

DATE: 22 OCTOBER 2023 | SPEAKER: PASTOR JOACHIM TAN |
TOPIC: JEHOSEPHAT – WINNING THE SPIRITUAL BATTLES |
SCRIPTURE: 2 CHRONICLES 20

SPIRITUAL OBJECTIVES

At the end of the sermon discussion, cell members will:

1. Remember that they are constantly in an ongoing spiritual battle between the kingdom of darkness and the kingdom of light.
2. Be determined not to defile themselves but to constantly fix their eyes on the Lord through worship and praise during a spiritual battle.

SERMON SUMMARY

The question is not whether are you in a spiritual battle; but are you winning the battle? As children of God, we have an unseen but real enemy (the devil and his evil forces) waging war against us; and it is up to us to stand our ground in this spiritual battle. Through the story of Jehoshaphat, four principles of spiritual warfare can be learnt:

1. The call to pray from the position of His presence and promise. (v 2-3)
2. The call to stand firm in the spiritual battle (v 17)
3. The call to worship and praise through the spiritual battle
4. The call to trust in God's deliverance and timing - the battle belongs to the LORD (v 15)

SERMON RECAP

Introduction

Christians often forget that we are in the midst of a raging spiritual battle. We have an unseen but real enemy waging against us; thus, we are not to be unaware of this reality that is happening constantly in our lives.

“...for we are not ignorant of his schemes.” – **2 Corinthians 2:11 (NASB)**

The question then is not about if we are in a spiritual battle, but rather, are we winning the battle. Drawing from the example of King Jehoshaphat in 2 Chronicles 20, Ps. Joachim shared 4 principles concerning spiritual warfare that will help us as we approach the various spiritual battles in our lives.

#1 The Call to Pray from the Position of His Presence and Promise (v 2-3)

Even though Judah was facing a vast army that outnumbered them, King Jehoshaphat's first response was not to mobilise the troops for battle but to call for a fast throughout the whole nation (v 4-9). King Jehoshaphat's knew that God had made promises regarding the temple (2 Chronicles 5-6). Therefore, as Judah stood in the temple to pray sincerely to the Lord, God will deliver them.

#2 The Call to Stand Firm in the Spiritual Battle (v 17)

During an intense spiritual battle, it is easy for believers to lose hope, be discouraged and to give up. This can often lead to us relinquishing our authority to the leading of our flesh resulting in defilement or fear. When we allow ourselves to be defiled, or to bow down to fear during a spiritual battle, the enemy will have a stronghold within our lives rendering us powerless in a battle. 3 times in Ephesians, Paul encourages us to “stand firm” in the midst of the spiritual battles. Therefore, we must never allow the devil to have a foothold in our lives during the intense spiritual battle but rather, to stand firm!

“You will not need to fight in this battle. Stand firm, hold your position, and see the salvation of the Lord on your behalf, O Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid and do not be dismayed. Tomorrow go out against them, and the Lord will be with you.” – **2 Chronicles 20:17 (ESV)**

“If you do not stand firm in your faith, you will not stand at all.” - **Isaiah 7:9b (NIV)**

#3 The Call to Worship & Praise Through the Spiritual Battle (v 21-22)

King Jehoshaphat and Judah faced a real battle where people will die in battle. Instead of being in fear, King Jehoshaphat sent His “worship team” to the frontlines of the battle to proclaim the Lord’s goodness and love to them. They allowed praise to be their battle cry and their spiritual weapon.

In challenging times, it can be difficult to look to God and to praise Him. But worship is the only thing we can offer unto the Lord that He has not first given to us. When we start to praise in the midst of our spiritual battles, God will work on our behalf. Praise fixes our eyes on God and not on the situation. Praise also declares to the heavenlies and to the situation who God is, what He has promised and His faithfulness to His people.

#4 The Call to Trust in God’s Deliverance and Timing (v 15)

The battle belongs to the Lord and not to us. Sometimes, it is not about us fighting the battle and finding solutions on our own because the battle belongs to the Lord. Ps. Joachim encouraged those of us who have not seen God’s deliverance in their situation, to trust in God’s timing of things. He is faithful and good towards us. We must trust in Him!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. Was there a situation you encountered that made you realise that you are in a spiritual battle? Share with the cell regarding that experience.**
- 2. Ps. Joachim shared that when we defile ourselves, the enemy will have a stronghold in our lives and that would render us powerless in the spiritual battle. What are the common “defilements” that we face regularly? How do we avoid being defiled by them?**
- 3. Ps. Joachim shared that praise can be a powerful weapon in the midst of our spiritual battle. Why do you think it is so hard for many of us to praise God in the midst of a spiritual battle? How can we make this a natural response for us?**

PRAYER

Consider dividing the group into micro-groups for a deeper time of sharing as well as praying for the following items:

1. Sermon Application

- That we will be alert to the spiritual battles happening in our lives day in and day out.
- That we will not allow ourselves to be defiled, but will learn to be more sensitive to the promptings of the Holy Spirit.

2. RiverLife

- Pray for our church that as we have concluded the 21 days of prayer and fasting, we will determine to live in a new normal – one that follows after the example of Christ.
- Pray for our upcoming mission trips, RiverLife Kindergarten Graduation Concert, as well as the Parents Gathering and Marriage Retreat that will be happening soon.

3. World

- Pray for Singapore as we experience a new wave of COVID-19 and haze.
- Pray for the conflict in the Gaza Strip between Israel and Hamas, that a peaceful resolution can be reached soon.
- Pray for Scotland and Scandinavia as the deadly storm Babet hits these countries.
- Pray for the bed bug infestations that are sweeping through France, Algeria and Africa.
- Continue to pray for the Russia-Ukraine war and the avoidance of using nuclear weapons.

4. Opportunities for Outreach

- Ask the Lord to bless us as we step out to reach a pre-believer.
- Ask the Lord to grant you opportunities to reach out to a non-believing loved one, friend, or colleague this week as we seek to mature in Christlikeness.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Digital Bulletin: rlc.sg/bulletin

1. Newly Commissioned Ministry Heads.

- Grace Wong, *Head of Worship Ministry*
Grace's heart is for the generations coming together in oneness to worship the Lord and hasten the day of His return. Her desire is to see the church be wholehearted in our love for the Lord and His people. A musician by training and teacher by vocation, she is passionate about educating, equipping and activating the body of Christ to understand the Father's heart and serve Him with excellence. Having served in RiverLife Worship & Arts Ministry since 2012, she was part of the MegaLife Worship Ministry core team from 2016-2022 and joined the RiverLife staff team in February 2023. Grace is married to Jason and they have a son, Micah.
- Charmaine Chee, *Head of Counselling Ministry*
Charmaine came to know the Lord when she was 14 and her faith deepened when she grew spiritually through serving in Overseas Christian Fellowship as a student in Perth. From 1992 to 2010, Charmaine served in various capacities as a full-time staff with Hope Church (Singapore). Presently, she is a primary school counsellor with the Ministry of Education after pursuing a joint degree in Master of Arts in Practical Theology and Master of Arts in Human Services Counselling at Regent University, USA. Her journey with RiverLife began in March 2019 when she started worshipping regularly here. She is part of PSH2B cell group and has been serving in Alpha @ RiverLife as well as our Counselling Ministry since 2020. Having completed the RTF Activation Seminar in July 2023, Charmaine is now training to be an RTF IFM Minister. She considers loving and following Christ as the best thing in her life and desires to continue empowering people to live fulfilling lives in the Lord.

2. **Collect Your 'Make Us One' T-Shirts.** Starting this Sun – 22, 29 Oct & 5 Nov After service till 12.30pm | Atrium (Level 1) Upon collection, we may request for the email containing your order details received from 'Google Forms' at the email address you used to place your order for verification. Due to the overwhelming response, we seek your understanding that collection of orders will be done after service until 12.30pm on Sundays on a first-come-first-served basis. If you are unable to collect within the time slot this Sunday, you can do so next Sunday. Please be assured that confirmed orders (i.e. those placed and paid for within the ordering & payment period) will be fulfilled.

3. **Bible Equipping Sessions by Pastor David Lim - Book of Leviticus Set Apart for The Gospel: Encountering God's Holiness.** "Rules and regulations" are unfortunately what go through many believers' minds whenever they encounter the book of Leviticus. In fact, its current name can be traced to a misconception that the book contained merely instructions to the priesthood, and thus was not relevant to the rest of God's people.

But why did God give this book to Israel right after the completion of the Tabernacle? How were the various rules related to the fact that God's holy presence was now dwelling among His people? The first half of Leviticus focuses on the significance of Israel's sacrificial system, culminating in the central theology of the atonement, while the second half explores the specific instructions concerning different aspects of daily lives and how they are meant to reflect the holiness of God.

This series comprises 4 sessions:

1. Fri, 17 Nov, 8-10 pm
2. Sun, 19 Nov, 11.30am-3.30pm (with lunch break)
3. Fri, 24 Nov, 8-10 pm
4. Sun, 26 Nov, 11.30am-3.30pm (with lunch break)

Pre-order your lunch for the Sunday sessions by Sun, 13 Nov: rlc.sg/lev-lunch
If you have not attended the Genesis book study series, please watch *Introduction to the Pentateuch*: rlc.sg/intro-penta (First 30 minutes)

- 4. Seniors Survey for RiverLifers aged 55 & above.** We're inviting RiverLifers aged 55 & above to participate in our survey for seniors! This survey, initiated by our newly set up ministry for seniors – Caleb Ministry, seeks to understand seniors and the ways they would like to serve or be involved in church life during this season of their lives. Caleb Ministry is part of our ongoing churchwide discipleship efforts, and aims to encourage, equip, and empower our seniors to live an abundant life (John 10:10) in their autumn years.

Kindly submit your response by Thu, 30 Nov: rlc.sg/calebsurvey

- 5. The RiverLife Welcome Lunch. Sun, 19 Nov | 11.30am-1pm Grace Chapel (Level 1)** Specially for those who started joining us at service or cell this year. Relationships matter to us because church is family. If you are new to RiverLife, come join us for this Welcome Lunch so that we can get to know one another better. You'll get to meet fellow RiverLifers as well as our Senior Leaders and Pastors too. This session is for those who have not attended a Welcome Lunch previously. Due to capacity constraints, each guest may be accompanied by up to two family members or friends (including their host).

RSVP online by Sun, 12 Nov: rlc.sg/welcomelunch

- 6. RiverLife Community Services (RCS)**

- 2023 Faith Goal: \$920,000
- Amount raised to date: \$574,046

RiverLife Community Services is the community arm of RiverLife Church. It is our hope that through RCS, we will be able to bring Kingdom transformation to local communities by reaching, nurturing and empowering individuals and families. Your contribution to RCS will help sustain the programmes and support extended to low-income beneficiaries.

How you can give:

- Indicate your donation amount on this form: bit.ly/feeddreams
- Donate digitally or in-person at the Atrium on 15, 22, 29 Oct & 5 Nov (10.45-11.45am).
- As a token of appreciation, with every donation of \$50, you will receive one complimentary meal voucher from your choice of our partner restaurants.

- 7. RiverLife Kindergarten Annual Concert and K2 Graduation 2023. Sat, 4 Nov, 9-12pm.**

RiverLife Kindergarten will be holding their Annual Graduation Concert this year-end. They're looking for volunteers to serve as:

- Classroom Helpers: Touch up children's hair, take care of them before and after their performances
- Greeters & Ushers: Welcome guests and usher them to their seats
- Stage Helpers: Assist in moving children up and down the stairs

You will need to serve on the following dates:

- Combined Full-dress Rehearsal: Thu, 2 Nov | 8am to 12pm | Worship Centre
- Actual Concert Day: Sat, 4 Nov | 9am to 12pm | Worship Centre

Sign up to serve:

- Email Oi Leng at oileng@riverlifekindergarten.org.sg

- Call Linda Chong at 6511 4168

8. **The Parents Gathering.** The Parents Gathering is held once a quarter for parents to come together to learn, connect with and support one another through the journey of parenting. As we discover more about ourselves and our children, may we grow to become the parents that God intended us to be. This platform is suitable for parents of all ages, including grandparents. Our time together will comprise:

- A short 30-min video teaching segment
- Group connection time
- Personal / couple processing time
- Light refreshments

Our first gathering: Sat, 28 Oct. 2-6pm. Victory Chapel.

Register by Sun, 22 Oct to join us at our first meetup: rlc.sg/pg

Workbooks can be purchased at \$16 each. Details to be released at a later date.

About the Curriculum Used

'The Art of Parenting' is designed to help parents make faith the core of their parenting with intentional, Biblical teaching and Christ-centered plans. Parents will gain renewed confidence, fresh insights on raising children at different ages, and a parenting plan unique to each child's personality and gifting. Inspired by Psalm 127:4, this eight-session study is video based and covers the following topics:

The Goal of Parenting • Forming Character • Applying Discipline • Building Relationships • Understanding Identity • Nurturing Identity • Preparing for Mission • The Power of Family

Preview the Curriculum here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M7ZJ31DbGag>

9. **Discipleship@Home - Our Bodies, God's Story (For Parents of Primary Children)**

- Primary Session: Sun, 5 Nov | 9am-11am | Grace Chapel
- Content: What is God's design for our bodies that are made in the image of God? How can we love God through knowing how to take care of ourselves as male and female image-bearers?

The sessions will discuss biblical sexuality with children and parents, providing age-specific handles so that we can be effective ambassadors of Christ in His grand story. *More in-depth discussion on pressing issues such as purity and the influence of media will be covered at the Primary session.* If you have children in both preschool & primary levels, we encourage you to attend both sessions as content will differ.

Speaker: **Carol Loi** is the International Director of *Generations of Virtue*, a ministry committed to teaching sexual wholeness and integrity, building family relationships & transforming culture. As a mom to two young adults, Carol is also a certified digital wellness educator and a Fellow of the Center for Media Literacy. She has served in the Singapore public service for over two decades, including EDB, MOE and IMDA.

- Sign up to attend: rlc.sg/dah

10. **Serve in SuperLife.** Serve in SuperLife as a Teacher or Tech Support Crew!

- Teacher's role:
 - Support the running of weekly SuperLife services for preschool children
 - Care for and manage the children during service
- Tech support crew role:

- Serve at our children's services for Kindy (aged 5-6) and Nursery (aged 3-4) levels
- Operate the Pro-Presenter software on a laptop for videos and slides support
- Operate the sound panel and microphones for audio support No prior experience needed as training will be provided.
- Sign up to serve: rlc.sg/serve

11. Current Pulpit Series – In the Wake of Awakening.

- Part 2 – Revivals (15 Oct – 26 Nov). We survey seasons of awakening in Israel's history throughout the Old Covenant. From restorations of relationships to spiritual warfare, we will glean from Israel's obedience and failures following seasons of renewal.

CHURCH CALENDAR

1. Church Calendar Highlights

- *Quarter 4*
 - Parents Gatherings – 28 Oct
 - Leaders Huddle – 5 Nov
 - Water Baptism Service – 12 Nov
 - Equipping Series - Leviticus: 17 & 19, 24 & 26 Nov
 - Marriage Retreat – 24 to 26 Nov

2. **YA Gatherings (For Young Adults in their 20s). First Saturday Every Month, 5pm-8.30pm Victory Chapel (Level 1).** The YA Gathering is a space where young adults can get together to connect and build community. This gathering is made up of two components – Community Conversations & Communal Dinner – both with a focus on relationship building and life conversations. If you are currently in a cell, register your attendance with your cell leader. If you are currently not in a cell, do register online: rlc.sg/YAgathering-apr-reg.

3. RiverLife Prayer Meetings.

RiverLife Prayer Room. Tue, 8-9.30pm, Victory Chapel.

RiverLife Revive Nights. Wed, 8pm – 9.30pm, Victory Chapel (livestream: rlc.sg/revivenights)

CHURCH MINISTRIES & OPPORTUNITIES

1. **9M Ministry.** The 9M Ministry provides prayer support for expectant mothers on their 9-month journey of pregnancy. Sisters-in-Christ who are fellow RiverLifers are assigned as Prayer Buddies to walk alongside mums who sign up to receive prayer support.
 - Receive Prayer Support: rlc.sg/9m
 - Provide Prayer Support: rlc.sg/serve
2. **Missions Microsite.** Discover how you can go, give and pray for the nations. Let's make a difference in the nations together! For more information, visit rlc.sg/missions.
3. **RiverLife Cares Opportunities.** Signup: <http://rlc.sg/serve-rlcar>
4. **Prayer Ministry.** If you require prayer ministry for any issues you face (eg. fear, worry, etc), you can sign up for RLC's RTF ministry: <https://bit.ly/rlcrtf>

RESOURCES & CONNECTING WITH US

- Bible Reading Plan.** The church has provided 3 undated Bible Reading plans that will serve as a resource for those who wish to follow a Bible Reading plan. Link: rlc.sg/brp
 - 2 Year Chronological Bible Reading Plan.
 - 3 Year Bible Reading Schedule (Alternating readings between Old and New Testament passages)
 - Redemptive Historical Bible Reading Plan (At your own pace, focusing on the redemption story)
- RiverLife Podcast.** The RiverLife Podcast allows you to listen to RiverLife content anytime, anywhere! The link to go to is rlc.sg/podcast or simply search **'The RiverLife Podcast'** on Spotify.
- Spiritual Growth Resources.** We have put together a curated list of recommended resources for the RiverLife family. These resources (books, articles, podcasts and videos) are recommendations for the various spiritual growth stages as you seek to grow deeper in the River of God this year. You can access them at rlc.sg/resource. This list will be continually populated throughout the year.
- Testimony.** If you have a testimony to share, you can write to us at stories@riverlife.org.sg to share with us your testimony as an encouragement to others.
- Stay Connected with RLC.** Follow us to stay updated on latest church news and happenings.
 - **WhatsApp Broadcast:** Text 'Subscribe' to 8923 1939
 - **Telegram Channel:** t.me/RiverLifeChurch
 - **Facebook & Instagram:** [@riverlifechurchsg](https://www.facebook.com/riverlifechurchsg)

GIVING LINKS & QR CODES

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