

Walking Forward on the Battlefield in the Fight for a Victorious Perspective

Exodus 12:1-3; 24-28

The Plagues of Egypt Series Conclusion

What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? Therefore, what shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loves us.

In every Christian family, in every Christian church, in every part of America, and in every part of the world, the Devil is winning a battle in the hearts of God's people that they don't even realize they are involved in. It's not the Battle for the Bible. For God's people know that the Word of God is alive and active and sharper than any double-edged sword. It's not the Battle for the Gospel. For God's people know that for God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. It's not even the Battle to Forgive. For God's people also know that Jesus said blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. Instead, it is this battle: The Battle for a Victorious Perspective. For it is on this battlefield, the Battlefield for a Victorious Perspective, that the Great Deceiver's cannons fire the heaviest artillery shells. And those shells have been designed to pierce the armor of God's people in order to mortally wound their spiritual lives. They are the same mortars that he fired at Gideon that caused him to surrender his victorious perspective for a hiding place in the crevices of the valley of the shadow of death. They are the same mortars he fired at Peter that caused him to surrender his victorious perspective for a life on the run and in denial. And they are the same mortars that have caused people from the beginning of the age to lay down their swords and surrender their joy to the Great Deceiver at the first sight of an armor piercing.

But I've got great news for you today, church. And that news is this: it is possible to live in this world right now with a victorious perspective, regardless of what you are going through at this very moment. Here's why: the same Jesus that called Gideon a mighty warrior is the same Jesus that calls you a mighty warrior. The same Jesus that called Peter's faith a rock is the same Jesus that calls your faith a rock. And the same Jesus that called the church in Rome more than conquerors is the same Jesus that calls you more than a conqueror.

We've gathered at the river of the Nile every Sunday for over two months in this series. We've heard Words from the Lord about blood, frogs and flies. And we've heard Words from the Lord about promises, providence and protection. But I want to tell you today that the last Word from the Lord in this series is the one you need to hear the most. And that is this: the Battle for a Victorious Perspective had already been won before a single shot from Moses or Pharaoh was fired. God's people only needed to walk forward on the battlefield. You see, before the most destructive plague of Egypt even began, God saw a glorious future for his people. And that means in order to walk forward on the Battlefield for a Victorious Perspective we must walk with a gait that shows others we believe the battle has already been won instead of yet to be fought. So today, church, my objective is to simply tell you how to walk forward on the battlefield in the fight for a victorious perspective. To do that, please turn with me to Exodus 12:1-3, and 24-28. As you turn there with me, please keep in mind that God gave these instructions to His people before the last plague, the worst of the whole bunch, even occurred. When you keep that in mind, you'll start to understand what a victorious perspective is all about.

The Lord said to Moses and Aaron in Egypt, ² "This month is to be for you the first month, the first month of your year. ³ Tell the whole community of Israel that on the tenth day of this month each man is to take a lamb for his family, one for each household. . . .²⁴ "Obey these instructions as a lasting ordinance for you and your descendants. ²⁵ When you enter the land that the Lord will give you as he promised, observe this ceremony. ²⁶ And when your children ask you, 'What does this ceremony mean to you?'²⁷ then tell them, 'It is the Passover sacrifice to the Lord, who passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt and spared our homes when he struck down the Egyptians.'" Then the people bowed down and worshiped. ²⁸ The Israelites did just what the Lord commanded Moses and Aaron.

Walking Forward on the Battlefield in the Fight for a Victorious Perspective Requires:

1. The Proper Motivation (2)

- **Advertising Techniques and the Mosquito Lamp** – (1) Clever companies trying to peddle you a product for 19.99 plus shipping and handling always package their advertisements in a certain way to motivate you to buy them: Your life before and your life after. (2) The Mosquito Lamp is a prime example: Before you see people swatting, itching, and slapping to get the mosquitos off them. But after the purchase, they are playing in the pool, cooking out, and relaxing. (3) It's dark before the mosquito lamp. But glorious after it.
- **Main Idea of the Point** - Just before the darkest of nights, God gave Israel a glimpse of a future so glorious He told them to restart the calendar by it. That's all the motivation they needed to walk forward with a victorious perspective.
- **Textual Emphasis (2):** ² "This month is to be for you the first month, the first month of your year.
- **Main Teaching Emphasis: Start the Calendar** – (1) God's People Had Experienced Calendar Stopping Events – 430 years of slavery; the first three plagues right along with the Egyptians; (2) God's People Had Seen Calendar Stopping Events - six more plagues; all of which devastated Egypt; (3) God's People Had Heard of More Calendar Stopping Events – the Plague of the First Born; (4) Living during that time, they would have wondered if their days were numbered. But at that precise moment, God told them to start their calendar.

- **App:** The motive for a victorious perspective always comes from the One who interrupts your darkness at the greatest point of need and tells you to start the calendar.

2. The Proper Method (24-25)

- **There's a Lesson in Ocean Observation** – (1) I love sitting on the beach and just gazing straight into the ocean as far as my eye can see; (2) But I particularly enjoy the view when a small boat gets in the way of my unobstructed view; (3) Because I can see the obstacles and the calm in a way that the driver of the boat can't; (4) I can observe the horizon the driver is heading for while he is still just battling the current and the waves near the shore; (5) I see his quest in full. He sees what's in front of him. But we both know the same thing: the horizon lies beyond the roughest currents.
- **Main Idea of the Point** - God commanded the Israelites to celebrate the Passover while in their land as a lasting ordinance before the first Passover ever happened and before they even entered the land. That means the method for living in victory requires we see our present circumstances on God's timetable.
- **Textual Emphasis (24-25)** – *“Obey these instructions as a lasting ordinance for you and your descendants... when you enter the land observe this ceremony*
- **Main Teaching Emphasis – Promises for Promises** – (1) Notice that our obedience and the promises of God are woven together here. (2) In the language of the OT, it literally reads “Promise to Obey in light of the Promises of God.” (3) He gives them two right here in the darkest of times: (a) the promise of descendants (generations is a better reading). One generation is 40 years, and the noun is plural, meaning multiple. This implies a flourishing feature even though they couldn't see it; (b) the promise of land – the same land that he swore to Abraham more than 430 years before.
- **App:** The method for living in victory is resting in God's concept of time when you can't even see His divine clock. You must walk forward knowing it's still ticking.

3. The Proper Message (26-27)

- **Simon of Cyrene's Testimony** – (1) There's an obscure guy in the NT who had a story to tell. He's a guy who has just one part in the Good Book and then exits stage right. It's Simon of Cyrene. (2) He's traveling to Jerusalem for Passover with his two small sons when he hears commotion and stops. Next thing you know, he spots Jesus carrying his cross to Calvary. (3) And then, unexpectedly, the Roman soldiers demand he help Jesus carry the cross all the way to Golgotha. (4) Can you imagine the story he told his sons when he returned to the spot where they waited? What did you do, dad? I carried the cross. I carried the cross of Jesus.
- **Main Idea of the Point** - God told the Israelites to tell their children about what God did for them before he did it. That means that our victorious message must always be that we overcome by the blood of the lamb and the word of our testimony before the overcoming happens.
- **Textual Emphasis (28-29)** - *When your children ask you... tell them it is the Passover sacrifice... when the Lord struck down Egypt and spared his people.*
- **Main Teaching Emphasis – Components of Their Testimony** – (1) A Word About Blood – Passover Sacrifice; (2) A Word about Salvation – He spared His people; (3) That Has a Specific Audience – Their Children
- **App:** A victorious perspective is more often caught than taught. Others “catch” it when the blood of the lamb and the salvation of your soul are the most important things in your life. God never gives you victory to keep it to yourself.

4. The Proper Manifestation (27-28)

- **The Star of the Show** – (1) Have you ever heard the phrase “out of the mouths of babes?” (2) It signifies that kids can sometimes tell us more about God than 10 sermons. (3) I had this happen at a Vacation Bible School a few years back. (4) I asked one question: what is worship? (5) In the back of room, a child raised his hand and said: “making Jesus the star of the show.”
- **Main Idea of the Point** – God's people worshipped God before he delivered them. That means that the greatest evidence of a victorious perspective comes when we worship the Lord for what we know he will do, not just for what he has done.
- **Textual Emphasis (27-28)** – *Then the people bowed down and worshipped*
- **Main Teaching Emphasis – Us vs Them** – (1) We usually worship the Lord for what he has done, as well we should. (2) But the difference between what we usually do and what God's people did here is they worshipped the Lord for what he has not yet done as if he had already completed the action. That's not only the rarest of faith, it's also the rarest of worship.
- **App:** - The best manifestation of victory and joy in your life will come when you can worship for answering what you've prayed about before he answers it. That's the rarest of faith and the rarest of worship. But rare is exactly what is most needed in times like these. Praise the Lord!