

Experiencing  
the Power  
of God

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## **Forward**

Is anything too hard for the LORD?" The obvious answer is, "Of course not!" This question reveals much about God. Make it a habit to insert your specific needs into the question.

"Is this day in my life too hard for the Lord?" "Is this habit I'm trying to break too hard for him?" "Is the communication problem I'm having too hard for him?"

Asking the question this way reminds you that God is personally involved in your life and nudges you to ask for his power to help you.

**The strength and power of God is greater and more helpful than any power.**

**In this study, we will look at various Bible characters that sought and received the power of God to meet their need.**

**Without disappointment, they found that power of God was able to meet that need.**

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**As you study this lesson, may your needs be met.**

## Chapter 1



**Great men of prayer accomplished great things for God.**

### **Elijah**

Elijah was a man, who called down fire from heaven,

Elijah rought a widow's son back to life,

Elijah Ran faster than horses,

Elijah traveled 40 days and 40 nights on the strength of one meal

When Elijah came to the widow's house he told her to feed him and when she did, her jar of flour and oil did not run dry until the famine was over.

Elijah stood up to the wicked King Ahab and Queen Jezebel.

A chariot of fire came down and took him up to heaven in a whirlwind.

Elijah parted the water of the Jordan River just so he and Elisha, just two men, could go across and meet with god.

### **James 5:17-18**

Elijah was as human as we are, and yet when he prayed earnestly that no rain would fall, none fell for the next three and one half years.

## Moses

Moses parted the Red Sea so that the millions of people of Israel could pass through and escape Pharaoh's army.

### **Miracles of Moses contrasted with the miracles of Jesus**

1. The turning of water into blood was the first of the public miracles that Moses did in Egypt (Exodus 7:20).

Turning the water into wine was the first of the public miracles that Jesus did in the world (John 2:11).

2. The signs that God gave to Egypt in the Old Testament were plagues, destruction, and death

The signs that Jesus did in the world in the New Testament were healings, blessings, and life.

3. The turning of water to blood initiated Moses (a type of the Savior—Deuteronomy 18:15) leading his people out of the bondage of Egypt into an earthly liberty

The turning of water into wine initiated Jesus taking His people out of the bondage of the corruption of the world into the glorious liberty of the children of God (Romans 8:21).

4. The turning of water to blood culminated in the firstborn in Egypt being delivered to death

Jesus turned the water into wine culminated in the life of the Firstborn being delivered from death (Colossians 1:18).

5. The Law was a ministration of death, written on cold tablets of stone.

Jesus wrote the laws of God on the warm fleshly tablets of the heart. (2 Corinthians 3:7–9).

6. When Moses changed the water into blood, all the fish in the river died.

When Jesus initiated the new covenant, the catch of the fish are made alive in the net of the kingdom of God (Matthew 4:19).

7. The river of blood was symbolic of death for Egypt

The water into wine is symbolic of life for the world. The letter of the Law kills, but the Spirit makes alive (2 Corinthians 3:6).

## **Joshua**

Joshua parted the Jordan River so that the Israelite armies could cross over, together with the people, to conquer the Promised Land.

## Chapter 2



**Jesus Christ is recorded in the Book of John as performing eight great miracles.**

These events offered proof of Christ's divinity and reveals the powers of the LORD God that He chose to express through Jesus Christ as he walked the earth with the nature of man.

### **Turning of water into wine**

#### **John 2:1-11**

Jesus was on a mission to save the world, the greatest mission in the history of mankind. Yet he took time to attend a wedding and take part in its festivities. We may be tempted to think we should not take time out from our “important” work for social occasions. But maybe these social occasions are part of our mission. Jesus valued these wedding festivities because they involved people, and Jesus came to be with people. Our mission can often be accomplished in joyous times of celebration with others. Bring balance to your life by bringing Jesus into times of pleasure as well as times of work.

## **Healing of a Nobleman's son**

### **John 4:46-54**

This miracle was more than a favor to one official; it was a sign to all the people. John's Gospel was written to all mankind to urge faith in Christ. Here a government official had faith that Jesus could do what he claimed. The official believed; *then* he saw a miraculous sign.

Jesus' miracles were not mere illusions, the product of wishful thinking. Although the official's son was 20 miles away, he was healed when Jesus spoke the word. Distance was no problem because Christ has mastery over space. We can never put so much space between ourselves and Christ that he can no longer help us.

## **Healing of a lame man**

### **John 5:1-9**

After 38 years, this man's problem had become a way of life. No one had ever helped him. He had no hope of ever being healed and no desire to help himself.

The man's situation looked hopeless. But no matter how trapped you feel in your infirmities, God can minister to your deepest needs. Don't let a problem or hardship cause you to lose hope. God may have special work for you to do in spite of your condition, or even because of it. Many have ministered effectively to hurting people because they have triumphed over their own hurts.

## **Feeding of the 5,000**

### **John 6:1-14**

If anyone knew where to get food, it would have been Philip because he was from Bethsaida, a town about nine miles away (John 1:44). Jesus was testing Philip to strengthen his faith. By asking for a human solution (knowing that there was none), Jesus highlighted the powerful and miraculous act that he was about to perform.

When Jesus asked Philip where they could buy a great amount of bread, Philip started assessing the probable cost.

Jesus wanted to teach him that financial resources are not the most important ones.

We can limit what God does in us by assuming what is and is not possible. Is there some impossible task that you believe God wants you to do?

Don't allow your estimate of what can't be done keep you from taking on the task. God can do the miraculous; trust him to provide the resources.

In performing his miracles, Jesus usually preferred to work through people. Here he took what a young child offered and used it to accomplish one of the most spectacular miracles recorded in the Gospels. Age is no barrier to Christ. Never think you are too young or old to be of service to him.

## Jesus walking on the water

### John 6:15-21

The Sea of Galilee is 650 feet below sea level, 150 feet deep, and surrounded by hills. These physical features make it subject to sudden windstorms that would cause extremely high waves.

Such storms were expected on this lake, but they were nevertheless frightening. When Jesus came to the disciples during a storm, walking on the water (three and a half miles from shore), he told them not to be afraid.

We often face spiritual and emotional storms and feel tossed about like a small boat on a big lake. In spite of terrifying circumstances, if we trust our lives to Christ for his safekeeping, he will give us peace in any storm.

The disciples, terrified, probably thought they were seeing a ghost (Mark 6:49). But if they had thought about all they had already seen Jesus do, they could have accepted this miracle.

They were frightened—they didn't expect Jesus to come, and they weren't prepared for his help.

Faith is a mind-set that *expects* God to act. When we act on this expectation, we can overcome our fears.

## Healing of a blind man

### John 9:1-12

In John 9, we see four different reactions to Jesus. The neighbors revealed surprise and skepticism; the Pharisees showed disbelief and prejudice; the parents believed but kept quiet for fear of excommunication; and the healed man showed consistent, growing faith.

A common belief in Jewish culture was that calamity or suffering was the result of some great sin. But Christ used this man's suffering to teach about faith and to glorify God.

We live in a fallen world where good behavior is not always rewarded and bad behavior not always punished. Therefore, innocent people sometimes suffer.

If God took suffering away whenever we asked, we would follow him for comfort and convenience, not out of love and devotion.

Regardless of the reasons for our suffering, Jesus has the power to help us deal with it. When you suffer from a disease, tragedy, or disability, try not to ask, "Why did this happen to me?" or "What did I do wrong?" Instead, ask God to give you strength for the trial and a clearer perspective on what is happening.

The pool of Siloam was built by Hezekiah. His workers constructed an underground tunnel from a spring outside the city walls to carry water into the city. Thus the people could always get water without fear of being attacked. This was especially important during times of siege (see 2 Kings 20:20; 2 Chron. 32:30).

## **Raising Lazarus from the dead**

### **John 11:1-44**

The village of Bethany was located about two miles east of Jerusalem on the road to Jericho. It was near enough to Jerusalem for Jesus and the disciples to be in danger, but far enough away so as not to attract attention prematurely.

As their brother grew very sick, Mary and Martha turned to Jesus for help. They believed in his ability to help because they had seen his miracles. We too know of Jesus' miracles, both from Scripture and through changed lives we have seen. When we need extraordinary help, Jesus offers extraordinary resources. We should not hesitate to ask him for assistance.

Any trial a believer faces can ultimately bring glory to God because God can bring good out of any bad situation (Genesis 50:20; Romans 8:28). When trouble comes, do you grumble, complain, and blame God, or do you see your problems as opportunities to honor him?

Jesus loved this family and often stayed with them. He knew their pain but did not respond immediately. His delay had a specific purpose. God's timing, especially his delays, may make us think he is not answering or is not answering the way we want. But he will meet all our needs according to his perfect schedule and purpose (Phil. 4:19). Patiently await his timing.

If Jesus had been with Lazarus during the final moments of Lazarus's sickness, he might have healed him rather than let him die. But Lazarus died so that Jesus' power over death could be shown to his disciples and others.

The raising of Lazarus was an essential display of his power, and the resurrection from the dead is a crucial belief of Christian faith. Jesus not only raised himself from the dead (John 10:18), but he has the power to raise others.

Jesus has power over life and death as well as power to forgive sins. This is because he is the Creator of life (see John 14:6).

He who *is* life can surely restore life. Whoever believes in Christ has a spiritual life that death cannot conquer or diminish in any way. When we realize his power and how wonderful his offer to us really is, how can we help but commit our lives to him!

To those of us who believe, what wonderful assurance and certainty we have: “Because I live, you also will live” (John 14:19).

Martha is best known for being too busy to sit down and talk with Jesus (Luke 10:38-42). But here we see her as a woman of deep faith. Her statement of faith is exactly the response that Jesus wants from us.

When Jesus saw the weeping and wailing, he too wept openly. Perhaps he empathized with their grief, or perhaps he was troubled at their unbelief. In either case, Jesus showed that he cares enough for us to weep with us in our sorrow.

### **Miraculous catch of fish**

#### **John 21:1-11**

This chapter tells how Jesus commissioned Peter. Perhaps Peter needed special encouragement after his denial—he may have felt completely worthless. John 21:1-14 set the scene for Jesus’ conversation with Peter.

Only John (“the disciple whom Jesus loved”) recognized Jesus in the dim morning light, undoubtedly because Jesus had performed a similar miracle earlier (Luke 5:1-11).

## Chapter 3



### Promises given by Jesus about God's power

#### **Luke 24:49**

"And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high".

As the disciples stood and watched, Jesus began rising into the air, and soon he disappeared into heaven. Seeing Jesus leave must have been frightening, but the disciples knew that Jesus would keep his promise to be with them through the Holy Spirit.

This same Jesus, who lived with the disciples, who died and was buried, and who rose from the dead, loves us and promises to be with us always. We can get to know him better through studying the Scriptures, praying, and allowing the Holy Spirit to make us more like Jesus.

Jesus' physical presence left the disciples when he returned to heaven (Acts 1:9), but the Holy Spirit soon came to comfort them and empower them to spread the gospel of salvation (Acts 2:1-4). Today Jesus' work of salvation is completed, and he is sitting at God's right hand, where he has authority over heaven and earth.

#### **Acts 1:8**

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

"The promise of my (Jesus) Father" is associated with the power of receiving the Holy Spirit.

### Acts 2:4,

The disciples received power when they received the Holy Spirit; they also spoke in tongues.

This was a fulfillment of John the Baptist's words about the Holy Spirit's baptizing with fire (Luke 3:16), and of the Prophet Joel's words about the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Joel 2:28-29).

Why tongues of fire? Tongues symbolize speech and the communication of the gospel.

Fire symbolizes God's purifying presence, which burns away the undesirable elements of our lives and sets our hearts aflame to ignite the lives of others. On Mount Sinai, God confirmed the validity of the Old Testament law with fire from heaven (Exodus 19:16-18).

At Pentecost, God confirmed the validity of the Holy Spirit's ministry by sending fire. At Mount Sinai, fire had come down on one place; at Pentecost, fire came down on many believers, symbolizing that God's presence is now available to all who believe in him.

God made his presence known to this group of believers in a spectacular way—violent wind, fire, and his Holy Spirit.

Would you like God to reveal himself to you in such recognizable ways?

He may do so, but be wary of forcing your expectations on God.

## **No man can force the hand of God.**

### **1 Kings 19:10-13,**

Elijah also needed a message from God. There was a great wind, then an earthquake, and finally a fire. But God’s message came in a “gentle whisper.”

God may use dramatic methods to work in your life—or he may speak in gentle whispers. Wait patiently and always listen.

These people literally spoke in other languages—a miraculous attention-getter for the international crowd gathered in town for the feast.

All the nationalities represented recognized their own languages being spoken. But more than miraculous speaking drew people’s attention; they saw the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.

The apostles continued to minister in the power of the Holy Spirit wherever they went.

### **In Acts 2:38**

Peter tells us how to receive power by telling us how to receive the Holy Spirit.

If you want to follow Christ, you must “repent and be baptized.”

To repent, means to *turn from* sin, changing the direction of your life from selfishness and rebellion against God’s laws.

At the same time, you must *turn to* Christ, depending on him for forgiveness, mercy, guidance, and purpose. We cannot save ourselves—only God can save us.

Baptism identifies us with Christ and with the community of believers. It is a condition of discipleship and a sign of faith.

### **Everything is possible with God**

#### **Mark 10:27**

Jesus looked at them intently and said, "Humanly speaking, it is impossible. But it is not impossible with God. Everything is possible with God."

The religious leaders asked Jesus who gave him the authority to chase away the merchants and money changers. Their question was a trap. If Jesus said his authority was from God, they would accuse him of blasphemy; if he said his authority was his own, they would dismiss him as a fanatic.

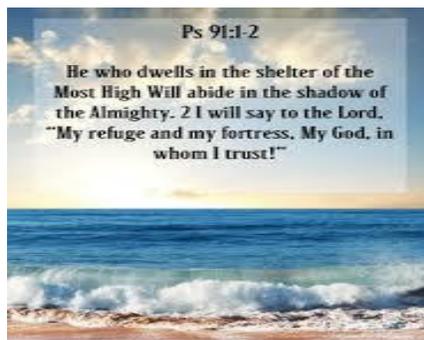
To expose their real motives, Jesus countered their question with a question about John the Baptist. The leaders' silence proved that they were not interested in the truth. They simply wanted to get rid of Jesus because he was undermining their authority.

#### **Matthew 19:26**

Jesus looked at them intently and said, "Humanly speaking, it is impossible. But with God everything is possible."

The disciples were astonished. They thought that if anyone could be saved, it would be the rich, whom their culture considered especially blessed by God.

## Chapter 4



### Promises of the manifest power of God

#### Genesis 18:14

Is anything too hard for the Lord? About a year from now, just as I told you, I will return, and Sarah will have a son."

Is anything too hard for the LORD?" The obvious answer is, "Of course not!" This question reveals much about God. Make it a habit to insert your specific needs into the question.

"Is this day in my life too hard for the Lord?" "Is this habit I'm trying to break too hard for him?" "Is the communication problem I'm having too hard for him?"

Asking the question this way reminds you that God is personally involved in your life and nudges you to ask for his power to help you.

### The Lord is clothed with majesty

#### Psalm 93:1

The Lord reigneth, he is clothed with majesty; the Lord is clothed with strength, wherewith he hath girded himself: the world also is established, that it cannot be moved.

Jewish tradition claims that the next seven psalms (Psalm 93-99) anticipated some of the works of the Messiah. Psalm 93 is said to have been used in post-captivity temple services and may have been written during Sennacherib's invasion (2 Kings 18:13-19:37).

### Mark 14:26

Then they sang a hymn and went out to the Mount of Olives.

The hymn they sang was most likely taken from Psalms 115-118, traditionally sung at the Passover meal.

## **God's possibilities are unlimited**

### Luke 1:37

For nothing is impossible with God."

A young unmarried girl who became pregnant risked disaster. Unless the father of the child agreed to marry her, she would probably remain unmarried for life.

If her own father rejected her, she could be forced into begging or prostitution in order to earn her living. And Mary, with her story about being made pregnant by the Holy Spirit, risked being considered crazy as well.

Still Mary said, despite the possible risks, "May it be to me as you have said."

When Mary said that, she didn't know about the tremendous opportunity she would have. She only knew that God was asking her to serve him, and she willingly obeyed.

Don't wait to see the bottom line before offering your life to God. Offer yourself willingly, even when the outcome seems disastrous.

God's announcement of a child to be born was met with various responses throughout Scripture.

Sarah, Abraham's wife, laughed (Genesis 18:9-15).

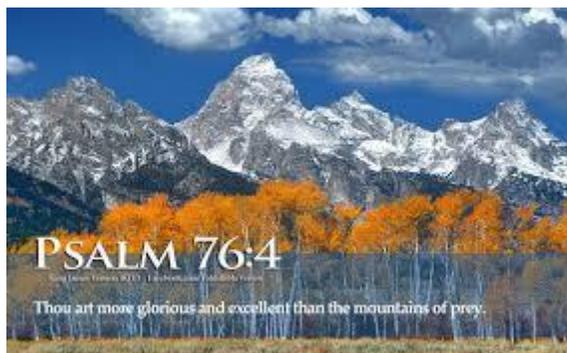
Zechariah doubted (Luke 1:18).

By contrast, Mary submitted.

She believed the angel's words and agreed to bear the child, even under humanly impossible circumstances.

God is able to do the impossible. Our response to his demands should not be laughter, or doubt, but willing acceptance.

## Chapter 5



### **The glorious power from God**

**2 Cor. 4:7**

But this precious treasure—this light and power that now shine within us—is held in perishable containers, that is, in our weak bodies. So everyone can see that our glorious power is from God and is not our own.

The supremely valuable message of salvation in Jesus Christ has been entrusted by God to frail and fallible human beings (“jars of clay”).

Paul’s focus, however, was not on the perishable container but on its priceless contents—God’s power dwelling in us. Though we are weak, God uses us to spread his Good News, and he gives us power to do his work. Knowing that the power is his, not ours, should keep us from pride and motivate us to keep daily contact with God, our power source. Our responsibility is to let people see God through us.

### **No one can stop God’s power**

**Job 42:2**

"I know that you can do anything, and no one can stop you.

Job was quoting the Lord's earlier questions to him (Job 38:2-3). He openly and honestly faced God and admitted that he was the one who had been foolish.

Are you using what you can't understand as an excuse for your lack of trust? Admit to God that you don't even have enough faith to trust him. True faith begins in such humility.

### **You cannot change God's plans**

#### **Isaiah 14:27**

The Lord Almighty has spoken—who can change his plans? When his hand moves, who can stop him?"

This prophecy came true as Isaiah predicted (see 2 Kings 19; Isaiah 37:21-38).

Isaiah received this message from the Lord in 715 B.C., the year that King Ahaz of Judah died. "The rod that struck you" (Isaiah 14:29) was not Ahaz but Shalmaneser V or Sargon of Assyria. The "cloud of smoke" from the north (Isaiah 14:31) refers to the soldiers of Sargon of Assyria.

### **God's name is full of power**

#### **Jeremiah 10:6**

Lord, there is no one like you! For you are great, and your name is full of power.

God sends Jeremiah to the temple gates to confront the false belief that God will not let harm come to the temple and those who live near it.

Jeremiah rebukes the people for their false and worthless religion, their idolatry, and the shameless behavior of the people and their leaders.

Judah, he says, is ripe for judgment and exile. This happened during the reign of Jehoiakim, a puppet of Egypt.

The nation, in shock over the death of Josiah, was going through a spiritual reversal that removed much of the good Josiah had done.

The themes of this section are false religion, idolatry, and hypocrisy. Jeremiah was almost put to death for this sermon, but he was saved by the officials of Judah

### **God's power makes a nation**

#### **Genesis 28:3**

May God Almighty bless you and give you many children. And may your descendants become a great assembly of nations!

#### **Genesis 35:11**

Then God said, "I am God Almighty. Multiply and fill the earth! Become a great nation, even many nations. Kings will be among your descendants!"

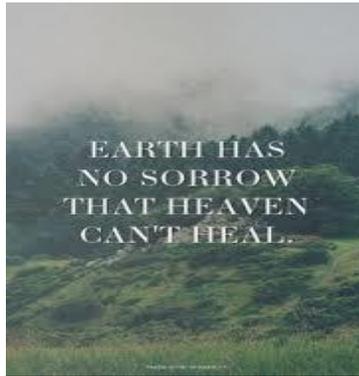
God reminded Jacob of his new name, Israel, which meant "he struggles with God."

Although Jacob's life was littered with difficulties and trials, his new name was a tribute to his desire to stay close to God despite life's disappointments.

Many people believe that Christianity should offer a problem-free life. Consequently, as life gets tough, they draw back disappointed.

Instead, they should determine to prevail with God through life's storm. Problems and difficulties are painful but inevitable; you might as well see them as opportunities for growth. You can't prevail with God unless you have troubles to prevail over.

## Chapter 6



### Prevailing through sorrow

#### Genesis 43:14

May God Almighty give you mercy as you go before the man that he might release Simeon and return Benjamin. And if I must bear the anguish of their deaths, then so be it."

Joseph's brothers arrived home from Egypt only to find in their grain sacks the money they had used to pay for the grain (Genesis 42:35).

Some months later, when it was time to return to Egypt for more food, Jacob instructed them to take extra money so they could pay for the previous purchase as well as for additional grain.

Jacob did not try to get away with anything. He was a man of integrity who paid for what he bought, whether he had to or not.

We should follow his example and guard our integrity. A reputation for honesty is worth far more than the money we might save by compromising it.

### All God's power is yet unknown

#### Job 11:7

"Can you solve the mysteries of God? Can you discover everything there is to know about the Almighty?"

## Job 31:2

What has God above chosen for us? What is our inheritance from the Almighty on high?

Job had not only avoided committing the great sin of adultery; he had not even taken the first step toward that sin by looking at a woman with lust.

Job said he was innocent of both outward and inward sins. In Job 29, Job reviewed his good deeds.

## **God is the king of glory**

### Psalm 24:10

Who is the King of glory? The Lord Almighty— he is the King of glory.

This psalm, often set to music, was probably used in corporate worship. It may have been re-enacted many times at the temple.

The people outside would call out to the temple gates to open up and let the King of glory in. From inside, the priests or another group would ask, “Who is this King of glory?”

Outside, the people would respond in unison, “The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle,” proclaiming his great power and strength. The exchange was then repeated (Psalm 24:9-10), and the temple gates would swing open, symbolizing the people’s desire to have God’s presence among them.

This would have been an important lesson for children who were participating.

## **No one is as mighty as God**

### **Psalm 89:8**

O Lord God Almighty, Where is there anyone as mighty as you, Lord?

Faithfulness is your very character.

Righteousness, justice, love, and faithfulness are the foundation of God's throne; they are fundamental aspects of the way God rules. As God's ambassadors, we should deal with people similarly.

Make sure your actions flow out of righteousness, justice, love, and faithfulness because any unfair, unloving, or dishonest action cannot come from God.

## **The God of Israel is no idol!**

### **Jeremiah 10:16**

But the God of Israel is no idol! He is the Creator of everything that exists, Including Israel, his own special possession. The Lord Almighty is his name!

### **2 Cor. 6:18**

And I will be your Father, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty."

Paul urges believers not to form binding relationships with nonbelievers, because this might weaken their Christian commitment, integrity, or standards.

It would be a mismatch. Earlier, Paul had explained that this did not mean isolating oneself from nonbelievers (see 1 Cor. 5:9-10). Paul even tells Christians to stay with their nonbelieving spouses (1 Cor. 7:12-13).

Paul wants believers to be active in their witness for Christ to nonbelievers, but they should not lock themselves into personal or business relationships that could cause them to compromise the faith.

Believers should do everything in their power to avoid situations that could force them to divide their loyalties.

Belial is a name that Paul uses for Satan. For those who have discovered God's light, there can be no fellowship or compromise with the darkness (1 Cor. 10:20-21).

Separation from the world involves more than keeping our distance from sinners; it means staying close to God (see 2 Cor. 7:1-2).

It involves more than avoiding entertainment that leads to sin; it extends into how we spend our time and money. There is no way to separate ourselves totally from all sinful influences. Nevertheless, we are to resist the sin around us, without either giving up or giving in.

**God has always been and will always be.**

**Rev. 11:17**

And they said, "We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty,

The one who is and who always was, for now you have assumed your great power and have begun to reign.

## Rev. 19:6

Then I heard again what sounded like the shout of a huge crowd, or the roar of mighty ocean waves, or the crash of loud thunder: "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns.

A great multitude in heaven initiates the chorus of praise to God for his victory (Rev. 19:1-3). Then the 24 elders (identified in the note on +Rev. 4:4) join the chorus (Rev. 19:4).

Finally, the great choir of heaven once again praises God—the wedding of the Lamb has come (Rev. 19:6-8). See Matthew 25:1-13 where Christ compares the coming of his kingdom to a wedding for which we must be prepared.

This is the culmination of human history—the judgment of the wicked and the wedding of the Lamb and his bride, the church. The church consists of all faithful believers from all time.

The bride's clothing stands in sharp contrast to the gaudy clothing of the great prostitute of Rev. 17:4 and Rev. 18:16. The bride's clothing is the righteousness of the saints. These righteous acts are not religious deeds done by believers to their merit, but they reflect the work of Christ to save us (Rev. 7:9, 14).

## Genesis 49:24

But his bow remained strong, and his arms were strengthened by the mighty One of Jacob, the Shepherd, and the Rock of Israel.

## **The Lord knows all things**

### **Joshua 22:22**

"The Lord alone is God! The Lord alone is God! We have not built the altar in rebellion against the Lord. If we have done so, do not spare our lives this day. But the Lord knows, and let all Israel know, too,

When the tribes of Reuben and Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh built an altar at the Jordan River, the rest of Israel feared that these tribes were starting their own religion and rebelling against God.

But before beginning an all-out war, Phinehas led a delegation to learn the truth, following the principle taught in Deut. 13:12-18.

He was prepared to negotiate rather than fight if a battle was not necessary. When he learned that the altar was for a memorial rather than for pagan sacrifice, war was averted and unity restored.

### **Psalm 50:1**

The mighty God, the Lord, has spoken; he has summoned all humanity from east to west!

God judges people for treating him lightly. First, he speaks to the superficially religious people who bring their sacrifices but are only going through the motions (Psalm 50:1-15).

They do not honor God with true praise and thankfulness. Second, he chides wicked, hardhearted people for their evil words and immoral lives (Psalm 50:16-22).

He asks the superficially religious for genuine thanksgiving and trust, and he warns the evil people to consider their deeds, lest he destroy them in his anger.

This psalm begins as though God is finally ready to judge the evil people on earth. But surprisingly, we read that God's great fury is leveled against his own people (or at least those who claim to be his). God's judgment must begin with his own people (1 Peter 4:17).

**God's power, through fury, is poured out on his enemies.**

### Isaiah 1:24

Therefore, the Lord, the Lord Almighty, the Mighty One of Israel, says, "I will pour out my fury on you, my enemies!"

God promised to refine his people similar to the way that metal is purged with lye in a smelting pot. This process involves melting the metal and skimming off the impure dross until the worker can see his own image in the liquid metal. We must be willing to submit to God, allowing him to remove our sin so that we might reflect his image.

### Isaiah 10:21

A remnant of them will return to the Mighty God.

Once Assyria's army was destroyed, a small group of God's people would stop relying on Assyria and start trusting God.

This remnant would be but a fraction of Israel's former population: see Ezra 2:64-65 for the small number who returned to Judah (see also Isaiah 11:10-16).

Those who remained faithful to God despite the horrors of the invasion are called the remnant.

The key to being a part of the remnant was *faith*. Being a descendant of Abraham, living in the Promised Land, having trusted God at one time—none of these were good enough.

Are you relying on your Christian heritage, the rituals of worship, or past experience to put you in a right relationship with God? The key to being set apart by God is faith in him.

## Chapter 7



### **God is the mighty one of Israel**

#### **Isaiah 60:16**

Powerful kings and mighty nations will bring the best of their goods to satisfy your every need. You will know at last that I, the Lord, am your Savior and Redeemer, the Mighty One of Israel.

#### **Mark 14:62**

Jesus said, "I am, and you will see me, the Son of Man, sitting at God's right hand in the place of power and coming back on the clouds of heaven."

Of all people, the high priest and members of the Sanhedrin should have recognized the Messiah because they knew the Scriptures thoroughly.

Their job was to point people to God, but they were more concerned about preserving their reputations and holding on to their authority. They valued human security more than eternal security.

## The Mighty One is Holy

### Luke 1:49

For he the Mighty One, is holy, and he has done great things for me.

When Mary said, “From now on all generations will call me blessed,” was she being proud? No, she was recognizing and accepting the gift God had given her. If Mary had denied her incredible position, she would have been throwing God’s blessing back at him. Pride is refusing to accept God’s gifts or taking credit for what God has done; humility is accepting the gifts and using them to praise and serve God. Don’t deny, belittle, or ignore your gifts. Thank God for them and use them to his glory.

God kept his promise to Abraham to be merciful to God’s people forever (Genesis 22:16-18). Christ’s birth fulfilled the promise, and Mary understood this.

She was not surprised when her special son eventually announced that he was the Messiah. She had known Jesus’ mission from before his birth.

The significance of God’s power is significance in every book of the Bible. He gives his power to stand against all the wiles of the devil.

#### References:

**Holy Bible: New Living Bible translation.**

**Additional comments and charts are taken from: *Life Application Study Bible*. Illinois: Tindal House 2007. Print**

