

Messages From the Gates of Jerusalem  
#26 - Horse Gate - Part III- You're In The Army Now

The gates of Jerusalem in Nehemiah 3 depict the Christian journey from salvation at the Sheep Gate to Lordship (Absolute Surrender) at the Dung Gate to experiencing the Abundant Life via the Holy Spirit's power depicted in the Fountain Gate, Water Gate and Horse Gate. Although we may not realize it, we have been enlisted in the army of God.

It seems that it requires a long preparation to be ready for spiritual warfare.

It appears we cannot be victorious in defeating the enemy in spiritual warfare (Horse Gate) unless we are surrendered to the Lord and filled with the Holy Spirit. He fights our battles and He is the victor.

Truth: I am NOT ready for spiritual warfare until I am obedient at the Dung Gate and filled with the Holy Spirit who will quicken the Word of God in me and bring It to life.

John Chrysostom - martyr (347-407) - "You are but a poor soldier of Christ if you think you can overcome without fighting, and suppose you can have the crown without the conflict." The Christian life involves challenge and conflict. Our enemies are constantly waging war against us and trying to keep us from claiming our inheritance in Jesus Christ.

It is crucial that every Christian is aware of the spiritual battle around us. Its enemies, its prerogatives, its fortresses and its weapons are all spiritual. Vigilance, preparedness, courage and the right weaponry are crucial elements of engaging in spiritual warfare.

Truth: If we attempt to fight the spiritual with human weapons, we will fail and the enemy will be victorious.

*You're In the Army Now > Expectations of a Good Soldier:*

II Tim. 2:1, 3-4 You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

<sup>3</sup> You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

<sup>4</sup> No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of *this* life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier.

I Cor. 6:19-20 - Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit *who is* in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? <sup>20</sup> For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

- a. Requires discipline so we are already ready to fight
- a. Spiritual warfare requires spiritual endurance.
- b. Totally committed to the Commanding Officer - Jesus Christ

Life is a battleground; not a playground. We face an enemy who is much stronger than we are > apart from the Lord.

#### Paul's Military Instructions:

II Cor. 10:3-5 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds > (Our weapons have DIVINE POWER to demolish strongholds.)

casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ

I Tim. 6:12 Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

II Tim. 2:3 You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

II Tim. 4:7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

#### You are engaged in Spiritual Warfare - IT IS REAL

Eph. 6:10-12, 18 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

<sup>11</sup> Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

<sup>12</sup> For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*. <sup>18</sup> praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints.

#### Victorious Prayer - Link our lives with our Omnipotent God who commands us to pray

##### Pride Promotes Strife

James 4:1-3 Where do wars and fights *come* from among you? Do *they* not *come* from your *desires for pleasure* that war in your members? You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask.

<sup>3</sup> You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend *it* on your pleasures.

Jesus said to ask and you shall receive. James said you have not because you ask not.

a. Failures in my lives are prayer failures.

b. Prayer could have prevented the sin in my life.

Mark 14:38 Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation.

John Bunyan: Prayer will make a man cease from sin. Sin will entice a man to cease from prayer.

c. The genuine needs in my life can be met through fervent, believing prayer.

#### I. The Presumption or Arrogance of Unoffered Prayer - James 4:1-2 (see above)

The war in our hearts helps to cause the war in the church. The essence of sin is selfishness.

Ex.: 1) Eve disobeyed God, ate of the tree > Become wise like God

2) Abraham lied about his wife > Selfish to save his own life

3) Achan caused defeat to Israel > Selfish > Took forbidden loot

4) Isa. 53:6 ALL we like sheep have gone astray & turned to our own way > God laid our sin on Jesus.

Consider: Many times we veil religious quarrels under the disguise of "spirituality."

1) Miriam & Aaron > complained about Moses' wife > Envious of Moses' authority

2) James & John > ask for special thrones in the Kingdom > Desired Recognition NOW

Results of Selfish Desires: God's Chastening & Division Among the People

Truth: Selfish Desires lead to Wrong Actions & Wrong Praying

God wants to bless us & give us what we need. However, we are so proud and self-sufficient. We fight, war, scheme, plan, hate, connive, strive - trying in our way and our own strength to get the things we think we need.

Truth: When I seek to know God and seek His face, I will know peace in my heart.

Consider: It is not until I pray that God moves into action!

Illustration: Little boy trying with all of his strength to move a stone > Muscles bulging, sweat on his face. "Daddy, I'm using all of my strength." His Dad replied, "No, you're not. You have not asked me to help you."

Question: Are you burdened down with crushing problems? Are you crying, striving and fighting, and warring? Are you doing everything you know to do? Have you asked your Heavenly Father to help? You have not because you ask not.

Illustration: Little boy trying to steal an orange - didn't know it was a sour orange.

The man would have given him a great, sweet orange if the little boy had asked.

The man had an abundance of oranges that he was trying to give away.

Spiritual App - Imagine arriving in heaven - God shows you the storehouse of blessings He had for you. See those blessings that are unused, gathering rust and mold - those were the ones I had for you. I desired to give these to you and load you with my blessings. I couldn't give them to you. You went your own way > warring, scheming, planning, striving and trying > You have not because you ask not.

"O what peace we often forfeit; O what needless pain we bear. All because we do not carry everything to God in prayer."

Truth: Prayerlessness is a SIN.

I Sam. 12:23 Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you;

I Thess. 5:17 Pray without ceasing

Consider: You are doing without the things God wants you to have and you are sinning.

## II. The Problem of Unacceptable Prayer - God will not accept some prayers. -

James 4:3-4 You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss (wrongly), that you may spend *it* on your pleasures. Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity (warfare) with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

1. God will not accept prayer based on the wrong motivation. "People will sacrifice the answer to their prayer on the altar of their lusts." They are not asking for the glory of God but for their own lusts. Motivation is selfish and sinful.
2. When we were born again, we became the Heavenly Bride. We should belong to Jesus Christ only.
3. We commit spiritual adultery when we align ourselves with the world. Then we pray to God for \_\_\_\_\_, He will NOT answer.

### 5 Principles of Undeniable Prayer

#### 1. Sensitivity to the Spirit

James 4:5 Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, "The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously"?

The Holy Spirit dwelling in you has strong desires. He is envious for the cause of Christ. The Holy Spirit in you jealously yearns for the entire devotion of your heart.

Truth: BEFORE I pray, God demands my whole heart. The Holy Spirit is urging you to give your entire devotion to Jesus Christ.

I am the Lord Thy God. There is none other. Thou shalt have no other gods before Me for I the Lord Thy God am a jealous God.

Truth: God doesn't just want a place in your life or prominence in your life.

God demands preeminence.

The Holy Spirit will bear witness to you: Jesus is Lord. Be sensitive to the Spirit within you. We pray in the Spirit, through the Son, to the Father.

Rom. 8:26 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.

#### 2. Submission to the Father

James 4:6-7 But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble." Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

a. NO answered prayer until you are submitted to God - Thy Kingdom come - Thy will be done.

I John 5:14 Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.

b. Do I want more than anything else to do the will of God?

If you don't, you are wasting your time when you pray.

### 3. Standing Against the Devil

James 4:7 Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

When you pray, you must enter into warfare with the devil.

Eph. 6:11, 18 Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit.

The warfare is prayer. When we put on the armor, we are just getting ready to go to battle. God's warfare is against Satan. He intends to win through the prayers of His people. God moves when we pray. The devil FEARS the prayers of God's people. He will do anything he can to keep us from praying. He wants us to leave out the power of God that comes through earnest, persistent prayer.

### 4. Separation From the World

James 4:8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse *your* hands, *you* sinners; and purify *your* hearts, *you* double-minded.

Consider: You can't be separated from the world until you resist the devil. You can't resist the devil until you submit to God. You can't submit to God until you are sensitive to the Holy Spirit. NOW you can be separated from the world.

It's not for you to clean up your life; then God will accept you. You can't clean up your life until you come to God. We cannot come to God with unclean hands, divided hearts, double minds. God didn't save us by His shed blood to have us serve the devil.

Question: Do I have some unrepentant grudge, gossip, resentment, etc. Confess it!

James 1:7-8 let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord;

<sup>8</sup> *he is* a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

That man: v. 6 for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind.

Let go of this world and grab God with both hands. Then you will experience the power of prayer. God despises half-hearted Christians, religion and praying.

Jer. 29:13 And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.

Ps. 66:18 If I regard iniquity (have a pet sin I will not let go of) in my heart, The Lord will not hear.

There must be a repentance and a forsaking of sin.

### 5. Seriousness & Soberness in our Purpose

James 4:9-10 Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and *your* joy to gloom. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.

Our prayers must be fervent. Are my prayers silly, half-hearted, easily uttered and soon forgotten? Pray in the urgency and emergency of the need. Learn to weep before the Lord.

God forgive our weak, lazy, easy prayers; our unbroken prayers.  
Do I treat my sin lightly? Laugh at it? Sin is serious.

Ps. 51:17 The sacrifices of God *are* a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart—  
These, O God, You will not despise.

James 5:16 The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.  
Help me to learn the secret of victorious prayer.

### Factors in Joshua's Victory - Joshua 6:1-5

1. The Fear of the Lord - 6:1 Now Jericho was securely shut up because of the children of Israel; none went out, and none came in.
  - a. The news of Israel's Exodus from Egypt and their recent victories east of the Jordan had put the people in panic. (Joshua 2:9-11)
  - b. Deut. 2:25 This day I will begin to put the dread and fear of you upon the nations under the whole heaven, who shall hear the report of you, and shall tremble and be in anguish because of you.'
  - c. Deut.7:23 But the LORD your God will deliver them over to you, and will inflict defeat upon them until they are destroyed.
  - d. Deut.11:25 No man shall be able to stand against you; the LORD your God will put the dread of you and the fear of you upon all the land where you tread, just as He has said to you.
  - e. Deut.32:30 - "I will send My fear before you."
  - f. God had promised in Ex. 23:27 - "I will cause confusion among all the people to whom you come, and will make all you enemies turn their backs to you.

It is told that Mary Queen of Scots feared the prayers of John Knox more than she feared an enemy army. Today's world is not afraid of what God's people might do. The church has become much like the world > imitate their methods, cater to the world's appetites and measure what we do by their standards.

Joshua & Israel were a conquering people who made no compromise with the enemy. They trusted God to give them the victory.

2. The Promise of the Lord -6:2 And the LORD said to Joshua: "See! I have given Jericho into your hand, its king, *and* the mighty men of valor.

- a. The victory had already been won!
- b. Joshua & the people had to claim the promise and obey.

### Victorious Christians >

- a. KNOW the promises of God because they spend time meditating on God's Word  
Joshua 1:8 This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.
- b. BELIEVE the promises of God because the Word of God generates faith in their heart  
Rom. 10:17 So then faith *comes* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

c. RECKON on the promises and obey what God tells them to do.

Reckon > Count as true in your life what God says about you in His Word.

John 16:33 Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.

Gal. 5:24 And those *who are* Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

John 12:31 Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out.

Truth: Christ has conquered the world, the flesh and the devil. IF I reckon on this truth, I can conquer through Him. It's possible to believe a promise and still NOT reckon on it and obey the Lord. Believing a promise is like accepting a check, but reckoning is like endorsing the check and cashing it.

3. The Instructions of the Lord -6:3-5 You shall march around the city, all *you* men of war; you shall go all around the city once. This you shall do six days. <sup>4</sup> And seven priests shall bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark. But the seventh day you shall march around the city seven times, and the priests shall blow the trumpets. <sup>5</sup> It shall come to pass, when they make a long *blast* with the ram's horn, *and* when you hear the sound of the trumpet, that all the people shall shout with a great shout; then the wall of the city will fall down flat. And the people shall go up every man straight before him."

a. The strategy was the LORD'S. He delights in using plans and people that seem foolish to the world. (I Cor. 1:26-29)

- Joshua with trumpets and marching
- Gideon with torches and pitchers
- David with a sling

b. God delights in using weakness and seeming foolishness to defeat His enemies and glorify His name.

II Chron. 16:9 For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of *those* whose heart *is* loyal to Him.

Truth: We should be living like VICTORS. We fight FROM victory because the Lord has already won the battle. Reckon on His promises, obey Him, and we will have the victory.

Truth: The only way to grow in faith is to accept new challenges and trust God to give you the victory.

Phillips Brooks: "Do not pray for easy lives. Pray to be better men and women. Do not pray for tasks equal to your power. Pray for power equal to your tasks."

Corrie Ten Boom: " No Christian worker succeeds to the glory of God apart from prayer. Is prayer your steering wheel or your spare tire?"