

Victory Christian Center of Hollywood

A Church appointed to Advance the Kingdom of God! Pastor MC Sermon Notes: February 8, 2017

Mid week service

Getting to know some of the Warriors of God in the Bible:

Introduction: Warrior: What does it mean? Question? Are you a Warrior of God? Which one can you relate to?

News Alert: Some Republicans have stated we are at war with what is happening in Washington to President Trump and Vice President. They actually have said War. I believe they are right-this is spiritual warfare and we know who we are and be prepared to fight-the good fight of faith-which means speaking the word of God, prayer and casting demons out. Let's get ready to rumble.

What is a Warrior? A Warrior is:

- One who is engaged in or experienced in battle.
- One who is engaged aggressively or energetically in an activity, cause, or conflict:
- A person engaged or experienced in warfare; soldier.
- a person who has shown great vigor, courage, or aggressiveness
- man engaged or experienced in warfare; *broadly* : a person engaged in some struggle or conflict

More on a Warrior:

1. A person who has gone through tough training and discipline
2. A warrior is anyone who fights well in battle or has experience in warfare civilians into *warriors*>
3. A warrior is a person who is experienced at fighting battles.
4. Spiritual Warrior is someone who embraces courage, compassion, discipline and training by reading God's word and being led by the Holy Spirit with Wisdom, Understanding and Knowledge in spiritual combat and/or warfare.

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I. Let's look in the Word of God and see who were God's warriors and what did they do?

1. Samson was never a 'gentle giant': Judges chapters 13-16

Samson was an exceptionally strong man, a giant impossible to beat, but not inclined to compromise. He would not negotiate with an enemy when there was a chance of fighting. He does not seem to have fought in an army, as other ancient heroes like Achilles did, in the Iliad. Rather, he used his personal strength to take on and vanquish any enemy. He caused mayhem on numerous occasions. Some of his feats include:

- the wedding riddle used at his marriage to the Philistine girl from Timnah, where Samson killed thirty Philistines in Ashkelon to revenge himself on the Philistine men who bribed his wife to obtain the answer to the riddle;
- And his final escapade with **Delilah**, who deceived him to learn the secret of his strength.
- One of the weapons used by Samson was the jawbone of an ass (see right). He used it as an improvised club. Improvisation and ingenuity were especially valued by the Jewish tribes. They were forbidden by the **Philistines** to smelt or work metal, and so were unable to produce metal weapons themselves. This was clearly a disadvantage when fighting an enemy.
- Anyone who could get around this problem by inventing a different way of fighting (guerrilla warfare) or an efficient non-

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metal weapon (the jawbone of an ass used as a club) was clearly an asset to the beleagued tribes.

- When the Philistines learned the reason behind Samson's prodigious strength, they captured him and put out his eyes making him, they thought, utterly helpless. He was led into the temple of Dagon and made sport of as part of the day's entertainment.

But unnoticed by the Philistines, his hair had begun to grow back. In one last magnificent effort, he pulled the two supporting pillars of the temple apart, burying himself and up to three thousand Philistines in the rubble. *Judges Chapters 13 to 16*).

Summary: Samson was granted **supernatural** strength by God in order to combat his enemies and perform heroic feats^[2] such as wrestling a lion, slaying an entire army with only the **jawbone** of an **ass**, and destroying **a pagan temple**. Samson had two vulnerabilities, however: his attraction to untrustworthy women and his hair, without which he was powerless. These vulnerabilities ultimately proved fatal for him.

2. Gideon was wily, and he needed to be: Judges chapters 6-8

Gideon developed the strategy of guerrilla warfare, and it was to be the Israelites' chosen method of fighting for many centuries. He was Israel's fourth judge in the time between the death of Joshua and the beginning of the monarchy (a 'judge' at that time was not a legal official, but someone who was filled with the spirit of God and led military campaigns to defeat Israel's enemies.

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Gideon became a judge after he was called by an angel. At first he was doubtful that it was God who was commissioning him, but once convinced he threw himself into the task of fighting the Midianites and the Amalekites, enemies of the Israelite tribes. With an army of 300 men, chosen from a much larger group by a series of tests, Gideon attacked the Midianite camp at night, panicked and then routed them. The Midianite leaders were captured and beheaded. His selection of the 300 makes an interesting story. He chose the men who drank from a stream by lying full-length and lapping at the water. This meant they had to lie on the ground, mouth to the spring, and drink directly, rather than cupping water in their hands.

Why did he choose these particular men? Perhaps Gideon was testing their physical and psychological fighting capacity.

- Those who were too fastidious to fling themselves on the ground and preferred to kneel may have shown insufficient adaptability, a reluctance to face discomfort.**
- Those who lay full length on the ground offered the enemy a reduced target, perhaps a signal that they have faced an enemy before and learnt the hard lessons of war.**

In any event, these 300 men proved successful in battle. After his victory over the Midianites Gideon returned to Succoth and tortured the elders of the city, because they had refused to give him and his men the provisions they needed. Retribution and enforcement were

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necessary in this harsh situation, Gideon believed. The men of Israel asked Gideon to become their king, but he refused because, as he said, Israel should have only one king, God. He then returned home and lived to a ripe old age (Judges 6-8)

Jephtah - dogged by bad luck Warrior & Judge: Read Jephthah's story in **Judges** 11:1-12:7. Other references are 1 Samuel 12:11 and Hebrews 11:32. **Jephtah** started behind the eight-ball. He was born to a prostitute in a society where family lineage was important, and when his father died and the inheritance was divided, Jephthah's legitimate half-brothers drove him off. He was forced to live the life of a bandit, gathering a motley group of thugs and thieves around him.

But the wheel turned. When war loomed for the Israelites he was courted by the very people who had thrown him out. They knew his prowess as a fighter, and they needed his help. This time he bargained with them: 'I'll fight for you' he said, 'but on my terms'.

He was victorious and became a national hero. His story would have been forgotten had not Jephthah, just prior to the battle, bargained with God. If he won, he told God, he would offer a sacrifice of the first living thing that ran to greet him when he returned home. What he did not foresee was that the thing that ran out towards him was his only child, a daughter whom he adored. He kept his promise to God, and killed her.

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The **Spirit of the Lord** came upon Jephthah. He led the Gileadite army to destroy 20 Ammonite towns, but when Jephthah returned to his home at Mizpah, something terrible happened. The first thing that came out of his house was not an animal, but his young daughter, his only child. The Bible tells us Jephthah kept his vow. It does not say whether he sacrificed his daughter or whether he consecrated her to God as a perpetual virgin--which meant he would have no family line, a disgrace in ancient times.

Jephthah's troubles were far from over. The tribe of Ephraim, claiming they had not been invited to join the Gileadites against the Ammonites, threatened to attack. Jephthah struck first, killing 42,000 Ephraimites. Jephthah ruled Israel six more years, then died and was buried in Gilead.

Jephthah's Accomplishments: He led the Gileadites to defeat the Ammonites. He became a judge and ruled Israel. Jephthah is me Jephthah was a mighty warrior and brilliant military strategist. He attempted to negotiate with the enemy to prevent bloodshed. Men fought for him because he must have been a natural leader. Jephthah also called on the Lord, who endowed him with supernatural strength. He is mentioned in the **Faith Hall of Fame** in **Hebrews** 11.

3. Omri - extraordinary, but almost unknown

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There is no doubt that Omri was one of the great military commanders of the ancient world, but we know tantalizingly little about him. This is because of his religious policies - he allowed his subjects to worship whatever god they chose, so the Bible has shown him in an unfavorable light, hardly mentioning him.

In fact, he was a strong military commander who made a play for the throne after the previous king, Zimri, was killed.

When this happened the country was in danger of splitting into two, but Omri gained control, ended almost fifty years of civil strife, unified the country again, and founded a strong dynasty.

This dynasty prospered for over forty years - not much by modern standards, but a stand-out success at the time. He laid the foundations of the Kingdom of Israel, and later Assyrian inscriptions referred to the Kingdom of Israel as '*Bit Humri*', the House of Omri.

A man of energy and vision, he also began building a new capital city for his country at Samaria. His palace was called the 'Ivory House' because of the lavish use of carved ivory plaques in its decoration. It

The Mesha Stele
'I am Mesha, the king of Moab. My father was king over Moab for thirty years, and I became king after my father. Omri was the king of Israel, and he oppressed Moab for many days. And his son reigned in his place; and he also said, "I will oppress Moab!" In my days he said so. But I looked down on him and on his house, and Israel has been defeated; it has been defeated forever!'

(Translation of part of the inscription)

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outshone anything Jerusalem could produce, another reason why the Temple records hardly mention it. History is written by the victors.

In short: Omri was "commander of the army" of king **Elah** when **Zimri** murdered Elah and made himself king. Instead, the troops at **Gibbethon** chose Omri as king, and he led them to **Tirzah** where they trapped Zimri in the royal palace. Zimri set fire to the palace and died after a reign of only seven days. (**1 Kings 16:15-18**) Although Zimri was eliminated, "half of the people" supported **Tibni** in opposition to Omri. (**1 Kings 16:21-22**) It took Omri four years to subdue Tibni and at last proclaim himself undisputed king of Israel. (**1 Kings 16:15** and **16:23**)

4. Ahab: warrior, diplomat, depressive I Kings chapters 16-21

Ahab is one of the most underrated kings of the Old Testament. During his reign the kingdom of Israel played an important part in international affairs. He strengthened ties with Phoenicia in the north and Judah in the south, marrying a princess from Tyre (**Jezebel**) and then allying himself to Judah through the marriage of his daughter

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Athaliah.

He was a warrior as well as a diplomat - he had to be, because Ben-Hadad the king of Damascus engaged him in three separate wars. Ben-Hadad, together with thirty-two vassal rulers, was able to advance as far as Ahab's capital Samaria, where he laid siege to the city. Ahab drove him back, routing him in the process.

Ahab's main enemy, however, was the Assyrian king Shalmaneser III. Ahab led a coalition of twelve kings who fought Shalmaneser at Qarqar in Syria, one of the great battles of the ancient world. Ahab provided 10,000 infantry and 2,500 **chariots** - or at least that is what the records show. The numbers may have been smaller. But the fact remains that Ahab led a coalition of kings in a major battle of the ancient world, and he won. Details of the battle appear on the inscriptions of the Syrian king as well as in the Bible.

Wall carving from the northwest palace at Nimrud: a soldier struck a mortal wound by arrows; he is trampled underfoot by a chariot horse

Peace could not be maintained. No wonder the Bible suggests Ahab was prone to fits of deep depression. Once again, Ben-Hadad broke the peace, and Ahab faced him in battle at Ramoth-Gilead. This time he dressed as a common soldier - leaders in battle were targets for archers, and it was prudent to use some form of camouflage.

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The ruse did not work, and Ahab was mortally wounded by a random arrow. But he fought on. When he could no longer stand, he had himself propped up in his chariot, so that he could see the fighting. As the sun went down on the battlefield, he died.

5. Saul was a charismatic leader

Although he was Israel's first king, he was ultimately rejected (1 Samuel 15:10-11). His dark, fitful personality suffers by contrast with the two legendary figures between whom he seems wedged--Samuel the prophet-priest and David, Saul's hero-successor.

Saul the Warrior

"There was hard fighting against the Philistines all the days of Saul, and when Saul saw a strong man, or any valued man, he attached him to himself" (I Samuel 14:52).

The Philistine war thus became a guerilla war, characterized by ambushes and surprise attacks against enemy posts. Generally, it did not involve great numbers of fighters. Saul had only about six hundred men with him near Gibeah (1 Samuel 14:2). Unfortunately the Bible gives only brief intimations of the details of the continuing war with the Philistines. Saul probably succeeded in driving the Philistines out of the central part of Israel. But the Philistines did not give up. They apparently attacked from the south, threatening Judah in a confrontation in which a young Judahite named David distinguished himself (I Samuel 17) [?]

Other than the Philistine war, which seems to have been the principle feature of Saul's reign, the biblical text mentions wars against the

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Moabites, the Ammonites, the Edomites, the king of Zobah and the Amalekites (1 Samuel 14:47-8) [?]

He was handsome, tall and commanding - a charismatic leader. But from the start he faced a formidable enemy, the Philistines, who occupied all the fertile land in the central hill country of Judah.

When Saul's son Jonathan killed the Philistine governor at Geba, it was on for young and old. The Philistines took up a position opposite Gibeah in the gorge of Michmash and Jonathan, without telling his father, scaled the cliff and killed twenty men in the Philistine outpost. In the ensuing fighting, Philistine control of the mountain area was broken.

Saul's reign (and the reign of any tribal leader of the period) was a lifelong struggle against the enemy. At the approach of Saul's last battle he was filled with foreboding, and went to En Dor to consult a witch about the outcome of the battle - soldiers have always been superstitious. The witch confirmed what he knew already: that the Israelite army had no chariots and could not withstand the assault of the well-armed Philistines.

In the ensuing battle Saul's three sons were killed, and he himself was seriously wounded.

In the last moments of his life he asked his amour-bearer to 'thrust me through', and when the young man refused, Saul fell on his own sword and died.

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The Philistines found him and hung his decapitated body on the walls of their city Beth Shan, but some loyal followers removed the body and gave it an honorable burial.

6. **Barak faced impossible odds - and won** Barak's story is told in **Judges** 4 and 5. He is also mentioned in 1 Samuel 12:11 and Hebrews 11:32.

Occupation: Warrior, army commander.

Barak was not eager to fight the coalition of Canaanite kings, and when you look at the odds he faced it's hardly surprising.

- His enemy was more numerous, better equipped, and had excellent morale.
- Their technology was far superior to his - they controlled metal-making, so their weaponry was tougher than anything Barak could produce.
- The enemy general, Sisera, also had well-disciplined and seasoned troops. As far as Barak could see, facing them would be tantamount to suicide. He was eventually persuaded to fight by one of the most forceful women in the Bible, **Deborah**. She convinced him that winning a battle was not just a question of equipment and training, but of strategy as well - and she had a plan.

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They staged the battle near a large swampy area that slowed down the formidable iron-wheeled **chariots** of the enemy - once these had had a brake put on them, so to speak, they would not be nearly as maneuverable or effective.

At this stage, God stepped in and sent a rainstorm, which not only slowed down the chariots but brought them to a standstill.

The **archers** who would normally have shot from the back of the chariots now had wet bowstrings and limited visibility. Barak's Israelite militia, on the other hand, excelled at hand-to-hand combat and in the use of sling-shots, and were able to vanquish their enemy.

Mud was their ally, and the day was won.

Recap: Deborah summoned Barak, telling him God had commanded him to gather the tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali and go to Mount Tabor. Barak hesitated, saying he would go only if Deborah went with him. Deborah agreed, but because of Barak's lack of **faith** in God, she told him credit for the victory would not go to him, but to a woman.

Barak led a force of 10,000 men, but Sisera, commander of King Jabin's Canaanite army, had the advantage, because Sisera had 900 iron chariots. In ancient warfare, chariots were like tanks: swift, intimidating and deadly.

Deborah told Barak to advance because the Lord had gone before him. Barak and his men raced down Mount Tabor. God brought a massive rainstorm. The ground turned to mud, bogging down Sisera's chariots. The stream Kishon overflowed, sweeping many of the

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Canaanites away. The Bible says Barak and his men pursued. Not one of Israel's enemies was left alive.

Sisera, however, managed to escape. He ran to the tent of **Jael**, a Kenite woman. She took him in, gave him milk to drink, and had him lie down on a mat. When he slept, she took a tent stake and a hammer and drove the stake through Sisera's temples, killing him. Barak arrived. Jael showed him Sisera's corpse. Barak and the army eventually destroyed Jabin, king of the Canaanites. There was peace in Israel for 40 years. **Barak's Strengths:** Barak recognized that Deborah's authority had been given to her by God, so he obeyed a woman, something rare in ancient times. He was a man of great courage and had faith that God would intervene on Israel's behalf.

Conclusion:

Know your spiritual Warrior weapons & launch them daily by opening up your mouth in the power of confession

Read these scriptures out loud daily

- 1. The Powerful Word of God (It is alive!): Hebrews 4:12, 13: Read it! Daily.**
- 2. The Powerful Name of Jesus: Phil 2:8-11**
- 3. The Powerful Holy Spirit: Acts 1:8; Acts 2:1-4**
- 4. The Powerful precious Holy Blood of Jesus: Hebrews chapter 9: 11-12: 10: 19-24**
- 5. The Power of Praise & Worship: Ps 145-150**
- 6. The Power of Church Attendance: Hebrews 10:25**

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A Warriors' Prayer

Thank You Lord for sending Jesus to die on the Cross-for me. Thank You that You remind me that I am a Warrior-whether I feel like it or not. Thank You Lord. I declare: I am a warrior-a Warrior for Christ. I walk as a Warrior-I think as a Warrior. I am a Warrior for Christ. I stand up and speak out for Godly principles.

Holy Spirit, You are my Helper: help me: Give me Eagle eyes and ears to hear and see in the Spirit. Grant to me Wisdom, Understanding and Knowledge to act, and believe for the impossible.

Holy Spirit Give me the Boldness, Power, Courage and Strength as Joshua to be the warrior Christ has anointed me to be. I Believe I receive Now-in Jesus name-Thank You Lord.

Holy Spirit, do not allow me to be ignorant of Satan's devices. Help me to be sober and alert in the spiritual battles I face for myself and for others.

I declare out loud, I am a Warrior for Christ. Thank you Lord-I have the spirit of Joshua. I obey God at all times and I have a right to expect Victory-Full Victory in Jesus name. Amen