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ESF Lord's day sermon

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## **God expects us to take charge of our situations**

I Kings 20: 1-21.

INTRODUCTION: Guy Finley, in his book, "Freedom from the Ties That Bind" told of a story he had seen in a great western movie. The movie was about the courageous act of a single man, who saved the town because he dared to stand against the intimidation and control of the gangs and bullies.

In this western town, the people who were running the show were the gangs and the bullies. The Sheriff and the town's people were, literally, under the control of these lawless thugs. In the Guy Finley's own words, "frightened and defeated by events that seemed beyond his powers, the Sheriff took to the bottle to hide his own fears."

Nevertheless, amidst this impossible situations, there arised a man who was full of courage. This man wasn't even one of the locals, he was a stranger to the town. But, seeing what was going on: the lawlessness, injustice, the bullying and the intimidation that was in the city, as a direct result of the gangs and the bullies, this man determined to stand and face off these bullies. He called the bad men out into the street for a showdown.

Just as it looked as though this hapless and helpless stranger was about to be cruelly gunned down to the ground, the unbelievable took place. Rallied by the courage of the stranger in the face of impossible odd, the Sheriff and the town's people were moved to a change of heart. They

came to his rescue. As the stranger stood face to face with the bullies, all of a sudden, from all around him, shots rang out. A rain of bullets poured into the gang of murderous thugs and that day became the day the reign of terror ended.

God expects us to take charge of our seemingly impossible situation!

This is exactly what God told King Ahab, the King of Israel: “ Meanwhile ... “you will.” I Kings 20: 13,14.

The Lord knows how difficult it is to confront the enemy and take charge in the battle. For that reason, the Lord didn't tell King Ahab to be the one/the first to start the battle before he, at the same time, gave him assurance that:

- a) He, God, will make Himself known to Ahab that “ He is the Lord,” the “ I am” – the one who is always been and is. “
- b) Given him the authority and the means by which he triumph over his enemies and
- c) That the victory is guaranteed to him.

Let us look at each points closely.

- I. The Lord expects us to take charge of our seemingly impossible situation because He will be with us and will not leave us to our fate or show up after the fact.

In verse 13, the Lord asked, “ Do you see this vast army?” I will give it into your hand today and then you will know that I am the Lord.”

In here, what the Lord was saying to Ahab was, “ when you have victory over Ben Hadad and his vast army, you will understand that I am your

God, who will never abandon His people – that I am the God of Abraham, Issac, and Jacob, the God who was always been and is.

Yes, nothing encourages our spirit to stand firm in the face of evil and confront, even charge by faith, against our enemy than the awareness of God's presence in our situation.

A couple who were missionaries at a remote part of the world, as they were seated in their hut, a war broke between two rival clans/tribes and they were caught in a cross-fire. For days they were trapped and were uncertain of their future. In the midst of that, however, they were at peace. Upon returning home, they were asked how they managed to be at peace. Their reply was: they managed to be at peace because they were conscious of the presence of the Lord.

Jim Cymbala, the author of " Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire," commenting on I Chronicle 11:11, the first person on David's list, Jashobeam, " raised his spear against three hundred men, whom he killed in one encounter." Said as follows: " That sounds impossible. There is no way he could pile up that kind of body count without the overshadowing presence and power of God. Human bravery alone is not enough when the odds are 300 to 1."

What this servant of God has said is true!

We dare to go through the water and fire and afraid not to be drowned and burned up for He has promised us that He will be with us. Isaiah 43:1-5; John 14:16-17.

So, people of God, I challenge you today to take courage and rise up and face your enemy by faith. The Lord your God is with you when you

fight the evil that besieges you. The Lord is always at the side of those who stand for righteousness and righteous cause.

- II. The Lord expects us to take charge of our seemingly impossible situation because He has already given us the authority and the means by which we can triumph over our enemies.

The word of the Lord for King Ahab was, “ I will give it ( the army) into your hand today.”

Even King Ahab asked who will engage in the battle? The Lord replied, “ the young officers.”

What the Lord was saying to Ahab was that he has already given him the tools, the means, the provision by which he would be able to engage in the warfare and defeat his enemies.

When I was a teenager, it was my routine run to meet with my peers, after school, and play soccer. As much as I looked forward to that time, at the same time, was always disturbed when I think of what will happen to me. It was a legitimate fear. I had a bully in my life. There was a young teenager, name sake, who was always greets me with a punch and a kick.

One day, as usual, after school, I met with my friends to play soccer. To my surprise, the bully wasn't there, he was late. I hoped he wouldn't show up. But, unfortunately, in the midst of me having fun with my other friends, he showed up. He greeted others in a normal way and , as usual, turned toward me and punched and kicked me. I, then,

immediately, Kicked him back and took off. He came after me swearing and threatening to kill me. After I ran half the field, I stopped, turned toward him and faced him and warned him that I will fight him if he makes any wrong move.

He never believed I had such a courage to fight him back. So, he threw a punch, but I got under him and threw him to the ground, sat over him and started punching him until he was soaked with blood. I won the battle. I render the bully powerless. Ince that day, until I saw him last, I was doing to him what he has been doing to me whenever we meet at the field to play soccer.

Again, in the words of Jim Cymbala, “You and I never know our potential under God until we step out and take risks on the front line of battle.”

Yes, God has deposited a wealth of power and Grace in us. He has invested in us the authority over all evil. Mark 16:17 – 18

In another words, the Lord doesn't expect us to do that which we are not able to do or have the capability to do.

The young David, later King of Israel, knew very well about the promieses of God, He knew that the Israelites were a covenant people, circumcised, a people with a promise and special privilege. That's why, when David spoke with King Saul, he said, ( I Kings 17:36).

David relied not on his weapon or skills, but on the promise and power of God as a circumcised covenant person. That's why we read in the verses 45 – 47, David, instead of retreating in fear, he run toward Goliath and fight him in the name of the Lord.

People of God, humanly speaking, the odds to win against our enemies may be too high. But, be reminded of one thing: He who is in us is greater than the one who is in the world.

The Lord has said, “ My Grace is sufficient for thee for my strength shall be revealed in your weaknesses.” 2 Cor. 12:9

The time to look outward, to hear to what the enemy says, has passed. We are not looking at the enemies muscle, but looking inward to the Grace of God and our ears are open to hear the heaven’s report – to what god has planned to do using this earthen vessel.

So, don’t listen and accept to any report than what God has already said that you are in Christ Jesus.

- III. The Lord expects us to take charge of our seemingly impossible situation because He has already guaranteed us the victory.

In the Old economy, God sends His message directly or through His prophets to individuals or leaders of His people that He has given the victory. In the New economy, God has sealed our victory by the glorious resurrection of Jesus!

For these reasons, we are not guessing or questioning whether we will be victorious or not, we are sure that we are victorious over all evil that is coming against us.

As we read in the story, God sent a prophet to King Ahab to tell him that He has already given him a victory over Ben Hadad.

That's why the Lord, through His prophet, instructed him that he, not others, should be the one to start the battle.

Andrew Murray, in his book, "you've already got it," wrote that when he first got to the war front in Vietnam, that he had a hard time to sleep in a fox's hole for fear of the enemy coming and attacking him. But, when he heard from fellow soldiers that they ( Us ) has a far advanced and superior weapons – it was only then when he started sleeping.

You've already got it!

The Psalmist in Psalms 44:4 tells us that God has decreed victories for Jacob. The Apostle Paul, in I Corinthians 15: 57 said " But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

We all know the story of Gideon. To start with, he was a disappointed and fearful man. All he knew was that they were under a colony and, as a result, oppression. He thought that no army could defeat the Mideanites.

While Gideon was puzzled, by the fate of his country and his own inadequacy, the Lord told him that God, Himself, has already given victory to the Israelites through the hands of Gideon.

To proof that, God had him go down to Porah and listen to what people were saying ( Judges 7:10, 11 – 25 ).

Upon listening to what has been said, Gideon was encouraged and truly believed that the Lord has given the Medianites over

to Israel and so he blew the trumpet, declared war and went to battle and claimed his victory.