

Advancing Through Battle

As God's children, we never have any  reason to fear. If we stay close to Him, that will always be true, no matter our circumstances. Our Father is good. Our Father is loving. Our Father is more than we could ever expect. His goodness extends into all areas of life—including the battles we find ourselves in.

When we are attacked, some of us prepare for the long haul. We build fortresses and walls and settle down for a decade-long siege. We do not realize and perhaps aren't open to the possibility that there is goodness even here, in the midst of hardship.

It can be difficult for us to understand why God is allowing this obstacle, let alone realize it might just be our Father's doing. Though we are aware of the promise that *all things* work together for our good (Rom. 8:28), we typically hold this truth at a distance.

Here, however, our thinking needs to change. Every time we are attacked by something, God releases influence in our lives to overcome that attack. This means that we enter painful situations at one spiritual "level," and, depending on our choices, we exit them at another level. If people attack us,

we gain influence with people. If we are demonically attacked, we gain power and authority. From a human perspective, these tests may be painful and chaotic, and many of us run from them. But they are opportunities for promotion.

Stumbling Headfirst Into the Next Level

God's power is seemingly absent in much of the Western church today. Many of us have been praying for more of His power, but His strength is not something that can just be handed to us. It is not something that comes flippantly or easily. We don't obtain it with passivity; we earn it through battle—by walking with God through shadowed places and overcoming the things that stand against us. As Jesus said, the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force (Matt. 11:12). If we want more of God's power in our lives, we can expect conflict.

The question then becomes, What do we really want? Do we *want* to become champions of the Most High? Do we *want* to see God's kingdom come on earth and to experience His power in our everyday lives? Do we *want* Him?

If the answer is yes, then change is in the air. In most cases, we can expect the road to get a little rocky. We can, actually, expect what many of us are already experiencing—times of intense battle!

Herein we find the “battlefield promotions” of God.

That is why times like these are not times for fear; they are times for promotion. The way in which we handle difficulties is the key to our success. If we try to keep doing things our own way, we will stay exactly where we are, following the same road. But if we turn to God and trust Him, He will move on our behalf and help us overcome the darkness.

In the Midst of War

For years, I believed that if God wanted me to do something, I would be able to do it easily. So when the opportunity became difficult, I would quit, thinking God was no longer in it. Yes, sometimes God’s intended path has long, lenient stretches that are wide and flat and simple to navigate. But at this point in my life, I grow a little nervous when something seems *too* easy. Small battles tend to produce small champions. When given the choice to stay in the melee or run from it, I do my best to pick up my sword and look to God. I have spent far too much time running from my war zone, when there was no reason for it.

We live in difficult times. The world we know is shaking. But when we find ourselves in battle, we can remember that God is releasing influence in our lives to help us overcome that darkness. And

afterward, when the dust has settled, we can stand there and experience the *wonder* that is found in walking hand in hand with Him in the midst of war.

About the author: John Paul Jackson is the founder of Streams Ministries International () and a well-known authority on dream interpretation and prophetic evangelism who ministers nationally and internationally in churches and conferences. He also shares his practical and spiritual expertise through his Streams Training Center courses and publications, and he is the author of numerous books, including the best-selling titles *Unmasking the Jezebel Spirit* and *Needless Casualties of War*.