

God is Marshaling His Army for the Rescue of His Truth Victory By Following Jesus

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By Sheila Schrunk



VICTORY IN FOLLOWING JESUS

The Royal Master Leads Against the Foe

Helaman 2:24-27 And it came to pass that the work of the Lord did prosper unto the baptizing and uniting to the church of God many souls, yea, even tens of thousands. Thus we may see that the Lord is merciful unto all who will in the sincerity of their hearts call upon his holy name; yea, thus we see that the gate of heaven is open unto all, even to those who will believe on the name of Jesus Christ, who is the Son of God. ...

Many centuries before this Book of Mormon event took place, at approximately 1055 BC, a young Israelite lad followed God's teachings and commandments and worshiped Him. Even through his adult years—after much conflict, sin, and trials—he, being sorrowfully repentant, gained favor with God again. Then he was given the revelation of Jesus Christ coming to be our Good Shepherd. **Psalms 23** bears testimony of his knowledge. **The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of my enemies; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.**



THE BATTLE BELONGS TO THE LORD

The shepherd boy, David, had spent much time in tending and caring for his sheep in prayer, song, and remembering the scriptures taught to him about his Creator, God. He grew in faith, trust, devotion, and the act of surrendering to God's will. Living victoriously in Jesus takes a knowledge that we gain through study, prayer, and obeying God's word. David also showed amazing trust in God's promises i.e. his confidence in defeating Goliath. **1 Samuel 17:45, 47** Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield; but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. And all this assembly shall know that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear; for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give you into our hands.

When Bob and I watched the Sight and Sound "David" musical at Branson this Fall, I was amazed how much war took place in David's and the Israelite's lives. I'm sure when I have read the passages in Samuel and other Old Testament scriptures of war I have skimmed over the war information; but, to see it on stage was bringing it to my understanding how much they fought with other tribes. When the Israelites were depending on God through much prayer for protection, direction, and trust in HIM as their Chief Commander they had miraculous victories. A melodious song "The Battle Belongs to the Lord" is the musical's intriguing theme song.

Another incident of battle took place with King Jehoshaphat and the tribe of Judah against their enemies. Jehoshaphat was a great-great grandson of David.

2 Chronicles 20:15, 17, 18 And he said, Hearken ye, all Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, and thou, King Jehoshaphat, Thus saith the Lord unto you, Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but God's. Ye shall not go to fight in this day; set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the Lord with you, O Judah and Jerusalem; fear not, nor be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them, for the Lord will be with you. And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground; and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell before the Lord, worshipping the Lord.

They conquered their enemies, the Ammonites, the Moabites and Mount Seir and came to Jerusalem with psalteries and harps and trumpets unto the house of the Lord. The fear of God was on all the kingdoms of those countries, and Jehoshaphat walked in the way of Asa his father, and departed not from it, doing that which was right in the sight of the Lord. Years went by and in **2 Chronicles 20:35-37**. And after this did Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, join himself with Ahaziah, king of Israel, who did very wickedly; ... to make ships to go to Tarshish; ...Then Eliezer, the son of Dodavah of Mareshah, prophesied against Jehoshaphat, saying, Because thou hast joined thyself with Ahaziah, the Lord hath broken thy works. And the ships were broken, that they were not able to go to Tarshish.

2 Chronicles 21:7 Howbeit, the Lord would not destroy the house of David because of the covenant that he had made with David and as he promised to give a light to him and to his sons forever. King David knew his Good Shepherd would be coming as a Mighty King, for we read in **Psalms 45:1, 3 and 47:2**, My heart is inditing a good matter; I speak of the things which I have made touching the King; my tongue is the pen of a ready writer. Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most Mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty. For the Lord most high is terrible; he is a great King over all the earth.

The Prophet Isaiah told of Christ's kingdom around 760 BC in **Isaiah 11:2-5, 9, 10, 12** And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord, And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord; and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears; But with righteousness shall he judge the poor and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. And in that day there will be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek; and his rest shall be glorious. And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.

We seek to have victory in following Jesus. What does it mean to follow Jesus, our Good Shepherd, Anointed One, our Savior, Lamb of God, our King of King and Lord of Lords?



Jesus Christ stated truth to us in [John 10:1-17](#) that He is the Good Shepherd. **Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice; and he calleth his own sheep by name and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers. ... Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheepfold. All that ever came before me who testified not of me are thieves and robbers; but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. ... I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. ...**



An honorable shepherd was seen by the Old Testament and the New Testament people to be guide and protector. This imagery is deeply rooted in the pastoral culture of ancient Israel with leaders like Jacob, Moses, and David as shepherds in their younger lives. God is seen in the Old Testament as the Shepherd of Israel as in [Psalm 23](#) and in [Ezekial 34:11, 12, 15, and 16](#). God was not pleased with those shepherds who were more interested in taking care of themselves rather than the flock. In [verses 4 and 5 of Ezekial 34](#), God was upset with them and chastised them.

In the New Testament, we see Jesus lay down His life for the sheep as He paid the ultimate commitment of taking our sins upon Himself to the cross, that we might have eternal life with Him. As our Good Shepherd, Christ is leading us—His sheep—to safe refuge and provides for our very needs.

Jesus protects us from spiritual dangers also. This is seen in [John 10:27-30](#). **My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. ... I and my Father are one.**

What Caused the Disciples to Follow Jesus?

“Disciple” means a learner or student and comes from the Greek word *Mathetes*. In New Testament times, it meant one who actively followed a rabbi (teacher). Disciples dedicated themselves to learning and living by the guidance of the rabbis. Some of the responsibilities of the disciples of Christ included learning and studying His teachings and having spiritual growth to become more Christlike. They knew it would be a fulltime commitment placing full allegiance to Jesus’ message instead of personal possessions, job and family. Studying scriptures, praying, sharing the gospel He taught, having a zeal for lifelong service, plus transformation in the mission Jesus began—all of these comprised a commitment to a new identity (a way of life) and especially a devotion to Jesus their Master.

John the Baptist prepared the way for some of the disciples to immediately obey in response to Jesus. We read in **Mark 1:14-16** **And now as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew, his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishers. And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men. And straightway they forsook their nets and followed him.**

Having His spiritual authority and hope in a purpose greater than themselves, which was beyond their present circumstances, gave a deep awareness of redemption which brought about faith and trust in His Kingdom.

Jesus knew the commitment it would take to follow Him. **Luke 9:59-62** **And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead; but go thou and preach the kingdom of God. And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go and bid them farewell who are at my house. And Jesus said unto him, No man having put his hand to the plow, and looking back is fit for the kingdom of God.**



After Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist and then the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon Jesus, the scripture states, **Matthew 3:46** **And lo, he heard a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear ye him.**

Matthew 4:1-10 Then Jesus was led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be with God. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights and had communed with God, he was afterwards an hungered and was left to be tempted of the devil. And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But Jesus answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. ... Jesus was tempted two more times by the devil and each time Jesus said, **It is written ... Thou shall not tempt the Lord, thy God. ...** The third time ... **said Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord, thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil leaveth him.**





Jesus, who led and still leads today His disciples and believers with great love, continues to actively guide and protect us throughout our lives. We are to know His example and put our belief of Him in action with love, humility, and great faith—even in times of great trial, adversity, and uncertainty.

We can take solace in the knowledge that Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd, is with us protecting us from evil entities, false teachings, and moral dangers. He leads us through life's challenges and uncertainties if we follow Him, keep His commandments, and endure to the end.

HOW DO WE FOLLOW JESUS CHRIST?

Luke 9:23-26 And he said unto them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life must be willing to lose it for my sake; and whosoever will be willing to lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it. For what doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and yet he receive him not whom God hath ordained, and he lose his own soul, and he himself be a castaway? For whosoever shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed when he shall come in his own kingdom, clothed in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels.

Luke 22:42 tells of how Jesus Christ asked: **Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done.** We need to be submissive daily to the Lord, instead of when we think it best for us. We must remember that the Lord has told us many times in scripture to be obedient to His word.

Matthew 11:29-30 Then spake Jesus saying, Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls; for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

HOW DOES VICTORY THROUGH JESUS IMPACT YOU IN THE BATTLE YOU FACE DAILY?

It is so important that we develop [through the Lord] a spiritual growth and maturity, in order to stand firm in our faith and strong belief in Jesus Christ—that it will enable us to endure a multitude of experiences in life. We must strive to reflect the light of Christ to those we encounter daily. With Christ's direction, this is what we must be seeking to achieve—our spiritual awareness through obedience to God as He works in our lives.

How Can We Submit and Surrender to Jesus Christ, to Have the Royal Master Lead Us Against the Foe?

1. **Hebrews 6:10, 12** For God is not unrighteous; therefore, he will not forget your work and labor of love, which ye have showed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints and do minister. That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises.
2. **1 Corinthians 15:57-58** But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory though our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.
3. **Philippians 2:2, 3, 5** Fulfill ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.
4. **Philippians 2:14-16** Do all things without murmurings and disputings, That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world. Holding forth the word of life, that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither labored in vain.



Soldiers of Christ Arise

Soldiers of Christ arise and gird your armor on,
 Strong in the strength which God supplies
 Through his eternal Son.
 Strong in the Lord of hosts
 And in his mighty power
 Who in the strength of Jesus trusts
 Is more than conquerors.

Stand then in his great might,
 With all his strength endued,
 And take to arm you for the fight,
 The panoply of God,
 That having all things done
 And all your conflicts past,
 You may o'er-come through Christ alone
 And stand complete at last.

From strength to strength go on,
 Wrestle and fight and pray;
 Tread all the powers of darkness down
 Till yours a perfect sway.
 Still let the Spirit cry
 In all his Soldiers, "come!"
 Soon will the Lord descend from high
 And every victor crown.

Hymns of the Saints # 474

Charles Wesley and George J Elvey

How Can We Be Victorious in Becoming More Like Christ?

Do our lives reflect the spiritual fruits of the spirit? **Galatians 5:1, 13-14, 22-23** Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. For brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance; against such there is no law.

Spiritual maturity and growth are important for us to stand firm in faith and belief in following Jesus Christ. They help us endure various experiences in life and reflect Christ to the world. As a part of sanctification, spiritual growth is lifelong. It happens if we are obedient to God in the work He does in our lives—always remember the sacrifice of Jesus Christ in giving His life for us to take away our sins.

We need to remember **John 15:5** I am the vine, ye are the branches, to have that close relationship with Jesus to produce spiritual food. Also relying on prayer and listening to the Holy Spirit is crucial to developing these fruits or qualities in our lives. In prayer, reflect by self-examination to know which qualities to give more attention to for doing better. Look for opportunities to interact with others to reflect Christ's love. The fruits of the spirit are so important to our walk with Christ—to follow His ways and to be in His Kingdom. Only by His power can we grow at all in our daily walk with Him, having Godly qualities.

Where in Your Life Do You Struggle to Surrender Fully to the Lordship of Jesus and Trust in His Power?

One area of trust is when we are ill with infirmities that seem to not be healed as desired by us. Faith was an important element in the healings Jesus performed. Many times the faith of the person or the family or friend who would take the sick to Jesus resulted in the divine blessing of healing. He showed His great compassion for those suffering.

The Gospels tell of these miracles that showed signs to confirm Jesus as the Messiah and the Son of God. It also showed His great compassion for the suffering, which accompanied His teaching and His divine power inviting belief and transformation. In the Book of Mormon, Jesus ministered to those who were lame, blind, maimed, leprous, deaf, afflicted in any manner, and He healed them.

Some examples of the miracles He performed are: Healing - Restoring sight to the blind, **Mark 10:46-62**; Lowering the palsy man through the roof, **Mark 2:1-12**; Nature - Calming the storm, **Matthew 8:23-27**, Feeding 5,000 from seven loaves and a few little fishes, **Matthew 15:32-39**; Raising the Dead - Raising Jairus daughter, **Mark 5:21-43**; Raising widow's son **Luke 7:11-17**; Deliverance - Casting out a mute demon, **Matthew 9:32-34**, Delivering a girl from an unclean spirit, **Acts 16:16-18**. **3 Nephi 8:8** My bowels are filled with mercy; for I perceive that ye desire that I should shew unto you what I have done unto your brethren at Jerusalem, for I see that your faith is sufficient that I should heal you.

Ephesians 4:11-16 was proclaimed by Apostle Paul. **And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers—For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, Till we, in the unity of the faith, all come to the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive, But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ, From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.**

The Apostle Paul exhorts us to put off the old corruptible man and be renewed in the mind of the Spirit to be that new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Paul continues to say: put off lying, be truthful and not angry. **Ephesians 4:27-32 Neither give place to the devil. ... Let no corrupt communication ... but that which is ... edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. ... Let all bitterness, and wrath, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice; And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.**



The prison where Apostle Paul was kept in Jerusalem

The Book of Mormon Speaks about Following Jesus Christ

2 Nephi 11:78, 79 And as I spake concerning the convincing of the Jews that Jesus is the very Christ, it must needs be that the Gentiles be convinced also that Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God, and that he manifesteth himself unto all those who believe in him, by the power of the Holy Ghost, Yea, unto every nation, kindred, tongue, and people—working mighty miracles, signs and wonders among the children of men according to their faith.

2 Nephi 13:9-13 But notwithstanding he being holy, he showeth unto the children of men that according to the flesh, he humbleth himself before the Father and witnesseth unto the Father that he would be obedient unto him in keeping his commandments; Wherefore, after he was baptized with water, the Holy Ghost descended upon him in the form of a dove. And again, it showeth unto the children of men the straightness of the path and the narrowness of the gate by which they should enter, he having set the example before them. And he said unto the children of men, Follow thou me. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, can we follow Jesus, save we shall be willing to keep the commandments of the Father?

Jesus Christ Bids Us to Be Victorious in Him

3 Nephi 4:42-48 Yea, verily, I say unto you, If ye will come unto me, ye shall have eternal life. Behold, mine arm of mercy is extended towards you; and whosoever will come, him will I receive; and blessed are those who come unto me. Behold, I am Jesus Christ, the Son of God. I created the heavens, and the earth, and all things that in them are. I was with the Father from the beginning. I am in the Father and the Father in me; and in me hath the Father glorified his name. I came unto my own, and my own received me not. And the scriptures concerning my coming are fulfilled. And as many as have received me, to them have I given to become the sons of God; and even so will I to as many as shall believe on my name, for behold, by me redemption cometh, and in me is the law of Moses fulfilled. I am the light and the life of the world. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.

