

Welcome To Bootcamp!

Pastor S. James

www.gracetabernaclehyd.org

Father, this evening, we just come to You, the fourth day of the fourth month, the first Wednesday, we just thank You, Lord, we just thank You. Even as we are here, we pray, Father, that You speak to us, You teach us, that our hearts and our minds be always be open to the entrance of Your Word, for Your Word is life, it brings strength, Your Word is light. It dispels darkness. Your Word is healing. It destroys infirmities. Your Word brings deliverance. It casts out demons. So, this evening, once again, we lift Your Word above everything else, Lord. Speak to us. In Jesus' Name we pray, Amen.

The first text I want for tonight is from *James 5:17-18*.

James 5:17-18

¹⁷ Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. ¹⁸ And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit.

So, keep that as the background of your mind as you listen to the Word. So many children. Most of the people today are young ones. It's incredible to see young ones in the house of God. But you need to realize children are born to us, but the children of God are not born, they are born again. And even though children of God are born again, servants of God are made. Once you are born again, technically, you are supposed to serve God but it doesn't make you a servant of God, servants of God are made. Everyone, at one way or the other, believers, claim or want to serve God or say we are serving God but the question is: are we? Everyone, almost everyone I do not know, only you know and God knows everyone sitting in a church, every true believer is a child of destiny called of God but the other side of truth when you study Scripture is that, everyone will not fulfill their destiny, will not fulfill God's purpose simply because of what we choose to hear and what we choose to believe and what we choose to do. That's why we are called to persevere and one of the reasons we gather to study and hear the Word of God that we'll continue; on the way we all need a push. In *Hebrews 10*, this is what it says in verse 35 and 36.

Hebrews 10:35, 36

³⁵ Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. ³⁶ For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise:

After not before, not half way, after we have finished our race, after we have done what is the will of God for each of us personally, then we will receive the promise of His reward. So, we need to realize as believers, as Christians, our lives are not played out in the playground. It is actually played out in the battle ground. You know you have a term, an army term in English, in literature which is called gun fodder. You will understand that only if you know what fodder means. What does fodder mean? Food. Gun fodder means, soldiers who are food for bullets. Millions of soldiers have died unnecessarily; they were gun fodder. The reason was, they were ill-equipped and ill-trained. They did not have proper equipment and they did not have proper training. Like world-war 1, world-war 2, the American civil war, when the soldiers were dying, they had to recruit everybody from the streets, two weeks training and send them and you don't have enough equipment, proper rifles but they are sent into battle field and they die in their tens and thousands. Those ones are called gun fodder, simply because they were ill equipped and ill-trained. One of the reasons we need to come to the house of God and keep learning and keep being trained by God, otherwise we too in the Spiritual battle ground will just become gun fodder. If we are not trained and if we are not equipped with the amour and the power and the weapons of God, we will be just casualties on the battle field because we are very aware of physical casualties, we react but we are not aware of spiritual casualties. In heaven we will see spiritual casualties. That's why Paul uses analogy of Christian life, to a soldier's life. In *2 Timothy* he will say,

2 Timothy 2:3

³ You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

One of the basic training for a soldier when you join is, hardship. *Endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.*
Second thing,

⁴ No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier.

I'm not getting into it, we have looked at it before, we will keep coming back but basically God is saying, "Everyone was enlisted into the army of God." He uses analogy from the army. That every one who is born into the kingdom of God is being equipped and is being trained for spiritual warfare, not to fight with one another but for spiritual warfare. We need training, we need equipment. In *1 Corinthians 9:7*, he will use again a military term. He will say

1 Corinthians 9:7

⁷ Who ever goes to war at his own expense?

Whoever goes to war at his own expense. He is talking about in terms of - - That's why we need to be absolutely sure, we are being trained, we are equipped and He sends us. See, so many people in the kingdom of God actually struggle daily with provision but if you really know you are enlisted in His army, you don't go to war at your expense, the government pays for it. The government of King Jesus will pay. That's why He asked His disciples, "When I sent you out without bag, without a staff, without sandals did you lack anything?" They said, "No!" Get this concept right because if a soldier is going to worry about his provisions and his salary and all those things, he will not fight properly because his mind is divided. There is one set of people in India who never have to worry about their food are the soldiers; rations are guaranteed by the government, they don't have to worry about anything as long as they are in the army, they are taken care of. The only thing they have to worry about is to be focused in their training because they are prepared for one thing, for war. So, what applies to the world of warfare is also true of spiritual preparation for spiritual warfare. No one is ready for battle unless we go for training. So, the title of today's message is, 'Welcome to Bootcamp!' For those who do not know what Bootcamp is, Bootcamp is where the army recruits people and send them for training. From Bootcamp to boothill. For those who do not know what boothill mean, boothill is the graveyard but we will not put boothill in the title, 'Welcome to Bootcamp!' we are fighting the most powerful foe mankind has ever known. With countless numbers on his side. Understand that. In the final battle in Armageddon, when the two hundred million army comes from the east to fight against Jerusalem, even that two hundred million army is nothing compared to the forces the devil has on his side. He has one third of God's angels on his side, one third. We don't have to worry about his power as long as we know we are trained, equipped and God is with us but remember, you never under-estimate the enemy's power and his resources and his also a guy who will fight until the last moment, he never gives up. So you will see even after a thousand years of Jesus' reign on earth and he is locked up in prison, in the abyss for a thousand years, he can never change. When he is released, he still gets the whole of mankind still there to go against God, he will never give up. It is a fight till his end. Offices who joined military academy, I don't know if there is anybody who is interested in the army. When we go to military academies we have, NDA, we have one at Dehradun and we have one at Wellington, near Ooti. These are the military academies in India. When they go to military academies, they learn from the great ancient, modern generals, their military strategies. One of the famous ones is actually from China, it's called Sun-Tzu. The Sun-Tzu is a very famous from our east but all in the military academy will learn Alexander's strategy, Caesar, Napoleon, World-war 1 and 2 generals because wars are won not because of numbers. Wars are won because of strategy. So the generals sitting there, some of them are brilliant. Today of course they will be doing computer animations and all. In those days, it was just a map and they are looking at it and working out strategies and yet you need to realize, the greatest manual on warfare is the Bible, the greatest manual on warfare and the greatest general ever known in history is God Himself. In *Exodus 15:3* says

Exodus 15:3

The Lord is a man of war; the Lord (Jehovah Sabaoth) is His name.

Sabaoth means the captain of the host, the general of the army. He is a man of war. The greatest general the world will ever see is God Himself and the greatest Book on warfare strategy is the Bible itself and the greatest enemy you and I will ever face is the devil and his forces. The devil, the fallen angels (one-third of them) plus I believe all the demons; it's a very strange mixture of them, those I believe were those people who were destroyed in the flood of Noah. I believe, they are the demons. The devil and the demons. And in this warfare, when you study this warfare, you will see the enemy's two main tactics. One is deception. In Genesis 3, you see deception. In Genesis 4 you will see violence, intimidation and murder. You will see, those are the weapons and you will see, it is still the same in actual military warfare, first what you will see is

Welcome To Bootcamp!

deception. The beginning of the tide of changing of the second world war was not actual victory on the land, it was actually that Hitler was completely deceived. He moved his whole forces to one side through deception; they send false messages across while the entire allied army was going to land at another place. That's how military works and God uses what. When they had to fight AI. He said, "Do you know what you will do? You will take three thousand, five thousand soldiers and you will go and the enemy will come out, you run out, they will all come after you. Let them come after you, thirty-thousand should be hiding and take over the city and burn it" So, understand strategy, understand warfare, how wars are fought in the Bible. So, there is deception, there is violence and murder in chapter 4. Cain will kill Abel, Lamech will kill another young man and he will, and intimidation; he will boast. Intimidation, you will see that. If you compromise, if he, the devil cannot get us to compromise through deception, he will turn to intimidation and violence against those who choose the pathway of faith obeying God. Intimidation, that's why he is called the roaring lion. The lion through his roar is intimidation his enemies. He knows his enemies are more powerful than him. See herd buffalos, one buffalo is he wants can kill the lion. It is heavier and stronger than the lion but it is intimidated by the lion. You see all of you sitting over here who are children of God, God says, "Behold! I give you power over all the power of the enemy. You shall stamp on snakes and scorpions and they shall by no means harm you." But we are intimidated. The truth and the reality. Reality is, like roaring lion intimidates his prey, we are also intimidated by the enemy and he will use men, flesh and blood and systems and governments and mob and all these to intimidate. There can even be verbal violence, intimidated through verbal violence. So, be very careful in the way we use words because sometimes words can be used to intimidate people. We do not use words to intimidate people, we use words to warn but not to intimidate. The devil uses words to intimidate people. So, everybody is enlisted into the army whether you know or not. What distinguishes a soldier from a civilian? Outside, is the uniform. You look at a soldier, you will immediately know by his hair cut, his uniform, his walk, his training. The soldier doesn't walk the way we walk. The way he walks, he's being in the Bootcamp for so long, even his walk has been structure by his training. He doesn't walk like us. His walk, his outside has been trained. And you know it, the uniform, his training, his haircut, everything. While his inside is bound by sense of duty. His inside is bound by sense of duty. For him, his call to duty comes over and above everything else. Even his spouse, his children, his family, his village, everything; it is duty. So, outside and inside, that is how a soldier is distinguished for a civilian. In *James 5:17, 18*

James 5:17, 18

¹⁷ Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. ¹⁸ And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit.

Scripture is talking about Elijah. He was a man of prayer. A man or a woman of prayer is a man or a woman of war. A man or a woman of prayer is a soldier, is a man or a woman of prayer. War can have two results. Either war can bring famine and destruction, or at the end of it, peace is restored and at the end of war you can also have peace and prosperity. So, after second world war, Europe was devastated, a few years later, they had peace and prosperity till today. Both was a result of war. So, when a man of war prays, there will be famine and there will be prosperity. These are results of wars. So, man like Elijah or a woman of prayer, real prayer like this is a soldier. Why is Elijah so important? Because Elijah is one Old Testament prophet. Enoch was before the flood, we are all after the flood. Elijah is one Old Testament prophet who is not dead. That means his ministry still continues. The ministry of Elijah does not cease and Jesus Himself said this. It does not cease. What was the nature, the purpose of Elijah's ministry? When John the Baptist comes, he is coming in the Spirit of Elijah.

Luke 1:17

¹⁷ He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, 'to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,' and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

The purpose of Elijah's ministry, simply think – when God comes, He will have a people prepared for Him. So, when Jesus came, there was a set of people who were ready to follow Jesus, because John had prepared them. John said, "*Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!*" Immediately, his disciples started following Jesus, because John had prepared a set of people for the first coming of Christ. And, the Elijah ministry will continue till the Second Coming of Jesus Christ and the final prophet in the Old Testament, *Malachi*, will say this way about Elijah,

Malachi 4:5-6

Welcome To Bootcamp!

⁵ ***Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord*** (okay, that's the Second Coming). ⁶ ***And he will turn The hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse.***"

So, the Elijah ministry will always will be there, till Jesus comes. Only difference is before His First Coming and right before His Second Coming, there will be an increase of the Elijah Ministry, preparing people for the Lord's people. That's how you distinguish ministries – which ministry is this? If we are a part of God's people, we have two choices: - we can be a part of Elijah's ministry or be to those who Elijah will minister; or the Ministry of Elijah will cater to. So, we need to enrol into Elijah's Ministry. Okay? We need to enrol into Elijah's Ministry and be a participant and recipient of this ministry of Elijah, because we are preparing for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

There is a prophetic picture about Elijah's ministry, about in the last days, in the Old Testament, I will come to that. Elijah, literally, his ministry is during the time of Ahab and Jezebel. Understand that – Ahab and Jezebel; they had taken over God's land completely and corrupted it. Many men of God were hunted down, many went to hiding and one man alone stood there in public alone. That was Elijah. Under the threat of Ahab and Jezebel, many of God's servants were killed. Many, almost 7000 went into hiding. But, one man alone stood that is Elijah. In *James 5:6*, Scripture says; let's leave the first part of the Scripture aside,

James 5:16

¹⁶ ***...The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much*** (man or woman, okay)

You have to read this Scripture in three ways. One – The prayer of an unrighteous man avails nothing. Two – The righteous man who does not pray also avail nothing. When the evil tide comes, that righteous man will be swept away along with the evil. There was a great 17th Century Philosopher-Politician in Britain called Edmond Berg. One of his famous statement (I cannot remember the verbatim), but this is something that he said – "The only thing for evil to prosper is the good men to do nothing." The only thing for the enemy to take over is because righteous men and women do nothing. They don't pray. God has given power and authority into the hands of the Church. He says, "If you bind, if you release, if you pray, if you agree, if you fast, if you seek after My Kingdom and My righteousness, all the promises are given," but if good men do nothing, automatically, evil will take over.

Okay? So, let's look at a prophetic picture which applies to us, but seen during Elijah's time – when Elijah was walking on earth, he came to a poor widow's house in Samaria; a compromised place where God's Word has been mixed with the world.

1 Kings 17:17-22

¹⁷ ***Now it happened after these things that the son of the woman who owned the house became sick...***

We know the story of this woman and her son; Elijah coming and she giving her last dinner bread to him and the miracle happening. This happens after that; the boy becomes sick, the young man becomes sick.

...And his sickness was so serious that there was no breath left in him. ¹⁸ So she said to Elijah, "What have I to do with you, O man of God? Have you come to me to bring my sin to remembrance, and to kill my son?" ¹⁹ And he said to her, "Give me your son." So he took him out of her arms and carried him to the upper room where he was staying, and laid him on his own bed. ²⁰ Then he cried out to the Lord and said, "O Lord my God, have You also brought tragedy on the widow with whom I lodge, by killing her son?" ²¹ And he stretched himself out on the child three times, and cried out to the Lord and said, "O Lord my God, I pray, let this child's soul come back to him." ²² Then the Lord heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came back to him, and he revived.

Okay, the poor widow here represents a picture of the last days. This is a real incident and also, a prophetic picture. The last days' Church, the Laodicean Church, unlike other Churches is a widow, because her husband, Christ, is not with her; He is outside. If you know, in the seven letters, Jesus writes to the last Church, Christ is outside; He is not inside. So, the Church is a widow. She is spiritually poor and what you see, the next generation is dying; in *verse 18*, she is aware suddenly, that, "It is because of my sin, my son is dying." This is the effect of Elijah ministry – you're convicted. The Church has to be convicted

Welcome To Bootcamp!

of its own sin as to why the next generation is perishing and which is true; the next generation is perishing if you go by numbers. It's perishing, absolutely perishing. We don't have the statistics of others. One thing about USA is statistics are available. When you talk about another generation, 50% above in America, homes are broken; that means – the ones who suffer are the children. At least a million babies are aborted every year, okay? From the age group of 17-35, 60% of the children born are born out of wedlock – the foremost Christian nation in the world. So, the next generation is literally dying. That's the actual truth. That's why I always get excited by force or chance or will, you are here and it's wonderful to see the children. If you want God to work, first thing He says in *verse 19* is,

“Give me your son.”; he took him out of her arms.

We have to release our children into the hands of God. Unless we handover the next generation to the ministry of God's Holy Spirit, they will remain dead. There has to be a divine impartation for Elijah, from Elijah to the dead boy; and God will hear Elijah's prayer; He will not hear the mother's cry; He will hear Elijah's cry. And the boy will come back to life. One of the reasons, there is no effect on the next generation, in spite of the fact, billions and billions of Rupees or Dollars or whatever you want to call, is being poured into youth ministry, the young generation is dying, is because we do not receive this ministry. We do not receive this ministry, because we have refused the ministry of Elijah.

There are two stages of Elijah's Ministry, where we first have to receive life. To receive life, we have to hand over our dead children, spiritually dead children wholly into Elijah's hand. And then, God will breathe life. You will see, in this particular case, here is this woman, here is her son and here is Elijah living in the upper room. She will surrender her child into his hands though he is living her house only when he is dead. Till then, she holds onto him. Even when he is sick and he is dying, she doesn't release him. This is one of the problems with the parents – they don't release their children to God. And they slowly die. Once he is revived, Elijah hands the child back to the mother. So, that's what only ministers can do, back to the mother. At that point, the mother should have said like Hannah, “I give my son wholly back to God.” she doesn't say.

If you look at the Elijah ministry, you will see the difference. There are only two young men mentioned in the Elijah's ministry. Only two young men mentioned in the Elijah's ministry. The second man in *1 King 19*,

1 King 19:19-21

¹⁹So he departed from there, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he was with the twelfth. Then Elijah passed by him and threw his mantle on him (He is not dying; he is not dead; he is flourishing. Let me ask you a question: which is easy to give over to God, a dying child or an alive and a prospering child? Right? Prospering,) ²⁰And he left the oxen and ran after Elijah, and said, “Please let me kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow you.” And he said to him, “Go back again, for what have I done to you?” ²¹So Elisha turned back from him, and took a yoke of oxen and slaughtered them and boiled their flesh, using the oxen's equipment, and gave it to the people, and they ate. Then he arose and followed Elijah, and became his servant.

He was a young man. He said, did his part, he followed Jesus; and he followed Elijah all the days of his life. When, Elijah departed, he continued Elijah's ministry. She should have handed over her son to Elijah. She didn't. Now, all theologians, almost all theologians believe, who this young man was – her son, who was revived. In *1 Kings 18:43* on Mount Carmel, when the incredible miracle is happening and it is over and the Elijah is back on the mountain and praying, he said:

1 Kings 18:43

⁴³and said to his servant, “Go up now, look toward the sea.” So he went up and looked, and said, “There is nothing.” And seven times he said, “Go again.”

Who is this servant? Everybody says he is the widow's son. He also was serving Elijah; but not like Elisha served Elijah. What's the difference? Elisha saw; this servant never sees; he has to be sent seven times before, until the spiritual becomes visible, physical, he doesn't see the spiritual at all because he was never given over completely. When Elijah runs, under the threat of Jezebel spirit, he runs, Scripture actually says in,

1 Kings 19:3

Welcome To Bootcamp!

³ ***And when he saw that, he arose and ran for his life, and went to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there.***

That's the last time we hear about this young man who was, in all probability, the widow's son. He left him there, he chooses to stay; he will never say like Elisha, *"As the Lord God of Israel lives, and my master lives, I will not leave you.* Two generations at the same time. Remember – even when Churches are restored back to life, if we don't hand over the next generation to God, at some point, they will be left behind. I am not talking about the 'Left behind' movie, but they will be left behind. But those who follow, like Elisha, will be trained as true soldiers. They will endure hardship like Elisha and Samuel. Endure hardship and they will become mighty men of God. Because, one – they were handed over completely and second – they followed steadfast and did not let hardship stop them. So, endure hardship.

So, when you enlist into the army, they send to you what is called 'Boot Camp'. 18 years, you enlist into the army, and you enter into the Boot Camp. And if you ever go and talk to this people who enlist into the army as normal soldiers (I met thousands of them, literally thousands of them), 90% or 99% of the soldiers to whom I have interacted, none of them are from the cities. They all are from unknown little villages and towns of India. You go and check the US Army, it is the same. Those who enlist in the army are all from the simple towns and the villages. And you look into the God's army, through the Bible, He has enlisted His soldiers from very obscure, dusty villages and towns, and He put them in His Boot camp; gets them ready, battle-hardened soldiers who will literally face the devil and storm the gates of hell. Because easy laid-back life will not work.

Moses was taken out of the comfort of the palace, and for 40 years, he was put in the boot camp called 'Camp Sinai'; back side of the desert in the Midian, it is a boot camp for him because he had to be trained to be a general not just a soldier. Joseph graduated from a boot camp called Egyptian Prison. Elijah would graduate from a boot camp called Cherith. If you ever want to be a faithful servant of God, you have to go through God's boot camp. Otherwise, you will never be a faithful servant.

One of the greatest fighting units in human history has ever seen is the US Marines. US has many parts in their armed forces but most dreadful one is the US Marines. And their motto is 'Semper fi', which means "always faithful." You see, look at these in today's world, the most powerful fighting force in the world, to get into it is almost impossible. You need to meet standards which an average or an above average or and even an extraordinary man will not meet. What's the motto? "Always faithful" – that's the first test, God will teach us in boot camp. Will you and I be faithful to His Word? In *1 Corinthians 4:2*, Scripture says,

1 Corinthians 4:2

² ***Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.***

The first thing they will teach you in boot camp is – Will he be faithful to the orders? And it doesn't matter where you came from in the boot camp. Elijah came from an unknown village called Tishbe; David came from a little village called Bethlehem; and Jesus came from a place called Nazareth; the towns did not matter, but one day, if you become a faithful man of God, if you become faithful, you will not be known by your town; your town will be known by you. You will not be known by your town. Today, there are many pastors, especially in Kerala, who will add the town to their name. They have not been even proved faithful. It's a very common trend in Kerala, actors, politicians, Pastors also have taken it. Like if I want to say, I will use my name 'James', and my town. David did not become famous because of Bethlehem. Bethlehem became famous because of David. Nazareth did not become famous because of anything of Nazareth, because of Jesus. The only reason we know of a village called Tishbe is because of Elijah. That's what God does to faithful men. And the first test Elijah will have to face is, "Will you be faithful to the Word you have received? Will you speak it as it is? Will you speak?" We know, it's a very difficult Word He has given. And a very difficult audience. It's easy to speak the Word to a very receptive audience after 10 years of ministry. But remember the first year and all when you had to sit for one hour and you are wriggling and squirming. Now, 10 years, you are used to it. I don't know whether you are used to it in your mind but you are used it in your body, to sit. Because you are more scared I will call you by name. Difficult message, incredibly hostile audience. You will go stand before the king and you'll give him this Word. The king is hostile. Will you be faithful? Because he is faithful and he gives the Word, he's moved to the boot camp.

1 Kings 17:2-4

² Then the word of the Lord came to him, saying, ³ “Get away from here and turn eastward, and hide by the Brook Cherith, which flows into the Jordan. ⁴ And it will be that you shall drink from the brook, and I have commanded the ravens to feed you there.”

“I am moving into boot camp. Away from the cities, the towns, and from your mother’s cooking. You are going to live until I tell you in this boot camp. And you’ll have rations twice a day. And it’s just going to be bread and water. Get ready for training, Elijah.” Soft, out of shape recruits, who are used to mom’s cooking, are turned into first rate soldiers who can run, who can climb, who can handle all punishment he has to take place in that isolated place called Cherith. You know, that’s what Jesus promises His servants. He promises, His power, power over all the power of the enemy. He promises His power over all the power of the enemy. You see, unlike us, the devil knows the God’s Kingdom very well. He knows His is an incredible Kingdom of power and authority. That’s why Jesus will come and in the Great Commission, He says, *“All authority on heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Go!”* Only a person who has authority will be able to tell you, “Go.” And He doesn’t say some or more. He says, “All authority in heaven and earth is with Me.”

Jesus Himself, when He came in the flesh, Scripture says, “He was filled with the Holy Spirit and with power.” And the reason, please understand, because the devil knows – like little hardship has already come and we are starting to squirm. In the boot camp, there’ll be no fans. Honestly, there’ll be no fans. Literally, those who joined for the, if you are in the U.S. army, there, the soft young fellows who come, by the time they finish, they have run through the deserts in Texas and Arizona. Blazing deserts with their bag pack. You need to see the recruits even over here. In the morning, you’ll see them jogging. Two months later, you’ll see, they’re jogging with their bag packs. And the weight increases, they are being trained under incredible conditions so that, when the battle comes, there is no battle fatigue; they are ready to fight. That’s why God, the same thing applies in the Kingdom of God. God says, *“Offer your bodies first.”* Because there is no point in training the mind in a soft body, it is useless. In the corporate sector, the world is full of brilliant minds in soft bodies. The army is full of brilliant minds in hardened bodies. Most hardened bodies, if you look through the Bible are God’s servants. They knew what it was to fast. They knew what it is to shut down into their closet and never get out until they have heard from God. They knew how to stand alone without numbers behind them before the cruellest tyrants of the world, and speak the Word of God without fear. They were incredible strong men, because they were trained. These things don’t happen automatically. We have to be trained in the things of God. That’s what God is talking about. So, Jesus was given incredible power because He came under authority. The devil knows how the Kingdom of God works. In the Kingdom of God, you don’t receive power unless you are under authority.

In *1 Corinthians 11* and *verse 3*, Scripture says,

1 Corinthians 11:3

³ But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.

Christ knew who His head was. That’s exactly what *Philippians 2* means – Have this mind of Christ Jesus.

Philippians 2:5-7

⁵ Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, ⁷ but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

That’s what a soldier is.

Why did we win the Kargil War? Because the soldiers were willing to die. You actually have to read the Kargil War Report. To take a piece of glacier in which no man will live or can live, these soldiers just went into the enemy fire and died and took the glacier. To the point of death, they will obey. They will not. They know – this is death, but they will obey orders. Because they know, “We are under authority. We have to obey orders.” Jesus had incredible power to overpower all the power of the enemy because He was a Man under authority. Elijah was willing to go to Cherith. And, Jesus was willing to go to Nazareth. And into the wilderness, before He would come out with power. We don’t realize our homes; our little homes, is

Welcome To Bootcamp!

the first battleground. God knows every child; the devil knows every child. Devil knows every child of God has the potential to be a giant killer. So, what does he do? He sows rebellion. Abraham had two sons, Ishmael and Isaac. Only Isaac will qualify. The only reason Isaac will qualify is not because Isaac is better than Ishmael. It's because he's a son who will stay under the hand of his father, and will not rebel. Esau and Jacob. Jacob had ten sons, only Joseph will overcome. Because only one boy, the tenth one, who will come under authority. Because from God power can be released only when we accept His authority. And authority figures are placed by God, and it's a test for us.

We look at that test and don't realize this test so that I will receive more power. We fight those tests, we don't receive power. And we need power for the battles that lie ahead. If David hadn't come under his father's authority, he would never have fought the lion. And if he never would have fought the lion, he would never have fought the bear. And if he never fought the bear, he would have never received power to fight Goliath. At every stage, you need more power. The days ahead are going to be incredibly difficult and dark for believers. We don't need less power; we need all the power we need we can get. The power is released by God, only through authority. And the promises of God are real and the power is also real. So, the key words in the God's Kingdom is – 'submit' and 'resist'. Submit to God and resist the devil. The devil is not going to flee before any man or woman or child who has not submitted to God. Goliath will come and make an entire army of Israel tremble and yet, will fall before a boy. Understand that. That's how it works. Because our power to resist and subdue the devil comes from being under authority. *1 Corinthians 11:3* – “*The head of every man is (every man is) Christ.*” Every man sitting over here, your head is Christ. If you are not under the headship of the Word of God and the Spirit of God, there is no power. You will only have conflict in your homes. There is no power released. Power is released to subdue the enemy. But the enemy subdues men because the men are not under the Word and the Spirit of God.

Actually, how many men will, like Elijah, labour to come apart? And spend time in the spiritual Cherith, to come under subjection to the Word and the Spirit of God? Same thing about the women. The head of the women is the man. So, you have Rebekah and you have Rachel. Rachel dies, Rebekah sees and hears from God. See the difference? That's why Elijah is first being trained in Cherith and being sent to restore one individual. Only two men are mentioned in his life – the widow's son and Elisha, the son of Shaphat. Both representatives of the next generation, only two. If you don't have power, what will happen? We will, like in schools, they'll teach you – knowledge is power. If you don't have knowledge, what happens when exams come? You fail. If you don't have power, you'll? You cannot escape battles. Battle is part of life. You cannot escape battle. We were born for battle. And we were born again for spiritual battle, but if you don't have power, we will lose. Okay. And no one who has not fought, has ever had a victory. Why? Can you ever say without writing an exam, “I passed”? Can you ever say, “I got first rank”? Can you ever claim a victory without having fought a battle? The glory comes from victory. Only those who have fought have experienced. You know the glory of a class tenth exam? For those who have prepared well. The others just want to escape with their life. The soldiers like that also. Their prayer is not, “Lord, that my country should win today, Lord. Let me get my life back at the end of this battle.” There are students like that also. “I want glory. I really want glory. I want to prove myself.” Others are “I just want to pass.” The glory comes in the victory, in the battle. We are not fighting for our salvation, children. That, He already did. We are fighting for His glory, for His honor, for His Name and for His rewards. At the end of the battle, Kargil battle, the last battle fought – the Kargil war over, you will see – some dead, some alive; they get paramveer chakra, mahaveer chakra. Sometimes, a man is dead, his wife or if his wife is dead, his mother or father comes and receives it from the President in the Rashtrapati Bhavan – highest honor they receive. Why? For the way they fought. There are rewards. God is not saying, “Okay, you are saved. You are going to fight till the end.” One of His final words in the Bible, *Revelation 22:12* is,

Revelation 22:12

¹² “And behold, I am coming quickly, (how am I coming?) and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work.

“I've got many chakras with Me, medals of honor and ribbons and crowns. Behold, I come quickly. One day, two days and on the third day, I will be here.” On the third day, the Son of Man will be glorified. How is the Son of Man going to be glorified on the third day? When the saints who won rise up and He is glorified in them. When that soldier receives that chakra, don't we all feel good? We do. Do we envy him? Maybe, you will envy him when your friend gets marks but you don't envy the soldier's widow who is receiving the reward. Then, we say, “Thank you. We are proud of you. Really proud of you.” Right? Jesus will be glorified in His saints. The rewards.

Welcome To Bootcamp!

So, Elijah was being prepared in Bootcamp for a great battle and a series of battles and a great victory. We all, if we hand over our lives to God, are being prepared for battles and great victories. The Elijah ministries prepares us to face evil – Ahab and Jezebel and their servants. Think about it – the widow’s son had the privilege of living with Elijah, experiencing the miraculous provision of the flour and the oil, or being restored to life or seeing fire come down from Heaven or seeing the enemies of God being destroyed in the valley. So, all of these and when he was left, Elisha saw nothing. He only saw the future by the mantle that was put on his shoulder and said, “I will possess my future.” That’s why Jesus said, “Blessed are those who believe without seeing.” The widow’s son saw but didn’t believe. Elisha saw nothing but he believed and therefore, he possessed. A lot of young people sitting over here. Do you believe? If you believe, you will see and you will press on. You won’t give up. Even if you have failed a hundred times, you won’t give up because you are not pressing on for your salvation; you are pressing on for glory.

Remember the man at the pool of Bethesda? How many years was he sitting there? This is connected with you young people. How many years? 38 years. Jesus said, “Do you want to get well? Pick up your mat and go.” And he went and he went straight into the temple. What day was it? Sabbath. Your exams will be over now and your vacation will start. Many young people do not realize – it is your vacation that actually determines your destiny; not your work. What you do during your vacation will actually determine your destiny. What will young people do? Vacation means TV and games. They do not take time to set apart and sit with God and say, “Lord, define my future.” That’s the question God is going to ask the young ones – “Am I Lord of your Sabbath.” I know all of you are lord over your work because you call Pastor James in the morning, “Pastor, pray. I’ve got exams today.” And I pray and you say, “Thank you, Pastor.” “So, I know I am Lord of your work. I want to know whether I am the Lord of your vacation. Why do you many of you come back dazed after the vacation? Because all you did was sit before that idiot box. HBO – Hell’s Box Office. Then, you come back and you are totally disoriented because you don’t realize – God is not the God of your Sabbath. “My rewards are in My hands,” He says. “Behold, I am coming quickly.” You know what His rewards are? Through the Bible, He talks,

Revelation 2:7

⁷ “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the Churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.”

Cherubims were kept to guard. No man had access to that tree for 6000 years. Now, He says, “You will have access. You fight your battles, you gain your victory, you overcome, you will have access to this tree. You can eat from the very tree of life.” Next one,

Revelation 2:10

¹⁰ Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer.

In battle, you could be captured, you could be tortured. Personally, I don’t like him but he was one of the war heroes of the Vietnam war – John McCain who was a Senator. He tried to become President. He lost the election. But if you know, he doesn’t put his hand like this. He is only able to because he was in the Vietnam prison for 5 years. They beat him up. They broke his hand and everything. So, he walks like this. So, when people mock the way he is walking, they don’t realize – that’s because he was tortured in a Vietnamese prison for 5 years.

...Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days...

He says, “I’m not going to free some of you. You will live there, you will die in the prison.” But,

...Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

What is life? To know Jesus and to know God is eternal life. He says, “You will know Me in ways others will never know Me in eternity.” Rewards in Heaven.

Revelation 2:17

¹⁷ “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the Churches. To him who overcomes (who is victorious in

Welcome To Bootcamp!

battles,) ***I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it.***”

What is this hidden manna? We know about open manna. When manna fell, it was not hidden. It didn't come into your pantry. It was falling in front of everybody, right? Everybody could see manna. But there was one parcel of manna that was hidden. In *Hebrews 9*,

Hebrews 9:3-4

³and behind the second veil, the part of the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of All, ⁴which had the golden censer and the ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold, in which were the golden pot that had the manna...

There was one manna nobody ever saw, nobody ever ate, nobody ever touched. It was in a golden pot inside the Holiest of Holies, inside the ark itself. What is God is promising you is that He says, “I am the Bread from Heaven.” He says, “You will experience parts of God which have been hidden from every man since creation. You will eat.” Unless we are fascinated by God, these things will only make us say, “When is this message going to get over?” Right? We need to be fascinated with what is waiting in eternity, what God is promising. This is not a race with no crowns. This is not an aimless race. This is a very targeted race because at the end, what He promises is unbelievable.

Revelation 2:26, He says,

Revelation 2:26

²⁶And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations—

“You will rule on My behalf for a thousand years.”

Revelation 3:5

⁵He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.

Can you imagine Jesus sitting with God and Jesus saying, “Dad, that is Mahesh. Nobody noticed him. I noticed him. He used to listen. He didn't understand but he tried in his little way to understand. Then, he grew up and fought the battle and he died alone without anybody knowing for My Name's sake. That's Mahesh.” Jesus telling the Father somebody's name. The Book of Life, names are written. It says, “There are some whose names are etched in stone. They never can be removed.” Never. Because they've been faithful till the end.”

Revelation 3:12

¹²He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God...

You know, temples, buildings stand because of pillars. Understand the spiritual significance. God is saying, “This man will be a pillar in the temple of God forever.” Forever and ever. Meaning – he will have an incredible possession of magnificence for all of eternity because he fought his battles.

...and he shall go out no more. I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name.

Can you imagine? You know, when army officers come for functions, what all they have. Their whole chest seems to be covered with ribbons and colors and everything and every color has a significance. Everything they wear, they won it in a battle or in a training. Everything has significance. We don't understand. The soldier who looks at it understands and says, “He was in Kargil; he was in '71; he was there; he was there.” They know how to read it; we don't know. On that Day, everybody will know the Name of God, the name of the City, the Name of Jesus on His chest. See what God is offering?

The next one;

Welcome To Bootcamp!

Revelation 3:21

²¹To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.

I wonder sometimes how big this throne is! Finally, the eighth promise in *Revelation 21*,

Revelation 21:7

⁷He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.

That's an incredible promise. We don't understand what it is. God says, "You know what? You will be My child. You will be My Son, to whom I hand over everything." Incentives, motivations, rewards – isn't that how your company make you work? Right? Are we ever motivated by what God offers in the Bible? Remember, we need victories and there are no victories in life unless we have battles to fight. Anyone who is not fighting may look cool in the world outwardly but the spiritual reality is – you are a slave, taken captive by the devil to do his will. If you are not still fighting a particular issue in your life and you know this is right and this is wrong and, "Even if I lose today, I'm going to get up tomorrow and start fighting today." If you are not fighting any battle in your life, spiritual battle in your life, that means – actually, you are a slave, taken captive by the devil to do his will. It doesn't matter how cool you look outside. It's irrelevant. You are a slave; not a bonds slave of God; a bonds slave of the devil. Because the power of God is given to fight and to fighters.

Martyrs are not defeated. They went down in battle. You know what a martyr is? It is somebody who dies in a battle field. They were not conquered in the battle; they died fighting. Even if you go down fighting evil, you are still victorious. On the other hand, if you give in to evil and live a long easy life, in the Kingdom of God, you will be marked out as a traitor to the King and to the Kingdom. That's why every trial is a battle and in the battle, your and my weaknesses are shown. In the training in the military Bootcamp, they don't give you live ammunition first; they give you a dummy. In the battle, they will show you your vulnerabilities. That's what *James* is talking about. *James 1* says,

James 1:2-4

²My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, (why?)³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.

You are being tested. You are being shown you failed. You see? You are weak in that area and strengthen it up. How do you strengthen it? Go back to God, go back to repentance, go ask for the power of God, stand on His grace, store it up because you fell there yesterday. Be patient. You are not trained for one week and then, sent for war. Bootcamp is for a couple of years. Get ready. Get prepared.

⁴But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

You are ready. By that time, you have gone through your trials, your battles. You may be going through a series of battles but don't stop fighting because how you finish is what matters if you learn from your defeats. You can end in triumph. You could be blinded, chained, mocked like Samson. *Judges 16* – this is the end of a great soldier.

Judges 16:21-22

²¹Then the Philistines took him and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza. They bound him with bronze fetters, and he became a grinder in the prison. ²²However, the hair of his head began to grow again after it had been shaven.

This is what happened to him – mightiest man, physically, mightiest man – blinded, in chains and he is a grinder. He can't see but he is serving there. Then, Scripture says something. In the prison, in that situation, his consecration started coming back. If you fool around with God, God will bring you to a place where because of your circumstances, your consecration will come back. Because you cannot use your hands to sin anymore. You cannot use your eyes to sin anymore. Your feet will not take you where you want to go. You are right there where God wants you. So, your consecration will come back. God will not allow a soldier of his to die in shame. Once his consecration comes back, one day, the Philistines say, "Bring him!"

Judges 16:25-26

Welcome To Bootcamp!

²⁵ So it happened, when their hearts were merry, that they said, "Call for Samson, that he may perform for us." So they called for Samson from the prison, and he performed for them...

He's got one final prayer. What is his final prayer?

...And they stationed him between the pillars. ²⁶ Then Samson said to the lad who held him by the hand, "Let me feel the pillars which support the temple, so that I can lean on them."

How did he die? As a champion. He killed more people after his consecration came back in his death than he has killed in his life. That's why it is incredible when you read *Hebrews 11*, those in the Bible, you will see Samson's name mentioned there. And everyone would ask, "How can Samson's name come in Hebrews 11?" Because God says, "He died like a soldier." How did Samson die? We say in English – he died with his guns blazing; not like a coward like Saul who fell upon his own sword. Why did he fall upon his sword? Why didn't he take his sword and tell his sons, "Let us charge and die in battle"? They didn't die in battle; they killed themselves. Samson did not kill himself; he died in battle. That's what God is talking about.

"If you deny Me, I will deny you." Many Christians will die like cowards who give in under intimidation, pressure and persecution and they will be cowards like Saul and die one day of old age or sickness or anything but they will not be warriors; they won't be great men. They won't be. Paul will say in *6:17*; this is what he says,

Galatians 6:17

¹⁷ From now on let no one trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.

You ask any soldier who has come back from the battlefield and he carries the scars of bullet wounds, "What happened here?" "I took this for my country." He will not say, "I took it for myself," he will say, "I bear the marks of Christ on my body. It's not my marks; it's His marks I bear." Finally, when they mocked him, he would have taken his robe off and shown his back, "See the marks I have borne on my body. These are the marks of Christ. I did it for my Lord. I did it for my Master and I suffered for my Master. I'm a soldier." Don't live like a coward; don't die like a coward. Live like a soldier, die like a soldier.

As I close, I will read for you a manual. In US, when you join the Bootcamp, whether you are in the army, navy or air force, this is the Sergeant who will take the young people. First thing they will do is – send you to the Bootcamp barber. First thing is barber. All your mushroom and everything; Samsonite hairstyle, everything will go. Everybody will have one hairstyle and then,

"Look at the person on your right and on your left. In the next eight weeks, you are going to learn how to respect and trust that person. You will have to work together and help each other to survive. You are going to become a close team. While you are here, you will get your heads shaved, you will be given uniforms, you will send whatever you brought with you back home because you will not need it. I will be your mum, your dad, your closest friend. I will teach you how to walk, talk, stand, eat, dress, sleep, study, make your bed, exercise and how to be a true soldier, sailor, marine. You can take what you learn here and use it for the rest of your life or you can forget it when you walk out of the gate but as long as you are here, you will do things my way. You have made an important decision to serve your Commander in Chief and your country. This is the first day of the rest of your life. Treat it as such."

It's exactly what they say. That's how the Church began in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost. They gathered daily for the Apostles' instructions and fellowship, breaking of bread and prayer. They were trained in Bootcamp. One day, the battle began. It records in the Bible. The last two verses for today,

Acts 8:1

¹ Now Saul was consenting to his death. At that time a great persecution arose against the Church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.

Church was scattered. Battle began. They had been trained now for two years, three years, whatever; persecution has risen. They are scattered but they have been trained. So, how did they go?

Acts 8:4

⁴Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word.

They knew what they were called for. Therefore, the world was won by these set of simple people. In 300 years' time, the entire Roman Empire bowed to Christ because he had trained soldiers who knew what it was to pray, what it was to fast, what it was to study the Word and to obey the Lord. Amen? Welcome to Bootcamp. Shall we pray?

Closing Prayer:

Father, this evening, Lord, we just come to You, Lord. In Your army, Father, there is no young, no old, no male, no female, no free man, no slave; nobody. Everyone has enlisted into the army, Lord. When they were born again by the Spirit, they were born again into the army of the Living God. We know one Commander. His Name is Jehovah Saboath and like David, O Master, every one of these young people will be able to look at the devil in the eye one day and say, "You come against me with the spear, the sword, the javelin but I come against you in the Name of Jehovah Saboath." I pray, they will receive the training from You, they will receive the Word from You. They will continue fighting this good fight, O Lord. Every area they are fighting, Lord, whether it is with lust, whether it is with finances, whether it be relationships, whatever it is, O Father, I pray they will not give in but they will overcome until the life and the victory of Christ Jesus is manifested in each area, Father, and they will continue marching on for Your Name, for Your honor, for Your glory. One day, we can stand in Your presence. When You give Your rewards out to those who are victorious, Father, we will have the joy of taking our crowns off and putting it at Your feet and say, "Lord, it was You. It was Your power. It was Your authority. It was Your strength. It was Your Word. It was Your Spirit. Therefore, it is Your glory and it is Your honor. We lay our rewards, our crowns, our medals, our ribbons, everything at Your feet, Lord." Thank You, Father. Thank You, Lord. Thank You. As we go through this fourth month, I pray, Father, You will continue speaking to us. Continue teaching us. Continue breaking down every area of a rebellion within us, that part of us that still fights Your Word, that still fights Your Spirit, O Lord, until we are trained to obey the voice of the Living God; that we will stand before kings or beggars and give them the same Word without altering it, knowing that it is backed up with the power and the authority of Heaven itself, O Lord. Thank You, Father. Bless Your people, keep Your people, protect Your people, preserve Your people until the hour of Your coming, Lord. Thank You, Father. In Jesus' Name we pray, Amen.