

# 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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## Don't Fail the Final

*And David inquired at the Lord, saying, Shall I pursue after this troop? shall I overtake them? And He answered him, Pursue: for thou shalt surely overtake them, and without fail recover all... And David recovered all... (1 Samuel 30:8, 18).*

If we have an exam in chemistry class, will it make sense for us to study our grammar book? Of course not, because mastering possessive pronouns won't help us with chemical compounds! God wants to remind us today that the strategy to defeat our enemies as well as the answers to life's questions are all found in His Word. Perhaps this scripture will spark your spirit:

*This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success (Josh 1:8).*

Jesus told his disciples in John 16:13 that the Holy Spirit would guide them into all truth and show them of things to come. So why are we looking instead to the media for knowledge of the state of the world? Why are we seeking "fleshly wisdom" (2 Cor 1:12) about pivotal decisions? We cannot afford to solicit and/or accept advice that is not God-ordained, "for by wise counsel thou shalt make thy war: and in multitude of counsellors there is safety" (Prov 24:6).

I am still battling the strongholds of procrastination and 'couch potatoism'; so when I find the remote in my hand more than the Word, I have to remind myself that "He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him" (Heb 11:6). Psalm 119:148 states, "Mine eyes prevent the night watches, that I might meditate in thy word" – not 'that I might watch late-night comedy shows!' We have to make a conscience effort to fulfill the following principle:

*Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth (2 Tim 2:15).*

David told his son, Solomon, to "serve [God] with a perfect heart and with a willing mind" (1 Chron 28:9). We need to surrender completely to the Lord and ask Him to order our steps so that obstacles, interruptions, distractions, and stumbling blocks don't hinder or terminate the progression of our spiritual maturity. Here are some [secular] test-taking tips found in the bible:

Preparation: *Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil (Eph 6:11).*

Time Management: *Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep; and an idle soul shall suffer hunger (Prov 19:15).*

Thorough Review: *But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions (Heb 10:32).*

Proper Sustenance: *It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God (Luke 4:4).*

Let's see how severe the consequences can be when we do not complete our divine assignments and ultimately fail the test orchestrated by God to bless us:

*And Samuel said unto Saul, I will not return with thee: for thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord hath rejected thee from being king over Israel (1 Sam 15:26).*

Saul was anointed to be king over Israel in First Samuel 10; but three chapters later, he had already "done foolishly" (13:13) by not obeying the Lord. His final test was in chapter 15 when God told him to "utterly destroy" (15:3) the Amalekites. Saul was supposed to wipe out every man, woman, child, beast, and everything they had. However, he spared Agag, the king of Amalek, along with some livestock and "all that was good" (15:9). But Saul said unto Samuel, "I have performed the commandment of the Lord" (15:13). Samuel scolded him and explained that "to obey is better than sacrifice" (15:22). After Saul stopped making excuses and blaming 'the people' for this act of insubordination, he finally admitted that he had sinned. However it was too little too late because Samuel told him, "The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, that is better than thou" (15:28). David was anointed as the new king soon after, then "the spirit of the Lord departed from Saul" (16:14).

We need to execute all of the detailed instructions of the Lord; for His Word says that because of the anointing, "ye need not that any man teach you" (1 John 2:27)!

**THUS SAITH THE LORD, "Behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not..." (Luke 22:31-32).**

**PRAYER:** *Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul. O my God, I trust in thee: let me not be ashamed, let not mine enemies triumph over me (Ps 25:1-2).*

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

Psalm 18:32-34; Proverbs 15:28; Ecclesiastes 1:13; Isaiah 55:2, 58:11; Jeremiah 29:11-13; Matthew 11:29-30; Acts 2:28, 17:11; 1 Timothy 1:12-13, 4:14-16; Hebrews 5:12

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