



# TAKE UP THY SWORD



A newsletter with hope and encouragement from the Holy Bible

*For the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword... (Hebrews 4:16)*

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## Overwhelmed yet Overcoming

*For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the word: and this is the victory 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? (1 John 5:4-5)*

"We Shall Overcome" became a civil rights anthem during the 50s and 60s when the US was overwhelmed with injustice and inequality. Isn't it amazing how two words can have the same meaning and also be opposites? It all depends on which side of the court you're on! Either you feel OVERWHELMED/overcome (buried under a great heap) by your adversity, or you are OVERCOMING/overwhelming (gaining the victory over) your adversaries. This is where we get the power to prevail:

*Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world (1 John 4:4).*

When Jesus died on the cross and rose again on the third day, He conquered death, Hell, and the grave. And according to Romans 8:11, the same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead dwells in us! Therefore we cannot be fearful like the children of Israel were after spying out the promised land. But Caleb, along with Joshua, believed the report of the Lord and tried to encourage them:

*... Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it (Num 13:30).*

In addition to fear and discouragement, Paul tells us that we must "overcome evil with good" (Rom 12:21). How do we accomplish this? Just remember that even though we do have to fight, "the battle is the Lord's" (1 Sam 17:47) and to God "belongeth vengeance and recompence" (Deut 32:35). Jesus also said in Luke 6:28, "Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you." That can be a very hard and bitter pill to swallow, but the end result is worth it and the book of Revelation clearly states the reward for overcomers. They will:

- 1) eat of the tree of life in paradise (2:7)
- 2) not be hurt of the second death (2:11)
- 3) eat the hidden manna and receive a new name (2:17)
- 4) have power over the nations (2:26)
- 5) have their name in the book of life (3:5)
- 6) be a pillar in the temple of God (3:12)
- 7) sit with Jesus in His throne (3:21)

Of course we're all familiar with this passage: "And they overcame him (the devil) by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death" (Rev 12:11). Sometimes, we have to become overwhelmed by our circumstances in order for us to end up with a testimony! David is one example:

*Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me... Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee: He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved (Ps 55:5, 22).*

Although David always let his complaint or request be made known, he would then turn to the Lord for comfort and answers. When I feel the weight and pressures of life from trying to juggle parenthood, ministry, and career, all I can do is cry out to my Father in prayer:

*Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever (Ps 73:25-26).*

Then I hear the Holy Spirit whisper softly to me:

*Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest (Matt 11:28).*

Because we know that God is "a very present help in trouble" (Ps 46:1), we need to learn how to bring those 'impossible' situations to the altar and leave them there! Let's see how David handled one such struggle when he destroyed the Amalekites in First Samuel, chapter 30:

When the Amalekites burnt Judah's territory in Ziklag and kidnapped all of the women and children, "David and the people that were with him lifted up their voice and wept, until they had no more power to weep" (30:4). David had to take refuge in the Lord and seek His counsel when his own life was threatened by the people. Then God said, "Pursue: for thou shalt surely overtake them, and without fail recover all" (30:8). So David took 400 men, 200 others were too faint to fight, and "recovered all that the Amalekites had carried away" (30:18).

It's time to practice letting go and letting God if we want the joy of having "rest round about" (Josh 21:44)!

**THUS SAITH THE LORD: "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33).**

**PRAYER:** *When my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the Rock that is higher than I (Ps 61:2).*

**"Be encouraged in the law of the Lord" (2 Chron 31:4):**

Judges 8:4; Nehemiah 6:9; Psalm 18:37, 27:13-14, 121:1-4, 124:1&4-8, 143:7-12; Isaiah 14:3-7, 40:28-31, 41:10; Jeremiah 31:25; Jonah 2:7; Hebrews 12:1-3; 1 John 2:14

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