

# "God's Love Story Sermon Outlines"

by Doug Hamilton

## Section 9: "The Battle Belongs to the Lord" (The Book of Joshua)

David yelled out in his duel to the death with Goliath "...for the battle is the Lord's and He will give you into our hands" (1 Samuel 17:47). He was exposing a common theme in the lives of the Israelites and the predominate theme of the Book of Joshua, which is "The Battle Belongs to the Lord".

### 1) Israel's Battles Were Long Predicted to Belong To The Lord!

From the moment that the Israelites left Egypt, God wanted them to know that the Battle Belongs to Him!

- Exodus 23:27-31 "I will send My terror ahead of you, and throw into confusion all the people among whom you come, and I will make all your enemies turn *their* backs to you.<sup>28</sup> "I will send hornets ahead of you so that they will drive out the Hivites, the Canaanites, and the Hittites before you.<sup>29</sup> "I will not drive them out before you in a single year, that the land may not become desolate and the beasts of the field become too numerous for you.<sup>30</sup> "I will drive them out before you little by little, until you become fruitful and take possession of the land.<sup>31</sup> "I will fix your boundary from the Red Sea to the sea of the Philistines, and from the wilderness to the River *Euphrates*; for I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand, and you will drive them out before you.
- Exodus 33:2 "I will send an angel before you and I will drive out the Canaanite, the Amorite, the Hittite, the Perizzite, the Hivite and the Jebusite."
- Exodus 34:11 "Be sure to observe what I am commanding you this day: behold, I am going to drive out the Amorite before you, and the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Perizzite, the Hivite and the Jebusite.

Joshua chapter one makes it very clear that God was going to be the one to fight their battles as long as they were walking with Him.

- Joshua 1:1-5 Now it came about after the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, that the Lord spoke to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' servant, saying,<sup>2</sup> "Moses My servant is dead; now therefore arise, cross this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them, to the sons of Israel.<sup>3</sup> "Every place on which the sole of your foot treads, I have given it to you, just as I spoke to Moses.<sup>4</sup> "From the wilderness and this Lebanon, even as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and as far as the Great Sea toward the setting of the sun will be your territory.<sup>5</sup> "No man will be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you."

This is the basis of the boldness they were to have in the taking the land back as their possession.

- Verse 6 "Be strong and courageous, for you shall give this people possession of the land which I swore to their fathers to give them."

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- Verse 7 “Only be strong and very courageous; be careful to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may have success wherever you go.
- Verse 9 “Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”
- Verse 18 “Anyone who rebels against your command and does not obey your words in all that you command him, shall be put to death; only be strong and courageous.”

They were to be strong and courageous with their march into the land for He had given it to them in the promises to Abraham. *Genesis 13:17* “Arise, walk about the land through its length and breadth; for I will give it to you.” The only conditions for capturing the land was to be walking in faith and taking the initiative to go in a fight for it. The battle belonged to the Lord if they belonged to God!

## 2) Israel's Battles Belonged To The Lord!

### Chapter 2: Rahab understood the Battle Belongs to the Lord

The spies were sent out into the land for intelligence gathering. A couple of them entered Jericho and went to the home of Rahab the harlot. This would have been a way to blend in as a traveler for this culture. Canaan was filled with immorality and to show up in town and go to a house of ill repute would have been a normal sight to the officials of the Jericho. That is until the received word that some spies from the Israelites might be in the city (2:2). An all-out search led the officials to the door of Rahab, but she hid the spies on the roof, saying, “*Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from. It came about when it was time to shut the gate at dark, that the men went out; I do not know where the men went. Pursue them quickly, for you will overtake them.*”

Why would she do such a thing? It was because she recognized that the Battle Belongs To The Lord. “*I know that the LORD has given you the land, and that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land have melted away before you.*”<sup>10</sup> “*For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. When we heard it, our hearts melted and no courage remained in any man any longer because of you; for the LORD your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath.*” (Verses 9-11). Rahab saw there was no way to prevail when the Lord was fighting the battle. She requested, “*Now therefore, please swear to me by the LORD, since I have dealt kindly with you, that you also will deal kindly with my father’s household, and give me a pledge of truth,*”<sup>13</sup> *and spare my father and my mother and my brothers and my sisters, with all who belong to them, and deliver our lives from death.*”

When Jericho was destroyed, she was spared. Not only that, but her son Boaz was spared as well. Boaz went onto marry another foreigner name Ruth. They had a child named Obed; Obed had a son named Jesse; Jesse had a son named David. If you follow the genealogical line of this David,

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we find our Messiah Jesus Christ (Matthew 1). Her actions were indicative of God's Love Story (Hebrews 11:31; James 2:25), for she knew the Battle Belongs To The Lord !

## Chapter 6: The Residents of Jericho Understood The Battle Belongs To The Lord!

Jericho saw the approaching Israelite masses and locked down the city gates (1). The Lord told Joshua in verse 2 *"See, I have given Jericho into your hand, with its king and the valiant warriors."* What strategy did God want to use to take the walled city of Jericho? They were to simply march around the city once a day for six days, blowing the ram horns. On the seventh they were to march around the city seven times. Verse 16 *"At the seventh time, when the priests blew the trumpets, Joshua said to the people, "Shout! For the LORD has given you the city."* All the Jerichoites, standing on the thick walls of protection, probably thought the Israelites were idiots to employ such a strategy.

Verses 20-21 *So the people shouted, and priests blew the trumpets; and when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, the people shouted with a great shout and the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight ahead, and they took the city. They utterly destroyed everything in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox and sheep and donkey, with the edge of the sword.* The residents of Jericho learned well that day the Battle Belonged To The Lord!

## Chapters 7-8: The Residents of Ai Eventually Understood The Battle Belongs To The Lord!

The first battle of Ai did not go so well. It was a small town compared to the city of Jericho. When the spies came back from surveillance they confidently said in verse 3 *"Do not let all the people go up; only about two or three thousand men need go up to Ai; do not make all the people toil up there, for they are few."* It looked like a sure deal, but the Lord did not go to battle for them and they lost miserably. Thirty-six of their men did not return alive. Joshua was in complete grief and fell on his face in prayer to God. He basically said, "How can we take the land after being clobbered by the village of Ai?" The Lord informed Joshua that in the last battle in Jericho there was someone who was not faithful and took plunder. Until they rectify such they would fail. Through a process they determined the culprit were a man named Achan and his family (7:16-26). They were dealt with and God was with them again. 8:1 *Now the LORD said to Joshua, "Do not fear or be dismayed. Take all the people of war with you and arise, go up to Ai; see, I have given into your hand the king of Ai, his people, his city, and his land.* In the second battle with Ai, Israel ambushed the enemy and burned the town to the ground. 8:25 *The total number of men and women they killed that day was 12,000. They put to death all of the people of Ai.* Once again, the people of Ai learned that the Battle Belongs To The Lord!

## Chapter 10: The Amorite Kings Understood The Battle Belongs to the Lord!

The king of Jerusalem teamed up with the kings of Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish and Eglon to take out the Israelites. Five kingdoms at one shot! Surely this would be enough to intimidate General Joshua and the Israelites! That is not what the scripture records. 10:7-8 *So Joshua marched up*

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from Gilgal with his whole army. The army included all of his best fighting men. <sup>8</sup>The LORD said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid of them. I have handed them over to you. Not one of them will be able to fight against you and win." He waged night warfare against them and took them by surprise. The Israelites hit them hard, killed many and caused the survivors to flee. The men who fled were greeted by a terrible hail storm sent by the Lord which killed more than the battle. The survivors of the second wave did not have a chance for the Lord caused the sun to stand still until they were all slaughtered (12-13). The Amorite Kings and their armies knew that the Battle Belongs To The Lord!

### Chapter 11: The Northern Palestinians Understood The Battle Belongs To The Lord!

The Northern Kings of Canaan did not learn what the Southern Kings discovered, that the Battle Belongs To The Lord. They also pooled their armies together and prepared to take out Israel. Verse 6 states *Then the LORD said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid because of them, for tomorrow at this time I will deliver all of them slain before Israel; you shall hamstring their horses and burn their chariots with fire."* Before it was over, Joshua and the Israelites clobbered the Northern kingdoms, destroying Hazor, the largest city in all Canaan. *For it was of the LORD to harden their hearts, to meet Israel in battle in order that he might utterly destroy them, that they might receive no mercy, but that he might destroy them, just as the LORD had commanded Moses (20).* They won because the Battle Belonged To The Lord!

### Summary

With this battle over, most of the conquest of the land was over. There would be a only few minor skirmishes after and it was time to divide up the land (Joshua 13-22). By the end of the writing, General Joshua addressed the people. Joshua wanted to further reemphasize the lesson theme and the need to commit fully. He said in *Joshua 24:11 "You crossed the Jordan and came to Jericho; and the citizens of Jericho fought against you, and the Amorite and the Perizzite and the Canaanite and the Hittite and the Girgashite, the Hivite and the Jebusite. Thus I gave them into your hand."* All in Israel that day knew the Battle Belongs To The Lord and this was a factor in God's Love Story.

- Joshua 24 14-18 "Now, therefore, fear the Lord and serve Him in sincerity and truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. <sup>15</sup> "If it is disagreeable in your sight to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves today whom you will serve: whether the gods which your fathers served which were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." <sup>16</sup> The people answered and said, "Far be it from us that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods; <sup>17</sup> for the Lord our God is He who brought us and our fathers up out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and who did these great signs in our sight and preserved us through all the way in which we went and among all the peoples through whose midst we passed." <sup>18</sup> "The Lord drove out

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from before us all the peoples, even the Amorites who lived in the land. We also will serve the Lord, for He is our God.”

By the end of the book, Joshua was ready to go to the grave in peace, being 110 years of age. Because they learned that the Battle Belongs To The Lord, they were faithful for the rest of that generation.

## Application) Our Battles Always Belong To The Lord!

Part of understanding God's Love Story is to know that your Battles Belong To The Lord! We are not fighting Canaanites in ancient Palestine, but still have many battles that must be fought. The question is whether or not we believe that the Battles Belong to Him..

- We fight battles with cancer and poor health, but if we are a Christian, then the BATTLE BELONGS TO THE LORD! Go to the elders of the church, have the pray over you in the name of the Lord, making sure we recognize this fact.
- If you are struggling with depression or sadness, then understand that the BATTLE BELONGS TO THE LORD! Read encouraging verses from the Bible and talk to encouraging saints of the church. Share your struggles to others in the cause of Christ.
- If someone has hurt you to the point of brokenness, remember that the BATTLE BELONGS TO THE LORD! Turn it over to the Lord in prayer, letting go then letting God!
- If you are financially not able to make ends meet and you just can't figure it out, don't forget that the BATTLE BELONGS TO THE LORD! Meet with some of your brothers or sisters who might be better with balancing the books. If everything is being done that is possible for you, then let us help you make the ends meet until you get back on your feet.
- If you have often admired, but never committed fully to God in covenant, then recognize that the BATTLE BELONGS TO THE LORD! Surrender your repentant heart to Him by dying to yourself and living for Him, being baptized into the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit! Turn it over to God ALL THE WAY!

## The Battle Belongs to the Lord

In heavenly armor we'll enter the land, The battle belongs to the Lord  
No weapon that's fashioned against us shall stand, The battle belongs to the Lord  
The power of darkness comes in like a flood, The battle belongs to the Lord  
He's raised up a standard, the power of His blood, The battle belongs to the Lord  
When your enemy presses in hard do not fear, The battle belongs to the Lord  
Take courage my friend, your redemption is near, The battle belongs to the Lord  
Chorus: We sing glory and honor, Power and strength to the Lord (repeat)