only one way of salvation?

God is Great Enough to Confirm His Own Word – Just Share It

In personal evangelism I have seen this fierce battle fought many times. I was witnessing to a man in his home and God's Spirit was drawing him to salvation. As I shared verse after verse that pointed him to salvation in Jesus and His finished work, the age-old battle assault on the Word of God came to the forefront as he questioned the Bible, *"Everything that you have shared with me has come from the Bible. How do I know the Bible is true?"*

I then began to quote verses without letting him know that they were all prophecies of Jesus from the Old Testaments hundreds of years before He was born of the Virgin Mary:

My God, My God, why have you forsaken me? (Ps. 22:1).

All those who see Me ridicule Me; They shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, "He trusted in the LORD, let Him rescue Him; let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him! (Ps. 22:6-7).

They pierced my hands and my feet (Ps. 22:16).

They divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots (Ps. 22:18).

But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all (Isaiah 53:3-6).

I asked what event were these Scriptures describing? His immediate reply was it was the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. Then I opened my Bible and showed him that I had quoted from Psalms 22 and Isaiah 53, which were prophecies hundreds of years before the crucifixion.

It is the Holy Spirit that bears witness to God's Word and gives faith. God confirmed the Word in his heart. We do not have to *prove* the miracles of the Bible. We simply have to *proclaim* them. The Bible is a miracle itself and God confirms it when Christ is shared.

This man would be saved and over the years his ministry has impacted hundreds of thousands of people in many parts of the world.

It has been my experience that you do not have to answer every doubting question a lost person might have, but rather simply share the Gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit and God Himself will confirm the message.

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If Your God Cannot Stop the Sun, Then He is Not God at All

Then Joshua spoke to the LORD in the day when the LORD delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel: "Sun, stand still over Gibeon; and Moon, in the Valley of Aijalon." So the sun stood still, and the moon stopped, till the people had revenge upon their enemies (Joshua 10:12-13).

Read this Scripture again with a will to believe, even if you do not understand how God did it. Give your doubts to God and commit to believe all the Bible.

Why would we question something that is so simple with God? He created all things and sustains all things. Every second of the day, our God sustains and controls trillions of details in our world. The fact that the sun and moon rise and set according to a daily precision is a miracle of itself.

If you cannot believe that God had the sun stand still, then you worship a man-made distortion and false image of God that attempts to make God subject to our pea-sized brains. Trying to put limits on God is a dangerous thing. Trying to put God in our little philosophical or theological box only puts us in a faith-confining box that limits us.

This is critical battle for the soldier of Christ. You will never be effective in spiritual warfare if you ever have to question, “can God make the sun stand still”.

Early in his ministry, Billy Graham wrestled with whether the Bible was really true. He had heard all the arguments against it. And yet he knew in his heart that God’s Word was inerrant, infallible, and inspired. He came to a point where he knew he had to make a decision, one way or the other. And that day, Billy Graham settled the issue once and for all. The Bible was true. It was the true Word of God. He never turned back from that decision. And he faithfully proclaimed its message the rest of his life ... all around the world.

You will never be effective in your ministry unless you settle that decision for yourself as well.

If you do not believe that God did the miraculous in Bible-times, you will never believe He can do the miraculous today. All your prayers will be limited by your own reasoning. Feeble man becomes the one who determines the limits he places upon God. Satan does not flee from the one who doubts the sharp Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God (Hebrews 4:12, Eph. 6:17).

Our prayers should never eliminate the supernatural. We cannot say that we will pray for others when they are facing surgery on a broken leg, but not for a severe case of cancer.

To eliminate the possibility of divine intervention, miracles, healings, and God showing up in power, would be to strip the man or woman of God of their greatest weapon in warfare, God fighting for us and with us.

Perhaps you are struggling with God’s ability to work supernaturally. But your archenemy Satan knows it is true, and he freely uses his dark power against you.

We are not sovereign – God is. We cannot tell Him what to do, but we must believe that nothing is impossible with God. We pray and leave the answer to God’s wisdom.

Just Believe What is in Your Hand

I entered seminary excited to gain theological training that would help prepare me to be a pastor. I loved Jesus and wanted to dig deeper into His Word. I immediately faced a spiritual battle and crisis over the Bible. I was shocked to find that two of my professors had serious doubts about the Bible – and they were very effective in passing those doubts on to their students.

Dr. W.A. Criswell, the blessed pastor of First Baptist of Dallas, had written a book called *Why I Believe the Bible is Literally True*. His book encouraged me, while liberal professors were critical of it.²⁹ I was hearing such statements from these liberal professors such as, *“Moses did not write all of the books of the Pentateuch. There were many editors who changed it throughout the years, as the JEPD theory explains.”* They questioned major sections of the Old Testament, and continued that criticism throughout the New Testament. One professor said, *“When I read of Elisha cursing poor little children who mocked him, and then the God of Judgment of the Old Testament sends two she-bears out of the woods to maul the children, then I have to run to the New Testament to find the love of God.”* They picked and chose what they wanted to believe, and what they didn’t want to believe.

My spiritual warfare continued over these attacks on the Bible. It resulted in a victorious and sweet encounter with the Lord. One day I walked out of class with many questions about the Bible on my mind. I found shade under an oak tree and was weeping, crying out to God, *“Lord, I am not smart enough to answer all the questions I have heard about the Bible. I am not able to read the original manuscripts in Hebrew and Greek. Who am I to judge what is true in the Bible and what is not? Lord what am I to believe?”* Deep in my spirit came a clear thought, *“Just believe what is in your hand.”* I felt that God had encouraged me in that moment. I then prayed out loud as I held my Bible, *“Lord, I will believe and preach all the Bible.”*

That was a great spiritual battle that the Lord fought and won for me. Satan seeks to move each of us from the firm foundation where we are able to follow the pattern of Jesus and say to our enemy, *“Get behind me, Satan. It is written.”*

Now as a pastor for forty-eight years, I’ve kept that simple philosophy of believing all the Bible. I would take one new believer who has no theological training but believes the “sun stood still,” over a liberal theologian who has filled his brain with dozens of reasons why the miraculous did not occur.

²⁹ Apologetics is a field of theological study that focuses on defending the faith. There are many good books that I recommend including: Josh McDowell’s classic, *Evidence That Demands a Verdict; The Case for Christ*, by Lee Strobel; and *Who Moved the Stone?* by Frank Morrison. What all three of these books have in common is that all the authors were atheists who began to study the Bible to disprove it, and instead God proved Himself to them and they were all converted. The Bible has power in itself to convince the seeker because it is the Living Word of God authored by and confirmed by the Holy Spirit.

Like Joshua, we must know that we go into battle with the authority of God's Word in our hands. We must have complete confidence that when we use the Word of God, all the authority and power of the God who stopped the sun for Joshua is with us.

Application

Describe a time that you experienced spiritual warfare over the Bible. What were the thoughts of doubt that came to your mind? Did you gain victory over them? Do you believe the entire Bible now?

Reasons Why God Stopped the Sun

- 1. It showed the power of the one-true-God over all the false gods that the nations of Canaan worshipped.**

The Amorites worshipped the creation and not the Creator. They worshipped the sun and moon ... and when God stopped the sun and moon, He demonstrated to the nations of Canaan and Israel that He was Omnipotent – all-powerful.

Just as God directed His judgments of the ten plagues on the different false gods that Egypt worshipped, with Joshua He defied their deceived and demonic worship. Joshua remembered God's judgment on the sun god Ra of Egypt when God plagued Egypt with three days of darkness (Exodus 10:21-23). Joshua certainly believed that God the Creator could control the sun as he had experienced the Creator's sovereign control in Egypt. The faith training of Joshua in Egypt and under Moses in the wilderness built his faith for the battles of the future in the conquest.

The faith-training of Joshua in Egypt and under Moses in the wilderness built his faith for the battles of the future in the conquest.

Moses was gone, but God was still present with Israel. Now Joshua is gone, but the God of Moses and Joshua is still present to give you bold faith today.

I have seen many young Christians want to know the power of God. I would suggest you first become a servant and seek to see the miracle of salvation in the heart of a lost person. That my friend is a greater miracle than the seeing sun stand still.

2. It demonstrated His power over creation. It showed that God is the creator and sustainer of His own creation.

The Creator can intervene in creation as He pleases. Stopping the sun is no greater miracle than the marvel that He sustains the rising and setting of the sun and moon daily. Someone said about this miracle, *"It showed that the Creator is not subject to what we call the Laws of Nature. But the Laws of Creation are subject to God the Creator."*

- It shows his power.
- It shows His sovereignty.
- It shows His wisdom.
- It shows His love for His people.
- It shows His faithfulness to His people.

The majority of our world has accepted the deception:

- Nothing plus nothing equals everything.
- Chaos without intelligent design equals engineered precision, architected design, the laws of physics and mathematics, from the smallest cell to the largest galaxy.

The majority of our world has through bias and blindness rejected that which the Creator has made plain even to children and those who seek God (Romans 1:8-15). Where there is a precision-made watch, there is a watchmaker. That is clear and evident to the unbiased.

Creation shows the intelligent design of the Creator:

- Who was the scientist who created the laws that govern our universe? Was it chaos or the Creator?
- Who was the mathematician who built the laws of mathematics into our universe and world? Was it chaos or the Creator?
- Who was the physicist that made it possible for our world to have order? Was it chaos or the Creator?
- Who was the architect behind the cells of all living creatures? Was it chaos or the Creator?

- Who was the computer expert who created the super computer of the human brain? Was it chaos or the Creator?
- Who was the bio-engineer who designed the human heart and eye? Was it chaos or Creator?

It is obvious to see that those who believe that *“Nothing plus nothing equals everything,”* worship nothing.

They fulfill the words of Psalmist, *“The fool has said in his heart, ‘There is no God.’”* (Psalms 14:1).

We should never be embarrassed about God recording miracles in the Bible like the “sun stood still.” Yes, the blind will mock and stumble over them, but we will use them as stepping-stones to greater faith.

What the world calls foolish God calls wise.

Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you seems to be wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, “He catches the wise in their own craftiness;” and again, “The LORD knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile.” (1 Cor. 3:18-20).

God does not explain many things in the Bible. He just declares them to be true. God wrote the Bible to give light to those that search, and to take down the crafty in their pride and supposed wisdom.

Paul did not apologize to the skeptics of Athens when he preached the resurrection of Christ. *“And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked, while others said, ‘We will hear you again on this matter’”* (Acts 17:32). We can expect the same response that Paul experienced - some mocked and some believed.

We do not have to explain how the “sun stood still,” we just have to believe it. And we do not have to defend or apologize for God. God will defend Himself.

3. It encourages us to pray boldly knowing that we have a God who *heeded the voice of a man.*

*And there has been no day like that, before it or after it, **that the LORD heeded the voice of a man;** for the LORD fought for Israel* (Joshua 10:14, emphasis mine).

If God cannot stop the sun, then He is not God and Lord over all creation. If God cannot stop the sun, then why pray to Him? But since God did stop the sun, then we are encouraged to cry out to God like Joshua for our impossible needs.

This phrase, ***the LORD heeded the voice of a man***, is not recorded simply to tell us what happened, but to encourage bold faith and extraordinary prayer.

There will be a time that we have done all we can do and we will need God to respond in our time of need. We need to know that we have a God who hears our voice and is able to do the impossible.

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Putting Limits on God

Consider these three statements from Scripture:

*And the LORD said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh, saying, ‘Shall I surely bear a child, since I am old?’ **Is anything too hard for the LORD?** (Genesis 18:13, emphasis mine).*

*‘Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and outstretched arm. **There is nothing too hard for You** (Jer. 32:17, emphasis mine).*

*“Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh. **Is there anything too hard for Me?** (Jer. 32:27).*

If we were to ask Joshua that question, how do you think he would respond? Allow me to give some presumed answers:

Joshua, is anything too hard for the Lord?

- I have seen ten plagues on Egypt, boils, frogs, locust, swarms of flies and lice all doing God’s bidding. Nothing is too hard for the Lord.
- I have seen hailstones fall on Egypt, but not on Israel. I have seen darkness that lasted for three days in Egypt but not on Israel. Nothing is too hard for the Lord.
- I have seen every first-born die in Egypt in one night when the death angel passed over, except there was no death in the houses that were marked with the blood of the Lamb. Nothing is too hard for the Lord.
- I have seen the Red Sea open to provide safe passage for Israel and enclose the army of Pharaoh who followed us. Nothing is too hard for the Lord.
- I have seen manna from heaven feed Israel and the Rock that followed us give us water for forty years. Nothing is too hard for the Lord.
- I have seen God’s presence daily for forty years in a pillar of cloud by day and fire by night. Nothing is too hard for the Lord.

- I have seen the earth open and swallow those who rebelled against Moses. I have seen people dying from poisonous snakes look to a brass pole with an emblem of a snake on it, and those who looked in faith were healed. Nothing is too hard for the Lord.
- I have seen the Jordan River open for Israel to pass over on dry ground. I have seen the walls of Jericho fall with a shout. Nothing is too hard for the Lord.
- So, when the destruction of five great kingdoms was almost complete and the sun was about to set, God put it in my heart to ask that He would stop the sun for a few hours to have time to finish destroying the Amorites. I knew God was able to do that, for nothing is too hard for the Lord.

We must not miss this incredible faith building statement: *the LORD heeded the voice of a man.*

Without the promise of prayer, we are like mere ants to be crushed under the boot of Satan's forces. However, armed with the whole armor of God we are to be victorious everyday no matter what difficulty we face.

Why does God illustrate this for us today if it were not to encourage us now in our battles to pray boldly? *"Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us"* (Eph. 3:20).

Matthew Henry applied this passage correctly in his commentary on the book of Joshua:

*"No doubt Joshua had an extraordinary impulse or impression upon his spirit, which he knew to be of divine origin, prompting him to desire that this miracle might be wrought upon this occasion, else it would have been presumption in him to desire or expect; the prayer would not have been granted by the divine power, if it had not been dictated by the divine grace. God wrought this faith in him, and then said, "According to thy faith, and thy prayer of faith, be it unto thee." It cannot be imagined, however, that such a thing as this should have entered into his mind if God had not put it there; a man would have had a thousand projects in his head for the completing of the victory before he would have thought of desiring the sun to stand still; but even in the Old-Testament saints the Spirit made intercession according to the will of God."*³⁰

Can God Stop the Rain?

As a young Christian, I asked for the rain to stop for very important events at church and it did not. I then began to pray first that God would make us content with rain or shine and change our hearts to fit the weather that He gives. It is wise let God be in charge of the weather and we adjust to it.

³⁰ Henry, M. (1994). *Matthew Henry's commentary on the whole Bible: complete and unabridged in one volume* (pp. 309–310). Peabody: Hendrickson.

But sometimes bold praying is necessary because God wants to manifest His power to fulfill His will.

Our mission team was in India and part of our mission was to conduct a three-night open-air crusade. People from the surrounding villages were arriving by flatbeds pulled by tractors. Thousands were in attendance the first crusade night and several thousand made public decisions for Christ.

We rejoiced in God blessings, but the next day the rains came. What could we do if it rained on the crusade? All the Indian pastors and our team were asked to pray that God would stop the rain. An amazing thing happened. It rained in the city and the surrounding villages, but there was an exception. It did not rain on the crusade. The next day the city and villages talked about the God who stopped the rain. The following night, we had our largest attendance and many came to hear about the God who stopped the rain. Fifty-five thousand attended the three-night crusade and thousands made decisions for Christ. Our faith was increased.

I have also seen Christians ask in presumption and pride for great things, thinking they were asking in faith when they were as James said, "Asking wrongly" (James 4:3). God does not give us a blank check to spend on our own lust or plans. We cannot spend God's checks until God has filled out the "pay to the order of" line, and endorsed it. Then we can exercise faith and cash it.

Prayer is not giving God a plan and asking Him to walk according to our human wisdom. Prayer is founded on God's will revealed in His Word and then prompted by the indwelling Holy Spirit making intercession in our hearts (Romans 8:26-27). Then we can pray in the Spirit according to His will and in faith.

Application

The Bible has hundreds of verses on the subject of prayer. Below, I've picked three. Read each of these passages and write a statement under each regarding the power of prayer and how it relates to your life.

You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures (James 4:3).

If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you (John 15:7).

Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God (Romans 8:26-27).

What are you going through now that it seems that only God can help you with? Write that circumstance down – and claim His power and purpose over that situation.

The Lord Heeded the Voice of a Man

*And there has been no day like that, before it or after it, **that the LORD heeded the voice of a man**; for the LORD fought for Israel (Joshua 10:14, emphasis mine).*

This is perhaps the greatest illustration in the Old Testament of God hearing the prayer of a man, but it is not the greatest example in Scripture. From the Cross of Christ, God heeded the voice of another Joshua (*“The Lord is Salvation”*) when He heard the voice of Jesus, the Son of Man.

When Jesus prayed, *“Father forgive them for they know not what they do,”* God responded affirmatively, that he would heed the voice of Jesus, the Son of Man.

For God to adjust the rate of the Sun or earth’s rotation was not hard for God. He spoke the universe and its laws into existence in just six days. But for God to forgive sinners, save them, and impute to them the very righteousness of Christ, took a much greater work. It took the death of Christ Himself as our perfect substitute and sacrifice.

Jesus’ defeat of Satan, sin and death was much greater than Joshua defeating the Amorites. For Joshua, God gave extra hours of light to complete his victory. For Jesus, He gave three extra hours of darkness and shut out the light of the sun to complete His work of bearing the sins of the world while the wrath of God against sin and sinners was satisfied through Christ.

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Have you ever trusted Jesus Christ as the perfect sacrifice for your sins? You've read this book. You've heard about the miraculous powers of God. But the greatest miracle of God was accomplished at the Cross when Jesus Christ died for you. If you have never trusted Him as your Savior and Lord, now is the time. Trust Him now. At this point, it is appropriate to ask you to pray and receive Christ. Would you read the words of this prayer, praying them back to the Father in faith and repentance?

Dear Father, thank You that You gave Your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to die for my sins. I believe that Jesus died for me and rose from the dead three days later. I confess Jesus to be my personal Savior and Lord. I turn from my sin and every work to save myself to surrender and trust in Christ alone for salvation. Thank you for saving me according to your promise, *"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."*

The Soldier's Proper Position over the Enemy

God supernaturally intervened and fought for Israel with great hailstones directed at the Amorites and with the sun standing still until nearly all of the enemy was destroyed. We have seen the balance in this battle of great faith being accompanied with great work. Joshua's work was characterized as tireless, persistent, fearless, exhausting, sacrificial, and giving God every ounce of his energy while trusting God fully. Another place God described Joshua and Caleb as ones who had, *"wholly following the Lord"* (Joshua 32:12). They believed God and showed their faith by giving God all they had in the battle.

Now Joshua ends this battle by mentoring his captains and building their faith for tomorrow's battles. Joshua will give to his captains a living symbol of their position with God when they stand on His promises and walk in obedience to His will.

When the five kings fled from Joshua, they hid in a cave. Joshua found them. Joshua chose not to execute them immediately, but he sealed them in the cave until he could demonstrate to all of Israel that they were not to fear the mighty kings of Canaan. He would do more than declare victory to all of Israel; he would build their faith to finish the conquest of Canaan by trusting the Lord for tomorrow's battles.

*So it was, when they brought out those kings to Joshua, that Joshua called for all the men of Israel, and said to the **captains** of the men of war who went with him, **"Come near, put your feet on the necks of these kings."** And they drew near and put their feet on their necks.*

²⁵ *Then Joshua said to them, **"Do not be afraid, nor be dismayed; be strong and of good courage, for thus the LORD will do to all your enemies against whom you fight"** (Joshua 10:24-25, emphasis mine).*

We see a great picture of mentoring disciples in the life of Joshua. *"Be strong and of good courage,"* God had said to Joshua through Moses (Deut. 31:7). *"Be strong and of good courage,"* God had said to Joshua before the battle of Jericho (Joshua 1:6, 7, 9). What God had said to him, Joshua said to Israel, *"Be strong and of good courage."* Joshua lived his faith by bold

courage before his army, and he expected them to do the same, ***“Come near, put your feet on the necks of these kings.”*** Joshua gave his captains a living picture of their victory over the enemy. God had promised that *“no man shall stand before you”* and these defeated kings illustrated that to Israel.

Joshua lived his faith by bold courage before his army, and he expected them to do the same.

The symbolism of the captains standing in the presence of Joshua with their feet on the necks of their enemies is an instructive picture for us as well in spiritual warfare.

The Lord Jesus, our greater Joshua, demonstrated His victory over Satan while He walked on this earth. He met Satan’s temptations with Scripture, saying, *“It is written.”* He cast out demons with His word, showing His authority over the Devil. His healing ministry showed His power over Satan. When Jesus saved the Gaderene demoniac who was bound by Satan, He showed that He came to rescue those in bondage to the Devil. Through Christ’s death and resurrection, God illustrated for us that Jesus has defeated Satan and has His foot on Satan’s neck and under his heel.

We see this image first in the Garden of Eden when God said to Satan in speaking of the Promise Seed (Jesus Christ), *“He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel”* (Genesis 3:15). Satan appeared to bruise Christ’s heel at the crucifixion ... but ultimately Jesus crushed Satan’s head by His death and resurrection. This image of Satan being crushed under the feet of Jesus is seen in other passages:

The LORD said to my Lord, “Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool” (Psalms 110:1).

For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be destroyed is death (1 Cor.15:25,26).

And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly (Romans 16:20).

Joshua had his captains, who went with him into battle. Similarly, the Lord has invited us to go in His authority in the Great Commission. We are to *“submit to God, resist the Devil and he will flee from us”* (James 4:7). When Jesus sent his disciples in the authority of His name, they came back reporting that *“even the demons are subject to us in Your name”* (Luke 10:17). As God told Joshua that no man would stand before him as he went in God’s authority, Jesus has also given us a similar promise:

And He said to them, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven” (Luke 10:18-20).

Demons are Subject to You in Jesus' Name

The following testimony is subjective and is not to be taken as a firm pattern for spiritual warfare. Some people have psychological or physiological problems, and they should be referred to medical professionals for proper treatment. However, I share this experience because there is also such a thing as spiritual warfare that must be dealt with by prayer.

One night after our church service ended, a young lady waited to speak to me. *"I need you to come and talk to my boyfriend."* I soon found out that the two of them were heavily involved in witchcraft. She said that he feared for his life as a warlock and member of a coven. When we got together and talked, I shared how Jesus provided forgiveness and salvation for him. However, he could not understand the Gospel and seemed to have real trouble concentrating on the Scriptures that I read. I sensed that there was a strong spiritual battle going on for his life.

I asked him, *"Is Jesus Christ God who has come in the flesh?"* He answered calmly, *"I don't know. I do not know much about the Bible."* Then I said, *"I am not asking you, but the spirit that is in you."* Immediately he sat up straight and assumed a trace like appearance and with anger answered, *"NO!"* I then asked, *"Who is your God?"* and he immediately answered, *"Lucifer!"*

I then prayed, *"Come out of him in the name of Jesus."*

He went limp and caught himself as if he had awakened from sleep. He had no remembrance of what had just happen, even though all of those who were with me saw and heard his actions.

I again shared the Gospel to him. This time he listened intently and the Scripture began to make sense to him. He understood what Jesus did for him and surrendered his life to Jesus and confessed Him as Lord. In just a few moments he went from confessing Lucifer as his god to confessing Jesus as his God.

He committed to study Scripture with me for the next few days to give him a good foundation in the Word. We went to his house and he filled my car with his occult material so he could take it away and destroy it.

I remembered in Acts 19:19 where those who practiced magic and were involved in the occult came and burnt their books. One by one he threw his occult arts in the fire we had made and he said, *"I renounce Satan and any hold that these devices had on me."* His ceremonial dagger went, his black robes and hoods, his incense candles, his pentagrams, many strange devices, and one by one, his generational tarot cards handed down to him from his father and father's father. As he was about to throw his grandfather's tarot cards in the fire, he paused. His hands shook as he remembered his attachment to this set of tarot cards. He then threw that last attachment to witchcraft in the fire.

He seemed to be excited about his new life in Christ as I met with him for the next few days.

Then he was gone.

I could not find him or contact him. All I could do was pray that he was really saved and God would keep him.

About a year later, I received a wonderful thank you letter from him. He told me that he went out of state to tell his parents about surrendering his life to Jesus. They rejected his faith in Christ. He had some difficult weeks and was in a spiritual battle. He apologized to me for lying to me about having destroyed all his occult material. He said that one thing that he was afraid to destroy was his blood covenant document with the coven of thirteen. His fear was that he had sworn death upon himself if he broke the blood covenant. Thank God, he did destroy it. He and the girlfriend were now married and were active in a great church.

He reassured me that the day that I shared Jesus with him was indeed the day of his salvation and he was a changed man. Jesus had freed him from the power of Satan. I was so encouraged by that letter.

Yes, demons are subject to us in Jesus' name. There is spiritual power and authority in the Gospel. And our God reigns over the forces of Satan and darkness.

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Joshua Believed in Raising Up New Leaders

Joshua had not led from behind, but as a good shepherd and soldier, he went before his men for them to see his faith by his works. This pattern should be repeated in our lives as well. We should not only preach about prayer, witnessing, and missions, but we must lead from the front and take people with us. They will be God's captains tomorrow to continue the work of God and the church.

After Joshua's death, we read in the book of Judges that the first judge God raised up was Caleb's son-in-law, Othniel. Othniel had two great mentors in Joshua and Caleb. We are not told who the captains were that put their foot in the neck of the kings that day, but I believe one of them was the next leader of Israel – Othniel.

Leaders who demonstrate faith will impact others to carry on God's mission. Let us follow Joshua's example and challenge others to be strong and of good courage. Remember, we stand in the victory that our Lord Jesus has won for us.

 **Application**

In a few words make a personal application of the words of Joshua, *“Come near, put your feet on the necks of these kings.”*

From Victory to Victory

What follows after victory on the battlefield is the taking of the fortified cities of these kings. Joshua moved from one victory to another, beginning at Makkedah. *“He struck it and all the people who were in it with the edge of the sword. He let none remain in it, but did to its king as he had done to the king of Jericho”* (Joshua 10:30). The conquest of the Southland follows, as Joshua goes to these fortified cities and they fall before him one by one, from Makkedah to Libnah, to Lachish, to Eglon, to Hebron, to Debir.

What we have before us is a pattern for our victories in spiritual warfare. We are to move from one victory to the next, as we daily consecrate our lives to God. Every sin that held power over us is to be conquered in the power of Jesus Christ. Every manifestation of the flesh is to be put to death. Jesus broke the power of sin, Satan, and this world, and we are to continue in that victory, moving from one day to the next.

Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.... But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds (Col. 3:5, 8).

Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby (1 Peter 2:1).

All these cities fell to Joshua in one day, with one exception. Lachish was a stronger enemy to conquer, and fell to Joshua on the second day. *“And the LORD delivered Lachish into the hand of Israel, who took it on the second day”* (Joshua 10:32).

In his excellent commentary, A. W. Pink points out a spiritual application here.

(This) teaches the Christian that some of his lusts are more powerful than others, and require a longer and more determined effort on his part to subdue them. And, too, an initial failure to enter into possession of a particular portion of our inheritance must not deter us from making a second effort to do so.³¹

This seems to be true in our battles with our flesh. We give some areas of our lives over to God and have consistent daily victory over them, yet it takes longer to see spiritual victory in other areas.

One believer conquered *bar hopping* in just one day, but viewing porn was his Lachish that took a longer time. Another conquered cursing in a day, but anger was her Lachish. What about you?



Application

What is your “Lachish,” the area of your life that you are still struggling with? Write it down in the area below. Identify it and ask God to give you victory over that area of your life.

You and I Must Worship as We Reflect on the Faithfulness of God

What began as a battle to defend Gibeon led to Joshua’s greatest victory, as the Lord fought for Israel. God demonstrated His control of the weather and the universe by using hailstones and having the sun stand still. The continuation of that battle became a military campaign that gave Israel victory and conquest of all the Southland of Canaan.

So Joshua conquered all the land: the mountain country and the South and the lowland and the wilderness slopes, and all their kings.... All these kings and their land Joshua took at one time, because the LORD God of Israel fought for Israel (Joshua 10:40-41).

³¹ Pink, A. W. (1964). *Gleanings in Joshua*. Chicago: Moody Press.

The mention again of Kadesh Barnea gives us another lesson. It's the lesson of the faithfulness of God in our lives.

*And Joshua conquered them from **Kadesh Barnea** as far as Gaza, and all the country of Goshen, even as far as Gibeon (Joshua 10:41, emphasis mine).*

...Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it (Numbers 13:30).

Forty years earlier, an entire generation refused to go to war against Canaan at this same area because of the giants and the fortified cities. It was at Kadesh Barnea that Israel turned back in unbelief. As a result, God promised that none of them would see the Promised Land except for Joshua and Caleb (Numbers 13). Now God brought Joshua and Caleb full circle to see victory in possession of the land. The promise given was now victory fulfilled. The faith they had in Numbers 13:30 was fulfilled in Joshua 10:41.

You will find that God will often bring you full circle to remind you of His faithfulness. He did this with Jacob. He brought him back to Bethel, where he had his first great encounter with God. Over twenty years before, Jacob was poor and all alone, but he returned with eleven sons and great wealth. God had proved His faithfulness to Jacob.

I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed the pillar and where you made a vow to Me. Now arise, get out of this land, and return to the land of your family (Genesis 31:13).

Then God said to Jacob, "Arise, go up to Bethel and dwell there; and make an altar there to God, who appeared to you when you fled from the face of Esau your brother" (Genesis 35:1).

Joseph saw God's faithfulness to him. God used him in the lives of his brothers, who sold him as a slave over twenty years earlier, to provide food for them in the midst of the famine.

Moses tried to deliver Israel in his own strength, but returned to Egypt forty years later with the power of God. He was a changed man.

What a wonderful reflection Joshua and Caleb must have had as they remembered that over forty years before they secretly walked by all these fortified cities as a spy but today they walked the same land as victors laying claim to their promised inheritance. It was near Kadesh Barnea that they said in faith to Israel, *"Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it."* As a faithful soldier, you will one day stand and testify to God's faithfulness, even if you have had to wait many years to see the promise fulfilled. *"Be strong and of good courage."*