

# The battle if the Lord's

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[ 0 : 00 ] In the chapter before us, we will read of the preparation for the taking of the city of Jericho. Now Israel, as those of you who were present last Sabbath evening will remember, had passed through the waters of Jordan as on dry ground.

And now they were standing on the land of promise. They were actually now in the land of promise. What a wonderful day that was, or occasion that was, for God's own people. It meant many things to them. Above all, it meant the end of their journeyings. And it meant also, as you will have noticed, I'm sure as we read, the end, for example, of the miracle of the manna. We read that, and the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land. The manna was no longer necessary. They were now to live from the fruit of the land, according to the promise of God.

Now some people so foolishly try to, or do indeed maintain, that the Bible is a myth. That much of what, that most of it, indeed, if not all of it, is just old stories that were made up of by various people.

[ 1 : 22 ] But you see, those of you who have been following our studies in the Old Testament over the last year, or two years, or three years, will remember how a wee back we remember the promise that was given concerning a land that would be flowing with milk and honey.

Now in the intervening studies, there were times when we thought perhaps, well, they're never going to reach the land of promise. God is never going to fulfill the truth concerning this remnant. Remember, it began with Abraham. The promise was given to Abraham many years before now. And God's people had gone through the fire. They had suffered much.

They had sinned much. But God was faithful to his promise. And he brought them in. He brought them home. He brought them to the promised land. Now this is so figurative, of course, of God's people in every age.

Let us remember that our salvation rests in God and his purpose and his promise. And he is true to his promise. And especially his promise to his son.

[ 2 : 23 ] Ask of me and for heritage the heathen I'll make thine. And so it is that he is gathering in from the north, the south, the east and the west, those who are going to stray in deserts pathless ways.

And as each day passes, more and more have been gathered in. And as each day passes, the kingdom of Christ is increasing and growing and maturing.

Until ultimately, they will be gathered into his very inner presence, if you like. Where he is himself. Father, I will that those whom thou gavest me be with me where I am.

That they may behold my glory. And they shall enter in with joy and gladness. Now they shall be mine, say thee, in that day when I shall make up my jewels. Friend, are you in Christ?

Seek to be sure that you are among those who shall enter into rest. For there is a rest awaiting the people of God. But there is no rest awaiting those who are not the people of God.

[ 3 : 22 ] Indeed, your unrest is only beginning once you leave this world. It may be that you feel restless already. Discontented. Unhappy. Perhaps you feel burdened with care.

And suffering. But that is nothing. It is in need like a drop out of the ocean of suffering that will be the portion of those who die without Christ, without God, without hope in the world.

So let us seek to learn of God as we study his word tonight. If only we realize the privilege that is ours to have God's word. The privilege that is ours to be gathered as we are here tonight around the word of God.

Where he promises to be present in a special way. To help us to understand that we ought, all of us, to pray to God that the word will be blessed to us. I feel we must, as it were, get back to the place where we wait expectantly upon God for blessing.

Instead of coming and sitting, as it were. As if nothing is going to happen anyway. Isn't it true that this is the case with so many of God's people even among us? We come to church as if it's just a habit.

[ 4 : 32 ] And as if nothing is going to happen. Friends, we should be waiting for great things to happen. Why? Because we have a great God. And we have a great gospel. And we have the word of God.

And we can expect great things where God is. Where his word is. Where his people are. We ought to expect it. See the great things he has done for his people. Under the Old Testament economy. Here we are now, at last. In the land of promise. Here we are under the New Testament. With greater privileges. Greater blessings. Essentially the same. But in greater measure.

And yet, we live as if the Old Testament stage were better off than we are. How wrong we are. Our God is the Lord by whom the heavens created were. Our God is the Lord who sent Christ into the world.

Our God is the Lord who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ. And who also, as we thought this morning, brought from the dead those who were dead in trespasses and sins.

[ 5 : 27 ] Blessed them with all spiritual blessings. In heavenly places in Christ. Making them new creatures in Christ. And we have them among us. And we have them in the world. And we long to see more of them.

That together we may rejoice. In the salvation that is in Christ. Now they are in the land of promise. And it may be that some of them thought that struggles would be over on account of that.

But that wasn't to be. We know that Canaan is very often, as I've already said, taken as a type of heaven. But we believe that Canaan can be taken better, or looked at better still, as signifying or bringing forth or typifying the Christian life on earth.

Because, you see, there is a sense in which the Israelites have entered into peace when they entered into Canaan. That is, compared with what was true of them before they came to Canaan. They have entered into a certain security that they didn't have before. But still there is fighting. And there are many battles that they must engage in whilst they remain there.

[ 6 : 42 ] And so it is with the believer. The believer in this world has peace in Christ. We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Now that is true in the legal sense, forensically as we say.

But it is actually true also in our soul's experience. We enter into peace. It is wonderful to know that we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. To experience that peace.

To sense it. To feel it. It is something that belongs to the child of God. But there is much more to the Christian life than just peace. The Christian life is a life of warfare.

We wrestle not with flesh and blood, but with spiritual wickedness in high places. The Christian life is a full life. A life that is a fight unto the end. And that is why we must be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

And we must quit ourselves as men. We mustn't sit back as it were. But we must be up and doing for the Lord whilst it is day. For the night cometh when no man can work. And we have much conquering to do.

[ 7 : 44 ] Within our own hearts and around us in the world. Well their struggles were not yet over. And they are confronted almost immediately with this great obstacle called the city of Jericho.

Jericho must be captured. And this was a trial of their faith. A trial of their faith and a trial to their assurance as to whether God was with them.

Or whether they were going to serve God. But you see, surely none of us can look at what's happening here without noticing that there's an awful element of excitement about everything that is happening there.

I wonder if that's true of our own Christian lives. Or have our lives become so dull and mundane that we no longer know anything at all of the excitement, if you like, of being a Christian.

No, don't get me wrong, I'm not making a small thing. It's the very opposite I intend to do of a Christian life. It's a full life. It's a serious life. It must be a holy life. But it is a life that has to be lived.

[ 8 : 49 ] Always on our guard. Always waiting expectantly. Not knowing what God has for us next. Not knowing what lies around the corner. That's true of all of us.

Whoever we are. We know not what a day or an hour may bring about in our lives. But as Christians, as God's people, we should be waiting expectantly upon the Lord. And waiting to see

what he has for us next.

It may be triumph. It may be temptation. It may be that there will be sorrow. On the other hand, there may be joy.

There may be a time of peace. We know not. Because the Christian life is made up of so many different experiences. Now, from a human point of view, it would seem that in that they had now a beachhead, as it were, established at Gilgal, it would be the right time for them to strike immediately.

They had their armies ready. Everything was there. They had crossed the Jordan, and now was the moment to strike us. It was humanly speaking. Perhaps a worldly military commander would say to his armies, Well, now we're here.

[10:05] Let's advance immediately. Because they're terrified of us. We know that. Remember the spies who had gone to Rahab's house?

Have been told by her that the whole city and the whole place were terrified of the Israelites because of their God. And because of what God had done for them.

They were terrified of them. So that the morale of the Canaanites was low. After all, Israel's God had dried up the Red Sea.

They had defeated the powerful kings of the Amorites. God had just so recently dried up the waters of Jordan for them. So we would expect the military leader of Israel to favor, as it were, an immediate offensive.

Go into the attack. This was the ideal time, humanly speaking, to strike the enemy after all. But, and this is what we must all, and what we do learn.

[11:10] God is never in a hurry. A thousand years are in his sight, but as yesterday. He's not subject to time at all.

He's never in a hurry. We sometimes are. That's why we need the grace of patience. We need to be patient to wait God's time. To wait for the fulfillment of God's time.

So that we must remember that God doesn't want us to rush into things. We should take things slowly. He gives us time for prayer and preparation for the way that he is leading us.

And we must use that time in that way. And we must ask ourselves honestly, are we using our time in that way? The Lord, the Lord's work we know is going to prosper.

Whether we see it or not. We hope we will see it. We wait expectantly for it. But at the same time as we wait, are we waiting prayerfully? Expectantly. Are we waiting prayerfully?

[12:22] And are we preparing ourselves? And in preparing ourselves, preparing the church for God's time. He gives us time to consider, time to reflect, time to take stock, if you like.

Ah, it's good for us to take stock and to look around us and to see where we stand and how ready we are to enter into the fray, if you like. And God gives us time. Gives us the opportunity.

But we mustn't wait too long. We must act whenever God commands us so to do. And we'll learn surely from this book of the Bible much about that.

Because there's an awful lot to be learned. God's teaching us a lot in this part of his word. You see, as I said, humanly speaking, the ideal time had come for them just to advance.

Because as I said, the morale of the enemy was low. And there's no better time to attack than when one's morale is low. And the devil knows that too. You can rest assured of this, my friend, when you're low. And the devil will be busy.

[13:33] From God's point of view, however, Israel was not yet ready to fight on the soil of Canaan. Certain things had to be attended to. Certain things were necessary before Jericho could be taken.

There were some important matters to be seen to. As one has put it, consecration had to precede conquest. Now it's as if we have forgotten the secret of consecration.

It is essential for us to be consecrated unto the Lord. That doesn't make us fanatics, as some people say. Consecration is essentially a private thing for the individual between himself and his God.

It's in the secret place, if you like. We spoke this morning from God's word on these words, Our lives are hid with Christ in God. And the life of the believer is hidden there.

But there is a hiddenness, if you like, to the life of God in the soul. That is strictly between the soul and his or her God.

[ 14 : 35 ] And it is there that you must have consecration. We may have outward consecration. We may seem to be consecrating ourselves outwardly. But God sees the heart. And that is where it is necessary, friends.

That you and I consecrate our hearts to the Lord. Ourselves. Our whole beings to the Lord. Now the city was to be taken.

And the Israelites were to be involved in the taking of the city. But what they must learn is this. That it is not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, says the Lord.

They had to learn that it was through faith that this great city was going to be taken. And as we read the history of the taking of the city, dare we say, but that it was taken other than by faith.

Surely we see that clearly again in the New Testament scriptures, where we read that by faith the walls of Jericho fell. It wasn't by the strength and the might of Israel.

[ 15 : 42 ] But by faith, the walls of Jericho fell. They were to conquer by faith. And to that end, God led them through certain experiences immediately before they were to take the city.

And there were four experiences that they had. There was first of all the renewal of circumcision.

Now, while the enemy was there in the city, filled with terror, of fear of the Israelites, God commanded Joshua to circumcise the sons of Israel.

Now that was no easy command to obey, but he must obey it. It must be done. And it rendered them useless, of course, for a few days. You see, those male Israelites who had been circumcised in Egypt had died in the wilderness because of their disobedience.

And you remember God's word in the New Testament warns us, in the light of what happened there, that we must be careful lest we die also on account of our disobedience.

For how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? If it was true that God slew all these Israelites in the wilderness on account of their disobedience, how can we escape in the light of the New Testament gospel, the gospel of Christ?

[ 17 : 12 ] How can we escape if we reject and neglect Christ, refuse to believe in him, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, is the word of God. He that believeth hath life shall never come into condemnation.

But he that believeth not is condemned already, that's what the word of God teaches us. All my friends see that you believe in Christ. Christ alone is saviour. Faith in him saves.

He is the salvation of the soul. There's none other but Christ alone. Now those born during the wilderness journey, of course, had not been circumcised during their wilderness journey.

So that it was now a new generation who were to be circumcised. Now why was it that they had to be circumcised in any case? Well, we can give various reasons, but the main reason is this, that this was a sign of the covenant.

This was the sign of the covenant of Israel. It was a reminder to the Israelites that God was their God. That God was theirs. And there was to be no victory without circumcision, first of all.

[ 18 : 21 ] That was one thing that had to be done. And you will notice that God says to Joshua, this day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you.

Now what was the reproach of Egypt? Well, there are various answers given to that question by commentators, but I believe the answer is the one that, of course, ought to come to mind immediately, that they were under the reproach of God during these 40 years, under the chastisement of God, or rather, during these 40 years.

And as their enemies, the nations around them, looked at what was happening to them, they would reproach them and say to them, where now is your God? Of course, God was still their God, but because of their sin, they were suffering on account of it.

And they were led through that wilderness. Of course, God was with them and God manifested himself to them in so many ways. Nobody can be sure what their reproach was, but there was a reproach.

But we believe that there was one particular matter which emphasized God's displeasure with them, which was now to be seen as being over and done with, and it was this.

[ 19 : 37 ] That Israel, up until this moment, during these 40 years, were under the just chastisement of God, and God was not fighting for them, as it were, as he had been, and promised to be, but now that was over and done with.

He was going to be for them, providing they would walk in his ways. And this was the beginning, as it were, of the renewal, if you like. And it had to begin with this, the circumcision, and the ratification,

if you like, of the covenant.

That God was theirs and they were his. And this was the mark that was to be upon them, that they were his. And all the reproach of these years was now removed, and they were entering into this new phase.

And you might say, what does that have to do with us? Surely that Old Testament teaching, it's history, factual, yes, I accept that. But it's not relevant to us today. Is it not? Well, I can assure you of this, my friends, that there will be no victory for us without circumcision either.

But I speak of the circumcision of the heart here. Because that is the circumcision that is important. There is no victory for us without it.

[ 20 : 51 ] The strongholds of Satan must be broken down. But this cannot be unless our hearts are changed by the Spirit of God. And once our hearts are changed by the Spirit of God, then we can go on in the strength of God the Lord.

We can go on and we can fight the battle for the Lord in his strength, not in our own strength. Whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the world.

And this is the victor that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God.

Friends, a new heart will I give unto you, says God. And when he does that, then indeed we are on our way. Yes, fighting the battle of the Lord, but in his strength, to his glory, and we're on our way in his will.

And it may be that you are here tonight conscious of evil within. You are conscious of weakness within. You are conscious of your own inadequacy and insufficiency.

[ 22 : 06 ] As you are confronted from God's word with the reality of the necessity of fighting the fight of faith. Unless there is resistance to evil in your life and my life, we must question honestly before God whether we are the Lord's at all.

And you're feeling this evil today in your heart tonight.

And you know that it has to be overcome. Yes, it must be overcome if we are going to have victory over Satan. These idols must be cast out.

Whatever it is, that is in your life and my life, that is wrong. Ah, but you see, we have sinful hearts. There will always be something wrong in our hearts. Yes, that is true.

But there's a difference in having sin in our hearts and giving a place to sin in our hearts and in our lives. The psalmist says, if in my heart I sin regard, the Lord will not hear me.

[ 23 : 12 ] If I give place to sin in my heart, if I allow that little idol, if I allow that little idol to come between me and the service of God, I'm going to suffer the consequences.

I will not be what I should be. As a servant of God, I must be rid of it. I must get out of it. How am I going to do it? We must ask and pray that the Holy Spirit will give us strength.

Strength which we do not have by nature to overcome. Ah, to overcome by the blood of the Lamb. Remember what is said of those who are around the throne in heaven.

They are those. Remember they were clothed in their white robes in the book of Revelation. They are those who have come through great tribulation and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Difficulties will be surmounted. Besetting sins will not have dominion over us. The walls of our Jericho, however strong, will certainly fall if we are strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

[ 24 : 12 ] But the second experience they gave them was the celebration of the Passover. Now, without circumcision, they would have not been allowed to partake of the Passover.

because in the book of Exodus chapter 12 at the end of verse 48, where God is giving instruction in regard to strangers and the necessity of their being circumcised, there the verse 48 finishes with the words, no uncircumcised person at all shall eat thereof.

You are not, no one is to partake of the Passover but those who are circumcised. And so you see, the Passover was to be a remembrance kept in Israel right through their whole history, but only to be given to those who were of the circumcised.

Now, surely, that's a wonderful illustration of the Lord's table, of the sacrament of the Lord's supper also. Those who are not circumcised in their hearts, who are not born again of the Spirit of God, who are not through Christians, they have no right to the privilege of the Lord's table, just as it was through in Israel in regard to the Passover.

But that, by the way, now, this is only the third Passover recorded in the Bible. The first was in Egypt on the night on which they were delivered, remember, when God said, when I see the blood, I will pass over you.

[ 25 : 48 ] And then the second one was at Sinai, when the law was given. And here is the third instance when it was given. These are three outstanding moments, if you like, in the history of God's people.

And on each of these three occasions, the Passover is celebrated among them. And so we begin to realise the importance of this occasion.

We begin to realise that here is a watershed, if you like, in the history of this great people. There was no indication that they ever observed the Passover during these 40 years in the wilderness. There's no biblical warrant to believe that they did. There was a great similarity, surely, between what happened at the Red Sea and what was happening here now at Jordan.

There is the drying up of the water, there is the celebrating of the Passover. And the Israelites would now surely begin to recognise something of the importance of their situation at that time.

[ 27 : 02 ] Not only so, but they had been taught concerning what God had done for their forefathers. And the God who had, you remember, who had taken them across the Red Sea was the God who had gone before them in the wilderness, who had been faithful to them despite their unfaithfulness.

And now as they had confronted themselves with the difficulty that is theirs in the fortified city of Jericho, in the Passover, they are reminded, what, of the faithfulness of God.

And as I was with Moses, he has said unto Joshua, so I will be with you. And so as I was with your forefathers, I will be with you also. And friends, isn't it good for ourselves to come to the scriptures and see how God was with his people there on so many occasions and take to ourselves the promises of God.

And even in our own experience, we can look back and remember God was with us there. We have our watersheds. If we have any spiritual experience at all, there have been moments in our lives when God was with us.

And we know that. Well, the same God is with us still. Yes, we have forsaken him. We have sinned against him. We're not better than the children of Israel. We're worse, some of us. But, God is faithful.

[ 28 : 16 ] And God is true to his promise. His promise to his son concerning his people. But the thirdly, we notice that they were given the appropriation of Canaan's produce.

The manna was to cease. But on the day of the Passover, they ate some of the produce of the land. Unleavened cakes and parched corn.

God had promised them a land of plenty, as I've already said. Now they're in the land. And, as God had reminded them in the book of Deuteronomy, chapter 8, a land of wheat and of barley, of vines, of fig trees, of pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey, a land where you shall eat food without scarcity.

Now they had tasted of the food of the land. But, it was only a foretaste of what was to come. It was the old corn.

The springtime was there and soon, then there would be the harvest to follow. There was to be a great entering in, if you like, on their part, into the fullness of the land in the future.

[ 29 : 27 ] part of which they were now tasting of, if you like. And you see, my friends, that's how we must look at what we have ourselves.

We've only begun to partake of the goodness and the fullness that God has provided for us in Jesus Christ. And in all the blessings that arouse in him. I ask you tonight, have you tasted of Christ for yourself?

If you have, you are saying in your soul, if not outwardly, go, taste and see that God is good to others. And if you have had any true experience of God's love, you have tasted more and more of that.

And yet, as you have tasted of it, you realize this, there is something in the taste that you have received of it, that gives you to know that you are only beginning to learn about it. There is, as it were, a notion, yet, to be, to be, be, be, be, be, discovered by you.

And that is what is true, my friends. And that is live thus in expectation of greater things from our great God. Because this was truly a land flowing with milk and honey.

[ 30 : 36 ] Eye have not seen, ear have not heard, nor have it entered into the heart of man what God has prepared for his own. What there is still to come, the best is yet to come, the half has not been told us.

If you find Christ, you find a pearl of great price. you have found the unsearchable riches of Christ that cannot be measured.

You are only beginning to understand or appreciate what Christ is. You who have not found Christ as yet, how empty your life is, how futile your life is, how purposeless your life must be, what is at the end of life for you?

Nothing but death and fear and degradation and woe. But if you find Christ, oh, you find everything. You have a purpose to life, but above all, you have eternal life itself.

He that hath the Son hath life, he that hath not seen the Son, hath not the Son, hath not seen life. Oh, my friends, if we have Christ, let us go on into the, let us seek to, as it were, advance more into a fuller realization of what we have in Christ, of who we have and what we have in Christ.

[ 31 : 58 ] And if we haven't found Christ as yet, may we never rest until we do. Rest not until you do, until you begin to know and understand and realize something of the glory that pertains to him who is altogether lovely, who is full of grace and full of truth.

They have now tasted of the food of the land, but it was only a foretaste of what was to come, what they were going to glean. And now the manna ceased. It was to be no more. It wasn't necessary anymore, because their wilderness journey was over.

It was no longer necessary. What a lesson for us to learn. God does not work miracles. When we have plenty in our possession. It may be, you see, that we foolishly wait, as it were.

And I must acknowledge my own folly in this as much as anyone else's. We all must, as it were, wait for something to happen. Something extraordinary to happen.

That's not going to happen. Why? Because we have in the word of God, in the gospel of Christ, in the church of God, in the New Testament dispensation, a fullness already, that is ours, that passes, or surpasses, anything we ever expected.

[ 33 : 20 ] If only we had the key to unlock the storehouses that are therein, and glean from the fullness that is in the gospel for ourselves and for others.

We must stop looking for miracles. We must stop looking for that unique experience, as it were. If God wants to give us these, he'll give us these in accordance with his word.

Nothing contrary to his word, friend. Don't get me wrong. We will not get anything contrary to his word. But then there was the appearance of their divine commander, finally.

All this was preparatory to what? To their taking of this great city. Let's keep that in mind.

Preparatory to their advancing. There was the circumcision. celebration. There was the celebration of the Passover.

There was the appropriation of Canaan's produce, and there is now the appearance of their own divine commander. We read that it came to pass when Joshua was by Jericho that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand.

[ 34 : 31 ] Now the question arises, what was Joshua doing over by Jericho? He had left the others and he had gone over. Whether he was alone, we don't know. Why he went? Well, perhaps he wanted to have a look at the place for himself.

He was, after all, the commander of the people. It was his duty to tell them what to do, how to do it, and so on. And being the wise man that he was, he wanted to know as much as he possibly could about the strength or otherwise of the enemy.

It's good to know the enemy, friend. We must never underestimate the enemy. However, scripture doesn't tell us why he was there, but suddenly he was given a remarkable vision of this man.

There stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand, and Joshua went unto him and said unto him, Art thou for us or for our adversaries?

Nay, says he, but as captain of the host of the Lord am I now come. What a wonderful experience this was. Here we have the captain of the Lord's hosts.

[ 35 : 50 ] Who is this? Well, without going into all the arguments, for or against and so on, I believe emphatically that this was none other than the Lord Jesus Christ himself in what we call a Christophany or a Theophany.

That is a manifestation before the incarnation of God in Christ to his church. Here we have the only captain of our salvation, the Lord Jesus Christ.

And all my friends, this is the one of whom God himself speaks in his verse, behold, I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader, and a commander to the people.

Now, Joshua was the commander under the hand of God, humanly speaking, but there was a greater one than he. Joshua was given the strength, something similar to that which was given Isaiah, remember, when he was confronted with the awful task of prophesying in Israel, when in the year that King Uzziah died, he beheld the Lord.

That was his strength, the knowledge that God was on the throne. Here you have Joshua, confronted with this great battle. What is his hope? Is it in himself, the strength of his armies, the military know-how of his armies?

[ 37 : 08 ] Of course not. His strength must be in the Lord. And so it is with us, my friends. The battle is ours in one sense, but in the highest sense, the battle is the Lord's.

And as we go out into the world, and as we battle with sin within ourselves, let us remember that it is Christ who is King. He is the captain of our salvation.

He it is who is going out to conquer and shall conquer. He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords. And the cause of Christ is in his hands, essentially.

In our hands also. But secondarily, first of all, the cause is his. And he is much more concerned about his cause than you and I ever shall be. And he shows himself here as captain.

And therefore, Joshua is comforted. At the same time, he is reminded of his responsibility to his captain. captain. Because unless he is, unless he lives up to the demands of his captain, and the commands of his captain, he will suffer the consequences.

[ 38 : 28 ] Friends, it is so with us. We mustn't trifle with the word of God. We mustn't trifle with the truth of God. We must take God's word as coming from the captain of our salvation.

It is an order. We are on military service. service. We are an act of service. The disobeying of an order brought its own terrible consequences. So it is with us.

It will bring its terrible consequences if we disobey. Perhaps Joshua had been afraid of the coming battle. Conscious of how unskilled he was in a battle of this kind as he looks at these fortified walls. The Lord himself directs all the military operations on this occasion. And for that Joshua is thankful. And you know friends, we must also, and we are aren't we, thankful that all the operations, the military operations that are yours and mine here on earth in the service of God are under the control of none other than the captain of the Lord's hosts.

[ 39 : 40 ] What hosts were they? Just the children of Israel, know all the angelic hosts, all the powers that be. Because the one, remember, who humbled himself and became obedient unto death, is the one whom God hath highly exalted, and given a name that is above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in hell, things on earth, things under the earth.

He is captain supreme in all things. it is his kingdom, it is his glory, and he will give strength to his own in the day of battle.

He will strike terror into the heart of the enemy, according to his own will. Now, God's people, no discouragement at times.

And our friends, we should feel and help one another in these times of discouragement. There's a conflict with sin and the enemy of their souls. And belief is there almost overcoming our faith at times.

But, from time to time, our Lord Jesus Christ shows us his own soul, shows us himself.

[ 41 : 02 ] And that is the greatest encouragement you and I can have on life's way. God's love. It's good to have the encouragement of friends. But, oh, a word from his mouth.

Through the preaching of the word at times, the reading of the word and prayer, how different that is, how uplifting that is. And you know, all the fears scatter.

It's amazing. You may wake up in the morning and everything is on top of you. Your own inadequacy, your own sin, your own insufficiency. And then, perhaps not in any dramatic way, but through the still, small voice, Christ draws near.

We know all is well. It doesn't matter what may happen. And we face the battlements of the enemy with courage and expectation. Because then we look not to ourselves, but to Christ.

And the battle is ours. The victory is ours. in heaven. The victory is ours on account of the fact that Christ is the captain of our salvation.

[ 42 : 08 ] Is he yours? How low your morale must be if anyone but Christ is the captain of your soul.