

# Breakthrough to Transformation~ A 40 Day Journey

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## *Week Two: Escape from Prison*

### **Introduction:**

Here we are at week two. I hope you are receiving revelation from God in regards to *BREAKTHROUGH* in any area the enemy might have been holding you back!

If you are not a part of a Life Group or you missed your group this week, here are some great questions to ask yourself as a recap from last week's devotionals before we press into *Week Two!*

1. What breakthroughs' are you praying for during this 40 day journey?
2. Are there promises from God that He is reminding you of during this time of prayer?
3. Do you sometimes believe the enemy's lies that you are abandoned, forgotten and without strength to breakthrough the captive areas?
4. In what ways are you relating to, agreeing with, or accepting your captivity instead of protesting it and utilizing your authority to break free?
5. How do we know that we have spiritual authority to break the chains of captivity off our lives?
6. What has Christ done to set you free? Are you applying that freedom?

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May 28, 2014

Day Eight: Breakout!

Zechariah 2:7, *“Come now, Zion! Escape, you who are living with the residents of Babylon.”*

The prophet Zechariah was a prophet sent by God, and at the time of his ministry many of the exiles or captives to Babylon had been released by King Cyrus of Persia and were allowed to return to their own land to begin rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem and the temple. However, many captives stayed behind in Babylon having been born there and were therefore rooted in their captive land. Many others had begun to live a very comfortable life under King Cyrus and had even acquired land. It is even possible that many in Babylon didn't want to return to their homeland and work hard at restoring their life in Jerusalem.

After having prophesied to the remaining captives in Babylon that God was going to give tremendous increase and enlargement to Jerusalem, *“Jerusalem will be a city without walls because of the great number of people and animals in it”*—he then calls for the captive daughter of Zion—who has already had her chains loosened to *“Come now, Zion! Escape, you who are living with the residents of Babylon”* (Zech. 2: 4; 7). God was declaring over his children a day of His favour and a day of vengeance against his enemies and those of his people. He called for his people to leave their captive place of bondage, to escape and break away because he was about to bring judgment upon the nation of Babylon and his enemies through King Cyrus' Empire. *“For this is what the LORD Almighty says: “After the Glorious One has sent me against the nations that have plundered you—for whoever touches you touches the apple of my eye—I will surely raise my hand against them so that their slaves will plunder them”* (Zech. 2:8-9, NIV). Another translation says this, *“The LORD of Heaven's Armies sent me against the nations who plundered you. For he said, ‘Anyone who harms you harms my most precious possession’”* (NLT).

Today, as God declares a day of breakthrough, increase and enlargement over us, some great questions we can ask ourselves is,

- ✓ Have we become so rooted in our captivity that we find it difficult to follow God's call to break away/breakthrough?
- ✓ Are we too comfortable in our captivity, whether of our own doing through sin or just a difficult circumstance?
- ✓ Do we find the thought of restoration too difficult to even try?
- ✓ Can we envision a day where God delivers us and restores us?
- ✓ Can we believe that we are God's most precious possession and he wants to see us free?
- ✓ Are we ready to break away from our places of captivity?

It's time to lift up our eyes from our places of captivity and see a day of breakthrough where God will deliver us and set the captive free. A day where the enemy that has held us bound is defeated, and we overcome him by the blood of the Lamb and the word of our testimony. Begin to see and declare your freedom today—begin to **declare your breakthrough!**

**Prayer Focus:** Revelation 12:10-11(NLT), *“Then I heard a loud voice shouting across the heavens, “It has come at last—salvation and power and the Kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ. For the*

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*accuser of our brothers and sisters has been thrown down to earth—the one who accuses them before our God day and night. And they have defeated him by the blood of the Lamb and by their testimony. And they did not love their lives so much that they were afraid to die.”*

**Prayer:** Father, in the mighty name of Jesus, by the power of His name and the power of his blood we declare today that we can see a day of breakthrough in the captive area of \_\_\_\_\_. I believe that you are a God of the breakthrough and that you want to see your precious possession set free and delivered because Jesus died that we might have life and have it abundantly! I declare that I am ready to do all and everything it takes to break away and break free! Thank you, Jesus, for your strength and empowerment which will help me as I step out in faith. In Jesus' name. Amen.

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May 29<sup>th</sup>, 2014

Day Nine: Push Back

Psalm 44:5, *“Through you we push back our enemies; through your name we trample our foes.”*

One of the most difficult things to overcome when you’ve decided enough is enough and the enemy is no longer allowed to steal, kill and destroy any area of your life or the life of a loved one is, when we receive push back from the enemy.

Let me explain. So, we’ve been awakened to our captivity, and reawakened to some promises of God; especially the promise of freedom from captivity. We’ve learned that we are clothed by our salvation and are cleansed and wearing a white robe of righteousness and are relying on the strength of God to set us free. Revelation is breaking upon our consciousness that we are sons and daughters of the King of kings, and that we sit at the right hand of the Father with all dignity, honour and authority over the enemy’s schemes. We are ready to fight; ready to do battle because Christ has already set us free! Great.

Not so great. I have prayed for my breakthrough. I have lifted up my eyes unto the heavens and envisioned a day of breakthrough. I believe that God is a God of Breakthrough—then why do I feel like I just got punched in the gut? Why do I feel like I’m still walking through the same struggles as I was seven days ago? Answer, you’re probably experiencing the enemy’s “push back”.

Elijah the prophet can relate to this, he too experienced push back from the enemy. Okay, so he was a little more forceful than we are but the principle is still the same. Elijah, a chosen, called servant of God went up against 450 prophets of Baal, and 400 prophets of Asherah—the enemy. He not only embarrassed them but he completely slaughtered them!

Elijah must have been ecstatic! He had the promise of God that, *“He was turning the hearts of Israel back to Him”* (1 Ki. 18:37). He had obediently done all that God had commanded him to do among the false prophets of Baal so that the people would know that God was the LORD. In verse 39, the people even fell prostrate and cried, *“The LORD—he is God! The LORD—he is God!”* Now that is a God of the breakthrough!

Unfortunately, a few short verses later we read that the evil Queen Jezebel *“sent a messenger to Elijah to say, ‘May the gods deal with me, be it ever so severely, if by this time tomorrow I do not make your life that of one of them.’* ***Elijah was afraid and ran for his life***” (1 Ki. 19:2-3b).

Ah, the push back! How did Jezebel cause Elijah, the great prophet and man of God, to run away in fear? How does the enemy cause us to run away in fear after we’ve moved to such a great place of faith in God and His promises? Two ways, 1) the enemy causes us to “see” our potential defeat and, 2) the enemy makes us believe we are “all alone” in the fight.

First, Elijah didn’t just hear Jezebel’s threat; he must have seen it potentially playing out. He probably walked it through in his mind and having pictured it in his mind, decided it was inevitable. We then read this statement, *“I have had enough LORD...take my life”* (1 Ki. 19:4). Elijah actually prayed to die. He could picture the fight continuing without an end or deliverance and decided it was too much.

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Second, Elijah thought he was alone in the fight—*“I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too”* (1 Ki. 19:10; 14).

During the next few weeks as we travel from breakthrough to transformation, be aware that the enemy will give you “push back”. He will try to cause you to picture your defeat and he will lie and tell you that it is the same old fight, and it’s been going on for a long time—and it’s just going to continue. Don’t let him do that. It’s a lie.

As he’s causing you to picture your defeat he’ll also try to isolate you or keep you feeling like you’re all alone in your fight, so why not just give up. The fight to breakthrough and transformation is just going to be too hard, too long and with no deliverance.

This week, share with others what you’re praying for and let’s walk this journey of breakthrough together—you’re not alone. God is fighting on your behalf, let’s arise and in the mighty name of Jesus give the enemy “push back” instead!

**Prayer Focus:** Jeremiah 15:11 (HCSB), *“The LORD said: I will certainly set you free and care for you. I will certainly intercede for you in a time of trouble, in your time of distress, with the enemy.”*

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May 30, 2014

## Day Ten: Take Every Thought Captive

2 Corinthians 10:5, (WNT) *“For we overthrow arrogant reckonings, and ‘every stronghold’ that towers high in defiance of the knowledge of God, and we carry off every thought as if into slavery—into subjection to Christ”* (Quotations mine).

Many of you might know this scripture better from the NIV which translates it this way, *“We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.”* It’s the same idea as the one quoted above, but I wanted to highlight the understanding that our thoughts can be the enemy’s *“stronghold,”* and that often our freedom is released as we *“carry every thought of the enemy into slavery or captivity”* instead of allowing the enemy’s lies to carry us into captivity despite our salvation and freedom in Christ.

Every Christian must learn to correctly apply 2 Corinthians 10:5 because the enemy often chooses to fight us on the battlefield of our minds. Why does he try to do this? If he can’t keep us from receiving spiritual freedom through salvation and Christ’s redemption, at least he can hinder us. He tries to throw every obstacle he can in our path so that we are ineffective in our lives and in sharing the gospel—*the good news that the Kingdom of God has arrived and overthrown the kingdom of the enemy!* The enemy likes to try to stay on the throne of our minds and hearts so that God’s people will walk in a slave mentality instead of the mentality of a son or daughter of the King.

On day seven, we referred to this statement, *“prisons don’t need locks—only prisoners.”* This is the core strategy of the enemy—to keep the minds of God’s children feeling imprisoned so they won’t advance the Kingdom of God and see others delivered.

Let’s take a look at what *“stronghold/fortress”* means in the Strong’s Greek Concordance. *Oxýrōma* from the root *oxyroō*, means a fortified, military stronghold; a strong-walled fortress or a heavily-fortified containment and is used figuratively of a *“false argument in which a person seeks shelter”* (a safe place) to escape reality. Stronghold (*oxýrōma*) is also used for the term *prison*.

The World English Dictionary describes a stronghold further as a *“major centre or area of predominance”*. Predominant means *“having superiority in power, influence, etc., over others, as well as prevailing.”*

Let’s ask ourselves a couple of questions. Does the enemy have a stronghold (*oxyroma*) in our thought processes where he feels safe and sheltered, and has imprisoned our mind? Are there lies or false arguments the enemy has spoken to us which we choose to agree and accept, therefore, giving the enemy *“predominance”*—power, and a prevailing influence over us? Things like fear, doubt, anxiety, rejection, anger, etc.

What causes strongholds or areas in our lives where the enemy has predominance; superiority, power and influence over our lives instead of God? In order to keep things simple I’m only going to touch on two areas, 1) deeply embedded lies that we have *“chosen”* to believe as true, often because of being wounded and, 2) inner vows we have made to *“protect”* ourselves from getting hurt again.

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How do we overcome those strongholds and escape from prison? Ephesians 4:8 (ASV) says this in speaking of Jesus, "*When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive...*" This is in reference to a military term and practice used by the Romans when they conquered another people called "Triumphing".

During the Roman Empire, the military held "triumphal processions" in the city of Rome so that they who were not on the battle field could share in the celebration and joy of being victorious over a conquered people, which signaled an increase in their empire. During these processions, the Roman military generals and their troops would march through the city leading the captives of war in chains. Often, these processions were made up of the defeated foreign kings and their military leaders and could last for two or three days. (Fisher, 21st Century Pastor)

In Judges 5:12 (KJV) we also read of a great Prophetess, Judge and Military leader, Deborah, as she co-lead her people to victory over Canaan. It says, "Awake, awake, Deborah: awake, awake, utter a song: arise, Barak, and *lead thy captivity captive.*" She was expressing the understanding that the military leader Barak would now *take captive those who had held them in captivity.*

Our ultimate conqueror, Jesus, has "*led captivity captive...*" he triumphed over the enemy who once held us all in captivity to sin and death. He has already led the "prince" of the air into captivity and put him in chains, and triumphed over his enemies! Because of Jesus we can do the same. It is our day to TRIUMPH over our enemies and "*take every thought captive and bring it into obedience to Christ*"!

**Prayer Focus:** Colossians 2: 15, "*And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.*"

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May 31, 2014

## Day Eleven: Conquering the Stronghold

2 Samuel 5:7 (ISV), *“Even so, David captured the stronghold of Zion, which is now known as the City of David.”*

To conquer something means to be victorious over it—to be triumphant as expressed in day ten’s devotional. The strongholds in our mind can sometimes be conquered quickly and easily, and at other times it takes a little longer to dismantle, tear apart, destroy and overthrow the works and lies of the enemy in our lives and minds.

It is interesting to read in 2 Samuel 3:1 before it says in 5:7 that King David captured and conquered the stronghold of Zion that, *“The war between the house of Saul and the house of David lasted a long time. David grew stronger and stronger, while the house of Saul grew weaker and weaker.”*

The reign of King Saul often revealed an insecure king, grasping and clinging to his throne even to the point of becoming an enemy of David, who he had brought into the palace to serve him and who had ministered deeply to Saul for many years. There came a season, however, where jealousy and ambition began to overtake Saul as he watched David’s influence increase within the kingdom. This caused Saul to become fearful that the people would crown David king in his place.

The story continues with King Saul chasing David from cave to cave in hopes of killing him. In the midst of this season David kept his heart teachable and humble before God, and did not grasp at being king despite the prophecy of Samuel that he would rule over Israel. Therefore, the house of Saul grew weaker and weaker, as the house of David grew stronger and stronger, eventuating in Saul’s death and the death of his household.

What war in your mind or life is taking place? Is there a prevailing lie that is grasping and clinging to its place in your life? What lie or circumstance in your life is trying to remain ‘sitting or active on the throne’ that rightfully belongs to God? Do you notice that it’s grasping and clinging because its “reign” over your life is getting weaker and weaker as you become stronger and stronger in your walk with God? If you feel like the lie or circumstance is seemingly getting stronger—just as you’re praying for breakthrough—know that it’s merely the enemy trying to keep a hold on you because he knows his time is up. His reign over you, a loved one or a circumstance is about to be conquered! Let’s take a moment now to completely conquer that stronghold.

2 Samuel 5:6-7 says, *“The king (David) and his men marched to Jerusalem to attack the Jebusites, who lived there. The Jebusites said to David, ‘You will not get in here; even the blind and the lame can ward you off.’ They thought, ‘David cannot get in here.’ Even so, David **captured the stronghold** of Zion, which is now known as the City of David” (NIV, ISV).*

Matthew Henry’s Concise Commentary explains,

The enemies of God’s people are often very confident of their own strength, and most secure when their day to fall draws nigh. But the pride and insolence of the Jebusites animated David, and the Lord God of hosts was with him. Thus in the day of God’s power, Satan’s strong-hold,

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the human heart, is changed into a habitation of God through the Spirit, and into a throne on which the Son of David rules, and brings every thought into obedience to himself.

Interestingly, not only did King David conquer this stronghold but he continued on and conquered the stronghold of the Philistines that had been a thorn in Israel's side for many years as they had never been conquered when Israel first entered the Promised Land.

*When the Philistines heard that David had been anointed king over Israel, they went up 'in full force' to search for him, but David heard about it and went down to the stronghold...David inquired of the LORD, "Shall I go and attack the Philistines? Will you deliver them into my hands?" The Lord answered him, "Go, for I will surely deliver the Philistines into your hands.' So David went to Baal Perazim, and there he defeated them. He said, 'As waters break out, the Lord has broken out against my enemies before me.'" So that place was called Baal Perazim" (God of the Breakthrough). (2 Sam. 5:17-20, NIV)*

What have you allowed to hang out in your life that should have been conquered when you first came to Christ and received salvation? Don't let it hang around any longer—go into its stronghold and conquer it—Christ's power and authority is with you!

**Prayer Focus:** 2 Samuel 5:22-24 (NIV), *"Once again the Philistines came up and spread out across the Rephaim Valley. When David asked the Lord, God replied, "Don't attack them directly. Circle around behind them and come at them from in front of the balsam trees. As soon as you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the trees, then attack, for God has attacked in front of you to defeat the Philistine army."*

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June 1, 2014

## Day Twelve: Conquering the Stronghold (Cont'd)

2 Chronicles 7:14 (CEB), *“If my people who belong to me will humbly pray, seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, forgive their sin, and heal their land.”*

The Bible reveals and describes two basic roots to captivity. There are many *forms or shapes* of captivity but still only two roots which are, 1) captivity through believing lies of the enemy, which leads to all kinds of scenarios such as not accepting salvation, receiving salvation but living a less than abundant life for various reasons—which we have focussed on these past two weeks and, 2) an absence of repentance. Today, we are highlighting the importance of repentance in conquering a stronghold in one’s life.

In the Old Testament, God’s people knew they were in captivity when they were given over to their enemies. When the Israelites continuously disobeyed God without repentance and they did not keep the covenant, then God would allow their enemies to rule over them and they would either be oppressed within their own land by a foreign country or they would be led away in captivity to a distant foreign land.

However, God prepared his people for this occurrence by declaring to them right up front—if you ever find yourself in captivity this is what you are to do, *“If my people who belong to me will humbly pray, seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, forgive their sin, and heal their land”* (2 Chronicles 7:14, CEB). God always gave them a way out—he provided them a way of escape from their captivity by calling them to repentance.

In 2 Chronicles 6:34-39 (NIV), as Solomon is dedicating the newly built temple for God’s presence to dwell we read this amazing prayer, *“When your people go to **war against their enemies**, wherever you send them...when they sin against you—for there is no one who does not sin—and you become angry with them and **give them over to the enemy, who takes them captive** to a land far away or near, and if they **have a change of heart** in the land where they are held captive, **and repent** and plead with you **in the land of their captivity** and say, ‘We have sinned, we have done wrong and acted wickedly’; and if they turn back to you with all their heart and soul in the land of their captivity where they were taken **and pray**...then hear their prayer and their pleas, and uphold their cause. And forgive your people, who sinned against you.”*

What an amazing prayer of release for the prisoner in captivity to sin. God says, one need only repent (have a change of attitude and behaviour) and acknowledge that they have sinned before God, and turn back to Him with all of their heart and he will then hear their prayers, *uphold their cause* and forgive them. He will set them free.

Jesus has already paid the price for our sins which held us in captivity to the enemy. If we choose to remain in our sin we reject the only one who can truly set us free and uphold our cause. To uphold someone means to support, defend or advocate on their behalf. Jesus is our advocate—without repentance we are left to defend ourselves before our enemies and God.

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Today, if you have found yourself in captivity due to sinful choices, the only way to gain freedom is to repent and turn back to God. Repentance and the atoning, redemptive work of Christ is the only thing that can break the chains that hold you back, and can conquer your stronghold.

**Prayer Focus:** 1 John 1-2 (NLT), *“My dear children, I am writing this to you so that you will not sin. But if you do sin, there is someone to plead for you before the Father. He is Jesus Christ, the one who pleases God completely. He is the sacrifice for our sins. He takes away not only our sins but the sins of all the world.”*

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June 2, 2014

Day Thirteen: Our Defender

Isaiah 42:13 (NIV), *“The LORD will march out like a champion, like a warrior he will stir up his zeal; with a shout he will raise the battle cry and will triumph over his enemies.”*

As we learned in week one’s devotions, we can’t fight the enemy in our own strength. There must be a death, a putting to sleep of our own strength and an awakening—a coming alive—to the empowerment and strength that comes only from God. A recognition that it’s only because of our salvation and the righteousness of Christ that we can annihilate our enemies—those things that hold our minds, our circumstances or a loved one in captivity.

Isaiah 42:13 speaks of what God was about to do to Babylon through King Cyrus in order to deliver his people. Taking a closer look, this portion of scripture highlights *who* will defend God’s children, *“The LORD will march...he will stir...he will raise the battle cry...he will triumph over his enemies.”* Our enemies are God’s enemies and *HE WILL* defend and deliver his children! Ultimately, as we know, God would go on to defend and deliver his children from captivity for all eternity by the crucifixion, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

*“The LORD will march out like a champion...”* The word champion here refers to God as our defender. But the question is, *“How does God defend his children against their enemies?”* There is a portion to this scenario—because we are human—that we will never fully understand, no matter how much we love and trust God, and rely on Him. We are humans, empowered by the Holy Spirit and we can never fully understand the Holy Spirit. There is always an aspect of *“faith”* that is required, however it is a faith and hope that is anchored in the God of the universe.

So, how does God defend and deliver us? One, if we are being obedient to the best of our knowledge to God’s written revealed Word in the Bible—than we know we are covered by the atoning blood of Jesus’ salvation, and are sitting under the name that is above every name, Jesus Christ. How can you know for sure? Be a doer of the Word and not a hearer only and embrace a love of the Truth, therefore you will not justify any sin; instead you will love righteousness (being right with God) and hate wickedness (separation from God).

Second, if we are resting in His strength and righteousness and not our own than we know that the Holy Spirit is actively working on our behalf. We need to recognize that we *“struggle not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in heavenly realms.”* The apostle Paul spoke these words in 2 Corinthians 10:3-4, *“For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of this world. On the contrary, **they have divine power to demolish strongholds.**”*

What are *“they”*? *“They”* are prayer, faith, hope, love, God’s Word and the Holy Spirit. These are the tools God divinely empowers to defend and deliver his children. So, what does *“divinely empower”* mean? Hebrews 4:12 states, *“For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires.”* Basically, God’s written, revealed Word can expose any false argument, wrong

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perspective, and wrong attitude, etc. and can make a true and just judgment in a person's life or over a circumstance. God's Word has been tested seven times over, therefore it is finished and complete; it is perfect (Ps. 12:6).

If God is giving you scripture(s) during this 40 day journey, he is giving you his "divinely empowered" weapon to defend and deliver you. Hold on to what God is giving you and begin to battle with it over your life or circumstance or over a loved one, and watch for his deliverance—**his breakthrough!**

**Prayer Focus:** Psalm 45:3-5, *"Gird your sword on your side, you mighty one; clothe yourself with splendor and majesty. In your majesty ride forth victoriously in the cause of truth, humility and justice; let your right hand achieve awesome deeds. Let your sharp arrows pierce the hearts of the king's enemies; let the nations fall beneath your feet."*

Hopefully at this stage you can recognize and apply understanding to some common themes in the prayer focus scripture such as, "clothe yourself", "with splendor", "right hand". Think deeply about what that might mean in terms of your warfare against strongholds, etc.

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June 3, 2014

Day Fourteen: Raise the Battle Cry!

Isaiah 42:13 (NIV), "The LORD will march out like a champion, *like a warrior he will stir up his zeal; with a shout he will raise the battle cry and will triumph over his enemies.*"

Before we pick up on the next portion of this scripture, let's clarify what this scripture is referencing. This is a prophetic word given by the prophet Isaiah to God's people in captivity in regards to how God would not only deliver them from Babylon through the Persian King Cyrus, but it also references our eternal deliverance through the gospel and the final overthrowing of the enemy by the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

This is exceptionally important for us to understand as we move forward on our journey, and as we prevail in prayer until there is breakthrough. To eventually see breakthrough we must know from what position we are battling from. As children of God, we battle "from" a position of *resting* as a son/daughter in the Kingdom of God—we are not battling to "get to" the position of son/daughter and the Kingdom of God. Therefore, we battle for breakthrough from a position which *rests and trusts* in the knowledge that the enemy has already been overthrown by Jesus.

Let's return to the Israelites story as they were leaving Egypt which had been their land of captivity for 430 years. It's looking like all is well...they've been released from slavery, they've even escaped with financial abundance given to them by the Egyptians, but then we happen upon this scenario.

*When the king of Egypt was told that the people fled, Pharaoh and his officials changed their minds about them and said, "What have we done? We have let the Israelites go and we have lost their services!"...So **he pursued** the Israelites, who were **marching out boldly**...The Israelites **looked up** and there were the Egyptians, marching after them. **They were terrified** and cried out to the LORD."*

Perhaps, the last few days, you have been experiencing the enemy pursuing you. You have been marching out of your captivity boldly in the knowledge that you're a son/daughter of the king and you've been released through salvation, therefore, you have been taking your authority and wielding it against the enemy. But now you feel him breathing down your neck, you've looked up and seen the enemy pursuing and you are terrified. Maybe you're feeling anxiety, fear, doubt, or discouragement that you will ever see deliverance or breakthrough...

I have to admit, I think the next few verses are a little bit funny because they reveal what we often do as well! They complained to their leader, Moses, as if he made the decision for them to leave Egypt all by himself and they had nothing to do with it.

*They said to Moses, "Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that **you** brought us to the desert to die? What have **you** done to us by bringing us out of Egypt? Didn't we say to **you** in Egypt, 'Leave us alone; let us serve the Egyptians'? It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the desert!"*

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Why were the Israelites complaining to Moses? Their escape from captivity wasn't Moses' idea—it was God's idea in answer to the prayers of his people,

*Then the Lord said, "I've clearly seen my people oppressed in Egypt. I've heard their cry of injustice because of their slave masters. I know about their pain. I've come down to rescue them from the Egyptians in order to take them out of that land and bring them to a good and broad land" (Ex.3:7-8).*

Moses answered, "*Don't be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the LORD will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again. The LORD will fight for you; you need only to be still.*" Other translations say, *be quiet*. In other words, don't look up at the enemy, don't murmur and complain but *trust; trust in the God of the Breakthrough!*

God says, "**I will** march out like a champion, like a warrior **I will** stir up my zeal, with a shout **I will** raise the battle cry and will triumph over my enemies" (paraphrased). When the God of the breakthrough delivers and sets the captives free, he not only leads them out but he completely annihilates the enemy so that what you have battled with in the past, and what has kept you captive before will never be a problem again. When God sets us free, we are free indeed!

**Prayer Focus:** There is a divinely empowered battle strategy of God that says, "*In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength*" (Is. 30:15). Rest in the knowledge today that God is acting on our behalf; he is fighting for us and breakthrough is God's idea, not ours!

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