

Confronting your Enemies

Psalm 23:5, “You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.” The Contemporary English Version says, **“You treat me to a feast, while my enemies watch. You honour me as your guest, and you fill my cup until it overflows”** The table pictured here represents every promise of God that is yours in Christ Jesus. Though surrounded by hostilities, you can enjoy the Lord’s abundant blessings in total peace and security. Eastern hospitality will always guarantee the safety of every guest. If you are an invited guest, you are taken into the tent and food is placed before you - while those who are antagonistic toward you are made to stand their ground and watch.

“You anoint my head with oil...” It is difficult for those living in a cooler climate to appreciate this, but it was customary in the Middle East to anoint the body with oil in order to refresh it and protect it from excessive perspiration. When mixed with perfume, the oil imparted a delightfully revitalising and invigorating sensation. Athletes anointed their bodies as a matter of course before running a race. Also, when the body is anointed with oil in the heat of war it is refreshed and invigorated, and so better suited for action. In the same fashion, the Lord desires to anoint you whenever danger threatens.

Again, the shepherd would anoint the heads of his sheep to soothe their scratches and wounds. So even if you’ve suffered injury the Lord can heal your wounds! In today’s turbulent times, you may be feeling battle weary. But it’s not enough to merely ride out the storm - you must confront it head on. Those of you who are brave enough to look adversity in the eye will triumph. **1 John 5:4** declares, **“...For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world - our faith.”** Notice, it is only the man, woman or child who’s **born of God** that can overcome the world. Because by faith he or she is able to face any catastrophe (any evil the world system may provoke), and see things in their true perspective. Therefore, the one who overcomes the world is not the scientist or philosopher or psychologist, but the humble believer exercising his or her **faith**. We must realise that God created us to be masters and kings - *in this life* - here on earth!

To “overcome” is, (a) *to win a victory over*, (b) *to succeed in subduing*, (c) *to prevail in*. The overcomer is one who has conquered and become master of his own circumstances. But note, the overcomer (by definition) must have had something to overcome. He’s been in battle or facing hostility, and he triumphed over it!

In a believer’s life here are two main battles raging. The one is in the **natural realm**. Namely, against the instruments of the enemy - the world system and those people whom satan uses to do his will and accomplish his objectives. And in this battle we are given just one effective weapon – “*love*.” Love is the only way you can defeat these agents of the enemy, because with flesh and blood “*love never fails*.”

The other battle is in the **spiritual realm** and this is where you are expected to be antagonistic. If you have the courage to ‘confront’ your enemy, you will surely triumph. This is where the real battle takes place. This is where you must learn rule and reign in this life!

What you achieve and gain in the spirit realm has eternal qualities; therefore, every victory can positively effect and alter the natural realm. **“...For we do not wrestle with flesh and blood, but against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places”** - Ephesians 6:12. And, **“The weapons of our warfare are**

not carnal, but spiritual, mighty in God for the pulling down of strongholds” 2 Corinthians 10:4. You already possess mighty spiritual weapons!

However, the battle in the spirit realm requires a militant and determined attitude, and it often means confronting the enemy head on. Many of you are too timid. You have never truly exercised your authority or stood your ground when the battle is raging. You always respond out of fear and never employ true *faith*. You must learn to be boldly confrontational with spiritual matters. ***“For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of manifest mighty power and of love and of a sound mind”*** 2 Timothy 1:7.

The only way a believer can have real confidence when confronting any enemy is through revelation of God’s word. What has God promised you with regards your situation? What can you confidently expect Him to do for you (on your behalf)? In **Exodus 23:22** God says, ***“...I will be an enemy to your enemies, and I will oppose those who oppose you.”*** Another translation says, ***“I will be an adversary to your adversaries.”*** Here, God promises to send an Angel (the Lord Himself) to keep you on course and ensure that you fulfil your destiny. But remember, He also undertakes to destroy any opposition you may encounter along the way. This assures you victory over both your enemies (the world and the devil), but as a soldier He still expects you to *fight the good fight of faith*.

So how exactly does God say He will do this? Another word for *oppose* is “*confront*,” therefore, God is saying that He will confront our foes. God is not opposed to confrontation! This is why you shouldn’t be afraid of confrontation either! And whom God confronts He has the power to destroy. Yet, the Lord promises a lot more in this scripture...

Let’s first identify a few key issues. The promise we see here is part of the same covenant promise God made with Abraham in **Genesis 12:3** and **Genesis 27:29**, where He said, ***“Whoever curses you I will curse,”*** and, ***“Cursed be anyone who curses you.”***

After examining the Hebrew word for *enemy/adversary* used in **Exodus 23:22** I discovered a deeper more profound meaning to this scripture. The word used for *adversary* is only ever used once in the Bible and it’s root is “to cramp” or “to confine / restrain.” However, it can also mean, “to bind-up,” “to besiege,” “to distress,” “to imprison” and “to restrict.”

Therefore, reading this verse again with the broader meaning in mind we start to see something very powerful. God promises to:

- Confine those who confine or restrain you.
- Bind up those you have you bound.
- Besiege those who have besieged you.
- Distress those you have caused you distress.
- Envelope those who have surrounded you.
- Constrain those who have jugged you.
- Restrict those who have restricted you.

Now you can fully comprehend and understand why the Lord, ***“Prepares a table before you in the presence of all your enemies” Psalm 23:5***. Another interesting thing to note is it this. The word ‘satan’ literally means “the one who opposes.” In the New Testament he is called *“our adversary the devil”* - the one who is actually *opposing* the church. Therefore, if satan alone is our adversary, then surely he is behind all those things that attempt to *confine, restrict, restrain, constrain, besiege, distress, envelop* and *imprison* God’s people.

The devil wants to have you bound by circumstances and totally confined by your fear, doubt and unbelief. But God has a different plan. In God’s plan you rule and reign; you are masters and kings. This is why God says that He will be an enemy (hostile) to your enemies - the rulers of darkness and spiritual forces of wickedness. He will oppose, confine and restrain those who try to oppose, confine and restrain you. **The battle is the Lord’s! Exodus 15:3 *“The Lord is a man of war,”* and here we see God revealing Himself as a mighty man of war. When it’s necessary, God is confrontational, seeking vengeance! Understand this - He is still the God of Elijah.**

In **Exodus 23:27** the Lord says, ***“I will send my terror ahead of you and throw into confusion every enemy you encounter. I will make your attackers turn their backs and flee from you in fear.”***

Today, God’s enemies are those evil forces who seek to attack and destroy His children, and He has not forgotten His wrath or lost His battle plan. He is the same yesterday, today and forever. **Revelation 6:2** states, ***“I looked and there before me was a white horse. It’s rider held a bow and He was given a crown, and He rode out as a conqueror bent on conquest.”*** Until God’s enemies have all been thrown into the lake of fire, the Lord will be *bent on conquest* against the enemies of His children.

You must accept the fact that all Christians are living in a ‘combat zone’ where there is a real enemy and a real threat. But God’s wonderful promises should give you the confidence to confront every situation. To bravely sail into the eye of the storm! And whoever is bent on conquest will confront their enemies without fear. Remember the story of David and Goliath in **1 Samuel 17**? In verse *10* it says that Goliath *opposed* the armies of Israel. But in verse *45* it states that David *confronted* him for opposing the armies of his nation. And the result? David cut off the giant’s head and paraded it openly. Maybe some of you need to confront the things that are in opposition to God’s word concerning your life, and make a show of them openly. For you are more than a conqueror!

Whether it is a desert storm caused by the world system, or a sustained attack by the evil forces that go about seeking to steal, kill or destroy - you must choose to be strong and courageous! You must choose to confront every circumstance head on! You must choose to be an overcomer!

The victory is yours!