



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

6420 Churchill Way | Dallas, Texas | 75230 | t 972.239.5371 | believerschapeldallas.org

The Sermons of Dan Duncan

Joshua 10: 1-43

Lesson 10

Fall 2020

"The Longest Day"

TRANSCRIPT

Thank you, Seth. Our passage is Joshua, chapter 10. It's a lengthy chapter, what, 43 verses. I'm not going to read all 43. In fact, I'm just going to read the first 15, and it covers the main part of the sermon this morning, though I will deal with the rest of the chapter rather briefly. But our text is Joshua, chapter 10, beginning with verse 1,

¹ Now it came about when Adoni-zedek king of Jerusalem heard that Joshua had captured Ai, and had utterly destroyed it (just as he had done to Jericho and its king, so he had done to Ai and its king), and that the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel and were within their land, ² that he feared greatly, because Gibeon *was* a great city, like one of the royal cities, and because it was greater than Ai, and all its men *were* mighty. ³ Therefore Adoni-zedek king of Jerusalem sent *word* to Hoham king of Hebron and Piram King of Jarmuth and to Japhia king of Lachish and to Debir king of Eglon, saying, ⁴ "Come up to me and help me, and let us attack Gibeon, for it has made peace with Joshua and with the sons of Israel." ⁵ So the five kings of the Amorites, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, *and* the king of Eglon, gathered together and went up, they with all their armies, and camped by Gibeon and fought against it.

⁶ Then the men of Gibeon sent *word* to Joshua, to the camp at Gilgal, saying, "Do not abandon your servants; come up to us quickly and save us and help us, for all the

kings of the Amorites that live in the hill country have assembled against us." ⁷ So Joshua went up from Gilgal, he and all the people of war with him and all the valiant warriors. ⁸ The LORD said to Joshua, "Do not fear them, for I have given them into your hands; not one of them shall stand before you." ⁹ So Joshua came upon them suddenly by marching all night from Gilgal. ¹⁰ And the LORD confounded them before Israel, and He slew them with a great slaughter at Gibeon, and pursued them by the way of the ascent of Beth-horon and struck them as far as Azekah and Makkedah. ¹¹ As they fled from before Israel, *while* they were at the descent of Beth-horon, the LORD threw large stones from heaven on them as far as Azekah, and they died; *there were* more who died from the hailstones than those whom the sons of Israel killed with the sword.

¹² Then Joshua spoke to the LORD in the day when the LORD delivered up the Amorites before the sons of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, "O sun, stand still at Gibeon, And O moon in the valley of Aijalon." ¹³ So the sun stood still, and the moon stopped, Until the nation avenged themselves of their enemies. Is it not written in the book of Jashar? And the sun stopped in the middle of the sky and did not hasten to go *down* for about a whole day. ¹⁴ There was no day like that before it or after it, when the LORD listened to the voice of a man; for the LORD fought for Israel.

¹⁵ Then Joshua and all Israel with him returned to the camp to Gilgal.

Joshua 10: 1-15

May the LORD bless this reading of His Word and bless our time of studying it.
Let's bow in a word of prayer.

LORD, what a privilege it is to be here with Your people and to do this; to read Your Scriptures, Your inerrant Word, and read of Your great and mighty works. So LORD, as we do that, as we study these things that which we've read, we pray that You would give us minds to understand it and make the right applications. And we pray that You would bless the sermon, that it would do that, and that You'd be glorified in this. It's a passage that glorifies You. A difficult passage in some ways, one that raises objections

from skeptics, but LORD, we know there is nothing too difficult for You. And we know what You've said and it is an encouragement to the child of God.

And so, build us up in the faith this morning, Father. You do that through the reading, the teaching, and the meditation on Your Word. And so as we engage ourselves in this passage, we pray that You would build us up in the faith and strengthen us spiritually.

And we pray for protection for some of our members who are particularly vulnerable to this virus. And Father, we still have some who are grieving for the loss of family members, and we pray that You would bless them.

LORD, I pray also for our members, men and women alike, who are employed. We pray for their employment, pray for their work, that You would sustain them and sustain it, and them in it, and pray that You'd bless. Bless those with small businesses and larger businesses, and those who are working for various companies. Father, keep them employed, and bless them in that in this difficult time.

LORD, our times are in Your hands and You, as the author of Hebrews describes Christ, create the ages. You bring it all into being. So this is not something out of your purview. This isn't something that has caught You by surprise. —This is all part of Your plan in fact. So give us peace as we realize that and think about that. And bless us LORD in the midst of it. May this be a time of spiritual growth for each of us; perhaps even a time for growth of Your church in Dallas, and throughout this nation. And equip us, LORD, to be men and women that are lights in the midst of the darkness. To that end, bless us as we spend our time in study and worship this morning. We pray these things in Christ's name. Amen.

When you are busy, it seems there's never enough time. Who hasn't been under pressure to meet a deadline and thought, "There aren't enough hours in the day." And there's nothing we can do about it. We talk about doing things. We talk about things like 'making time' for someone, or 'buying time' for ourselves. Of course, we can't make or buy time, or add one second to the clock. So we get frustrated.

That was Joshua's experience when we come to chapter 10. He was engaged in the grim business of war but he needed more time than he had for total victory. So he prayed, he sought God's help, then commanded the sun and the moon to stand still. God extended the daylight so that he could pursue the enemy and win the victory.

It's not the solution for us when we are pressed for time. The historian wrote in verse 14, "There was no day like that before it or after it." It was the longest day—unique—and not repeated. But what is repeated is God's help for us, to do His work in time. He listens to our prayers for help and He answers. That was so amazing to the historian here. He said, "The LORD listened to the voice of a man." (vs14). Now that's the lesson for us—He hears us and answers. There's no problem that He cannot solve, or task that He is not able to enable us to accomplish. He gives what we need. There's nothing He cannot do.

We are captives of time. We can't advance the clock or shorten the day. But time is no obstacle to the LORD. He created it. He planned the ages. It serves Him. What the LORD did here, how we explain it, is difficult. There are different possibilities, (We'll look at some of them), but it's clear that He did a supernatural work. And He is just as much at work for us today.

But we're not to be idle, either. Through all of this, Joshua and his army are an example of that for us in the spiritual life. We fight the good fight daily, as the LORD enables us to do it. That's chapter 10. It's about God who hears and helps, who is faithful to His people—always.

But it begins with Joshua being faithful. In chapter 9 you'll remember, Israel entered into a covenant with the Gibeonites, a treaty. It was a trick. They were deceived into thinking that Gibeonites were not Canaanites but people from "far off", outside the land. Still they confirmed this treaty with an oath, and they were unwilling to break it. They allowed the Gibeonites to live. But they became the servants of Israel, hewers of wood and drawers of water.

But the agreement involved more than that. It also meant that Israel would defend them against enemies. And it wasn't long before help was needed. The Amorites

learned of Gibeon's surrender to Joshua, and saw it as the beginning of a dangerous trend. It was especially alarming to the king of Jerusalem, Adoni-zedek. According to verse 2, 'Gibeon was a great city, one of the royal cities...greater than Ai, with many mighty men'. They were heroes and they were great warriors. So their alliance with Israel was disturbing because it might encourage others to sue for peace as well, leaving Jerusalem vulnerable.

In fact, its position was already fragile. The fall of Jericho and Ai, then the surrender of Gibeon, gave Israel control of an area that formed an arc north of the city and they threatened to surround it. So verse 2 says, Adoni-zedek "feared greatly". He was an influential king, and invited four other kings from the south to join him in a campaign against Gibeon in an attempt to punish the city and make an example of it to others.

Verse 5, "So the five kings of the Amorites, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, *and* the king of Eglon, gathered together and went up, they with all their armies, and camped by Gibeon and fought against it." The Gibeonites were outnumbered and faced certain slaughter. But they managed to get a messenger out of the city with an urgent request for help from Joshua, "Do not abandon your servants; come up to us quickly and save us." (vs6). That word 'servants' is important in that message because it's a reminder to them, 'We're in covenant relationship with you. We've made a treaty. We will be your servants, and your servants are now calling upon you for help.'

Now that was a test for Israel. The treaty was based on a lie and very unpopular. They could have decided to leave Gibeon to its fate, allow the Amorites to destroy them and erase their mistake. Rescuing Gibeon also required Israel making a treacherous march up an ascent of some 4000 feet over rough terrain and fight a large army. Israel had fought fortified cities, but now they were asked to fight against a large coalition of trained soldiers—the southern army of Canaan. And all for an ally that they didn't like or didn't want. —Now that was the test.

But Joshua was a man of his word. Now he didn't hesitate to respond to the plea for help. Verse 7 says, "So Joshua went up from Gilgal, he and all the people of war with him and all the valiant warriors." That's what God's people do because it's what God does—He keeps His Word. The saints keep their word. The LORD responds to our calls for help. We respond to calls for help.

And the LORD honored that. In verse 8, the LORD gave Joshua reassurance. "The LORD said to Joshua, 'Do not fear them, for I have given them into your hands; not one of them shall stand before you.' " That's what the LORD promised earlier to Joshua at the very beginning, in verse 5 of chapter 1. "I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you."

And so Joshua and the army marched all night from Gilgal to Gibeon, a distance of about 25 miles, uphill—a march which would have left them exhausted before the battle. Not good preparation for battle; but sometimes that's the way it is when we have to undertake our responsibilities. It doesn't always happen at convenient times, or in an easy way. Sometimes a doctor has to leave his family in the evening just when he's settled in to enjoy his time at home—maybe with a good book. And then he's got to be at the hospital on an emergency call. And before he knows it he's in surgery, doing some important work.

Duty calls at some odd times. It does for every one of us; does for the Christian; did for the apostles. But Paul said, in 2 Corinthians, chapter 12, "...when I am weak, then I am strong." (vs10). Not because Paul had some reservoir of inner strength, but because Christ had told him, "My grace is sufficient for you." (vs9). And His grace is sufficient for us at such times. It's sufficient for us at all times, because we are always waging a spiritual war against a great enemy: The coalition of the world, the flesh, and the devil. They are too much for us—but not for Christ. He will supply all our needs as we look to Him, as we lean on Him, as we obey His Word, act in obedience and faith and trust in Him. —That's the Christian life.

And the LORD was faithful to Joshua. Israel marched, Israel fought, and Israel triumphed because the LORD fought for them. Verse 10, "And the LORD confounded them

before Israel...He slew them with a great slaughter at Gibeon, and pursued them by the way of the ascent of Beth-horon and struck them as far as Azekah and Makkedah." Every verb in that sentence is a singular verb, showing that it is what the LORD was doing. The LORD was fighting and the LORD was defeating the enemy. Israel was slaying and pursuing, but their success was because of the LORD. And that's how it works.

That's what Paul teaches in Philippians, chapter 2, verse 12 and 13. "...work out your salvation in fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for *His* good pleasure." We work. We fight the good fight. It's real. But behind it all and in it all is the LORD enabling us to understand and act and succeed; enabling our faith to be strong; and apprehend; and move us in the right way. That's grace. It's all of God.

What happened here in chapter 10, (and all through the Book of Joshua, all through the Old Testament), really happened. —It actually happened. The battles, people, and events are true. It's history. But as Paul said in 1 Corinthians 10, verse 6, "...these things happened as examples for us..." They occurred to give us, in this age, instruction in the Christian life, to show how the spiritual life is lived. —It is altogether of the LORD. So here He fights for Israel, enabling them to slay the enemy.

Then in verse 11, He opened up the sky and rained down great stones on the Amorites so that there were "...more who died from the hailstones than those whom the sons of Israel killed with the sword." The LORD fights for His people. He even controls the elements—the rain and the hail; and He commands them to help us when it's necessary. He has unlimited means to carry out His will for us. And He always hears us and answers our cry for help.

That's seen next in verse 12 when Joshua realized there were not enough hours in the day to win a complete victory, so he prayed: "Then Joshua spoke to the LORD in the day when the LORD delivered up the Amorites before the sons of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel ..." —So this is a prayer he's going to give before everyone. I don't know what he did as they're pursuing the Amorites: Does he fall to his knees and look up to heaven and pray? But he did this in a way so that they heard and saw that he was

making this prayer which put him in a vulnerable place in the sense that he's making an amazing prayer! What if God doesn't answer? But he prayed it because he was confident God would answer this and be an example and a help to His people that God is faithful.

Here's what he prayed. " 'O sun, stand still at Gibeon, And O moon in the valley of Aijalon.' So the sun stood still, and the moon stopped, Until the nation avenged themselves of their enemy." There's some debate over who said, "O sun stand still." Was it Joshua or the LORD? Ultimately, of course, only the LORD God can affect such things. But I think the most natural reading of the text is that Joshua was speaking. —This is Joshua praying. But he spoke to the sun and the moon through the power of God, praying to God so that, again, it's God's doing. And that makes it completely plausible. Let me say that again. That makes it, this work of God, completely plausible.

Still, it is one of the most controversial passages in the Bible. So how did the LORD give this help? After all, the sun is stationary. It's the earth that moves. This is where Galileo got in trouble with the Catholic church over teaching that the sun is the center, and the earth and planets revolve around it. —That was denounced as heresy. And Ecclesiastes, chapter 1, verse 5 says, "The sun rises and the sun sets." And here, "O sun stand still at Gibeon." So he was put on trial, and he was made to recant, though at the end of the trial, the story is in a kind of stage whisper he said, "But it moves." And it does. We know that. But as a result of this, skeptics have dismissed the Bible as unscientific.

But the language that Joshua used in addressing the sun and moon is the language of ordinary observation that's used today in our 'scientific age'. We speak of the sun rising and setting. Scientists speak of sunsets. We don't judge a person's understanding of science or their understanding of the world based on that kind of language—the language that expresses things in terms of the appearance of things. And so we shouldn't make a judgment on the Bible, its view of the universe, based on Joshua's statement.

It may have been that Joshua believed that the sun stood still, but that really is irrelevant to the criticism. Charles Hodge put it correctly in his *Systematic Theology*, that the question is not whether the views of the sacred writers were incorrect, but whether they taught error. For example, it is not the question whether they thought that the earth is the center of our system—but did they teach that it is? And Joshua's prayer might indicate that he thought that it was, (I suspect that he did!), but that's not the same thing as saying that the Bible teaches that the earth is the center of this system. We know it's not. We know it's a solar system. All we can say is that the Bible describes things with the language of observation, just as we do.

Still, we would like to know what happened. Lots of answers have been given, such as the LORD tilted the earth on its axis so that the sun remained above the horizon, or He slowed the earth's rotation. More recently it's been argued that this is not to be taken literally but figuratively, in the same way that Judges 5, verse 20, (which is the victory song of Deborah and Barak), say that 'the stars fought against Sisera'. So this is simply poetic expression to describe the corresponding events of battle. The all-night march is described by, 'the moon stood still' and the long battle that ended at sunset by 'the sun stood still'. It's a way of describing the awe-inspiring way that God fought for Israel to bring a decisive victory about. 'He did it all within that time, but it was as though He stopped the sun to do so.' So this is not describing astronomical or geographical or geological phenomena.

Maybe the simplest explanation is the LORD caused the refraction or the extension of the sun's rays on a local level. That's the explanation that John Davis, who was an Old Testament professor at Grace Seminary, gave. I think it's a reasonable explanation. God extended daylight at this place alone on earth—much like He did when He supernaturally darkened Egypt during the plagues in Exodus 10. It wasn't dark in Goshen, where Israel was, but it was dark where the Egyptians were. How did He do that? Well, I don't know how He did that. But He did that by giving darkness in Egypt. And here He gave light in Canaan.

The LORD has innumerable ways of accomplishing His will. This is a difficulty only for those who reject the supernatural—meaning they don't believe in the all wise Creator, they don't believe in the ruler of the universe. Well, of course, if you don't believe in God, or you don't believe in the God of the Bible—and if you believe in a god of your imagination, then these kinds of things are impossible and must be ridiculous. But that's not the problem with the event itself, it's with your understanding or their understanding of God or lack of understanding of Him.

The God of the Bible can do any of these things. He can make anything happen the way He wills and does. We find implications of that, or statements of that, in various texts of the Bible, such as Colossians 1:17. It states that in Christ “all things hold together.” Everything. Every atom holds together ‘in Christ’. In Hebrews, chapter 1, verse 3, He “...upholds all things by the word of His power.” Which means He carries everything along. Before that he says that He created the ages. He creates time. He can make a day long—He can extend daylight.

What we experience every day really is every bit as amazing as this event. The earth rotates every 24 hours at 1000 miles per hour. It hurls through space at 67,000 miles per second. And we don't even notice it. The universe is full of mysteries that science can't explain. It's billions of galaxies are flying outward at a velocity of speed that is enormous—yet it holds together. And the atheist thinks that nobody's driving this. Nobody's in charge. Nobody's directing it. Really, atheism is faith—it's blind faith.

This event is unique. This event is a miracle. That's the point. If it could be explained naturally, to the satisfaction of a modern skeptic, it wouldn't be a miracle and would have no lesson. The lesson it has is, ‘nothing is too difficult for the LORD’. There is no challenge we face that He cannot overcome. He works in mysterious and in effective ways. And He answers our prayers when we call for help.

That, too, is the lesson, (I think that's the main lesson of this chapter). It is the fact that really amazed the historian; and he expressed that in verse 14, "There was no day like that before it or after it, when the LORD listened to the voice of a man; for the LORD fought for Israel." He listened to “the voice of a man”, and He listens to us when

we're in the battle. That's what the Christian life is. It is a life of faith in the LORD and obedience to Him—to His word. And when we are living that, when we are living that kind of life, an obedient life, there will always be resistance/conflict.

Joshua was in the heat of battle and was fighting each moment by faith. —And it was bold faith. Verse 12 states that he prayed “in the sight of Israel”. He was led by the Holy Spirit to do that; to be an example; to set this before them so that they would see and understand the hand of God in it all. And God answered so that Israel could fight and defeat the enemy.

Joshua and Israel were very active. God works in us and for us—and as we live by faith and as we obey we find that to be true. And we find His action in our life to be real, and that's an encouragement for us to be active. God doesn't leave us to our own devices. He's always with us and always enabling us; ‘He never leaves us or forsakes us.’ (Heb 13:5). And that's something we can rest in and is certainly the encouragement of this passage. What He assures Joshua of, He assures us of as well.

Now during the escape, the five kings took refuge in a cave at Makkedah. But they were soon discovered and Joshua order the cave sealed and guards stationed at the entrance. Then he and the army resumed their pursuit of the Amorites. So the five kings hoped that they had found refuge. But the very thing that they had thought was their refuge turned out to be their jail.

It's often that way. People trust in something for security, and it seems so promising; ‘Certainly this is where we'll find our refuge.’ Maybe it's their health or maybe it's their wealth. But in fact, it doesn't take long...and...it's not their refuge—it's their jail— it becomes their idol. Think of the passage that Mike taught this morning. Last time it was Proverbs 18, verse 10. "The name of the LORD is a strong tower, The righteous runs into it and is safe." We're safe in the name of the LORD, in the LORD and all that is His, and all that He does for us. And then the next verse is, "The riches to the wealthy man is a strong city." But, he says, it's all “in his imagination”.

And that become obvious at the end of it all because a person can have great wealth and, as the Proverbs say, it flies away—"it makes wings." Or even if it doesn't fly away—he does. It doesn't keep a person from the greatest events and calamities of life.— It doesn't prevent death. We all die. Wealth is no refuge. It can become a prison.

But there is security for us, and that security is only the security we find in the LORD. The psalmist tells us that in Psalm 46:1, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in time of trouble." Unbelievers don't have that. They have no security.

And these kings are an example of that. When the battle ended everyone returned to the camp and Joshua ordered the five kings brought out. He gathered Israel and told his chiefs to 'put their foot on the neck of each of the kings', (vs24). It was a symbolic gesture of victory over the enemy that was very familiar in the ancient Near East. You see it on Egyptian monuments and Assyrian monuments—this foot on the neck of the enemy. It signified subjugation. It signified total helplessness and that the enemy has been completely vanquished by the one who has his foot on the neck of that individual.

Well, we find it throughout the ancient Near East, but we also find that image used of the Messiah. It's used of Christ in Psalm 110:1 where David wrote, "The LORD says to my Lord: 'Sit at My right hand Until I make Thy enemies a footstool for Thy feet.' " That's future. What is depicted here with these five kings is a picture of what Christ will do with the rulers of this age, spiritual and material. He will come and absolutely conquer them, subjugate them completely. That's our hope.

Joshua then encouraged that. He told his chiefs, or his generals not to fear; "...be strong and courageous, for thus the LORD will do to all your enemies with whom you fight." (vs25). Joshua then slew the kings and hung their bodies on trees. 'Then at sunset, they took the bodies down, threw them in the cave, where they had hidden, and put large stones over the mouth of it, to that very day', the historian wrote. (vs27). 'It was there to this very day', suggesting I think, that this is another monument of stones. We see this all through the Book of Joshua, which reminded the nation of the help that God gives and the victory He promises His people.

The defeat of the five kings and their confederacy insured Israel's conquest of Southern Canaan. The remaining verses in chapter 10 trace out the path of that victory. The army moved from the cave at Makkedah on a progressive southern route to defeat Libnah, and Lachish, then Eglon. From there they conquered Hebron and Debir. The campaign, as briefly summarized, is described at a kind of quick pace with repetition of the statement that's given in verse 35. We find it all through here, 'And they captured it on that day, and struck it with the edge of the sword, and utterly destroyed that day every person who was in it.' And so it went with all of the cities.

It's brief and to the point, which was not to recount human heroics or the gory details of battle as is so common in the annals of ancient kings; or sagas like Homer's Iliad, that glorifies men and battle. The purpose here is to record the fact of decisive victory and show that because Israel trusted in the LORD, who fought for them, they rolled up victory after victory in fulfillment of His promise in chapter 1 verse 6. There He told Joshua, "Be strong and courageous, for you shall give this people possession of the land which I swore to their fathers to give them." He swore. He keeps His Word. He's good for His promises.

That's the lesson for us. We have every reason to be strong and courageous. Christ has come and conquered. He is the 'Greater Joshua'. As you know, that's the Hebrew name for Jesus. The first Gospel given is Genesis 3, verse 15, that promised that victory: The seed of the woman, the Messiah, would come and crush the head of the serpent under His heel. And He has gained that victory. Gained that victory over Satan, over death, over hell, over sin. —He did that at the cross when He died in our place. He bore our sins. They were punished in Him—for us. That's true for every believer in Jesus Christ.

The moment we believe we are God's children—we are His sons. Men and women alike are His sons. And the significance of that is, a son inherited the blessings. So whether one is male or female, in Christ we all inherit the blessings like a son. He makes us that. He forgives us. He declares us righteous in God's sight, and with the power to live righteously before Him, live obedient lives, capable of overcoming sin by

God's grace. Paul calls us a "new creature" in 2 Corinthians 5:17. And in Romans 8, verse 37 he said, "We overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us."

That's what the death of Christ accomplished for us. And so, we live obediently, and we are to live as Israel was counseled to live here, strong and courageous, in the power of Christ, which we literally have—literally have it through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. And we can always expect God's help.

Israel was faithful to its promise to the Gibeonites. It was, as I said, a challenge. It was a test of their faith. It was a hard step of faith for them to make that long march and engage in battle. But because they acted rightly, they went on to great victory, and the complete conquest of Southern Canaan.

Now that's true for us, too. One act of faith, one act of obedience, which may seem to us to be contrary to common sense, but nevertheless, one act of obedience in faithfulness to the LORD can open up doors of unexpected blessing for us. We never know what blessings are just beyond an act of faith.

That's reason for confidence in the Christian life and the spiritual war that we are in continually. But even more, the cross of Christ affects the whole of our life, not least our motivation in the Christian life, our desire to act in faith. The cross of Christ affects that. It influences that. It did Paul. That's what explains his energy and courage and sacrifice in the LORD's service. He said in 2 Corinthians 5, verse 14, "For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died."

The knowledge of Christ's love for him, (which was love unto death, and death on a cross), that moved the apostle Paul, that galvanized within him the ability and the desire to live a sacrificial life, to do the very things that he did. Look at some of them outlined in 2 Corinthians, chapter 11, all that Paul did and suffered. Nothing creates love in us, and the motivation to obedience in the Christian life more than the knowledge of Christ and His death for us, personally. It controlled Paul. And so he gladly served the LORD to the very end. He could say to Timothy at the end of his life, "I have fought the good fight."

And the good fight for all believers will end in triumph. The King is coming. Christ will return, and the Father will make His enemies a footstool for His feet—and for ours as well. That's the promise of Romans 16, verse 20, where Paul prays, "The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet." That's our hope. We will be like those chiefs of Israel with their feet on the necks of the vanquished kings. We will share in Christ's great victory over the enemy; His victory of righteousness, His victory of order, His victory over sin and chaos. —Will be our victory, too.

In the meantime, we are to live for the LORD in the world, looking to Him continually, knowing that He hears our prayers always, and answers. He fights for us, and has unlimited ways to help us in the life of faith. So live for Him. Be a witness. Fight the good fight of faith. Be strong and courageous. The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.

If you are here with us but without Christ, never having believed in Him, you don't have that hope. Just the opposite—only the prospect of being crushed by God's justice and consumed in His wrath. It's a terrifying thing to fall under the hand of the living God. Flee that. Fall into His loving hands. Come to Christ while you have opportunity. Believe in the LORD Jesus Christ and be saved. God help you to do that, and help all of us to be strong and courageous.

Let's bow in a word of prayer, and as we do I'll give thanks for the Supper that we are about to have.

Father, we do thank You for Your goodness to us, and what a blessing it is to know that our God is great. Your power is unlimited. There's nothing You cannot do. And the things that a skeptical modern world would reject, are things that You do. You do them all the time. The skeptic is able to entertain his skepticism because You hold him together every moment. You give his mind the power to think, even though he uses

it in a way that dishonors You. But You control everything. And so there's nothing you cannot do. And we should not be made to think that You can't meet any need that we have.

We're to look to You and patiently continue looking to You, and know that You hear us and You will bless. So we thank You for that, and we know that all of these blessings are grounded in Your grace and Your love, which was expressed and demonstrated definitively at the cross of Christ, where He purchased us for Himself, and gained our salvation for us.

And so LORD, as we now prepare to take the LORD's Supper, prepare our hearts for that. We thank you for Christ, and it's in His name we pray. Amen.

(End of Audio)