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PART 1

**BATTLE
READY!**

1

THE MAKING OF A WARRIOR

If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the results of a hundred battles.

—Sun Tzu, Chinese general,
philosopher and military strategist

IT WAS AN ORDINARY, cold Saturday afternoon in January in San Antonio, Texas. My wife and I were driving to Walmart when our youngest daughter, who was living in Honolulu, Hawaii, called from her work as a lifeguard at a hotel on Waikiki Beach. Esther and I could tell that something was terribly wrong.

Melissa's voice trembled as she explained that her fiancé had just called to inform her that a ballistic missile from North Korea had been launched and was on its way toward Hawaii. In fact, at 8:07 A.M. local time, Hawaiian citizens had received an emergency alert on their smartphones that read: **BALLISTIC MISSILE THREAT INBOUND TO HAWAII. SEEK IMMEDIATE SHELTER. THIS IS NOT A DRILL.**¹

I pulled off the road into the nearest parking lot. Melissa cried out, “Dad, what do I do?” Immediately I went into Army mode. I told her to remain calm, get to the nearest shelter, and text or call us back from there.

Esther continued to talk with her while I pulled out my Army phone and started scanning for emergency alerts. At the same time my mind and body were in full adrenaline alert. It was as if I had just drunk four cups of Italian espresso.

Multiple thoughts flooded me. Could that madman in North Korea have pulled off a first strike on the United States? Where were our anti-missile defenses? Why hadn’t Army headquarters (HQ) alerted me? Were we headed into World War III and all-out nuclear war?

Before those questions were answered, I received a much-needed text from Melissa’s fiancé stating that this was a false alarm. One of the workers at the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency (HEMA) had pushed the wrong button, unleashing panic throughout the Hawaiian Islands and the American mainland.

That one mistake in January 2018 sent shock waves around the islands and the world. One additional mistake on either side could have spelled disaster for the planet. With more than three decades in the Army, I had thought I was prepared for everything, but not this. Sure, I was relieved along with Esther and Melissa, but it took several hours to get back to normal. Afterward I could not help but relive what had happened to me some 27 years prior, right after Operation Desert Storm.

Our Patriot Missile Battalion (1–43 ADA) had been sent to Saudi Arabia to protect the oilfields and infrastructure from a still-dangerous Saddam Hussein. Our Bravo Company battery commander told me to get to the concrete underground shelter because radar had detected a Scud missile launch

headed for our position. I rushed to the bunker to discover a crowded room full of anxious soldiers awaiting their fate. Thank God it turned out to be a false alarm.

Nevertheless, whether it takes place in Hawaii or the Middle East, conflict and war throughout the history of mankind are inevitable.

War and Peace

War. We see it in the news constantly.

Over the past 3,400 years, mankind has experienced only 268 years of peace—just eight percent of recorded history. Historians are unsure of the actual number of people killed in war, but some estimate it is up to one billion. War is an integral part of who we are.²

History has seen many kinds of war: territorial, regional, national, worldwide, civil, economic and religious. There are many types of modern warfare—conventional, unconventional, nuclear/biological/chemical, and cyber. But another type of conflict has been going on since before the Fall of man in the book of Genesis: the battle in the heavens between the forces of heaven and hell, and the battle that rages within us.

This unseen war is played out every day in our world: the battle of the sexes, intense political conflicts, clashes of worldview, the rise of Islam, religious apostasy, divorce, abortion, addiction, pornography and the overall decay of the human condition.

And each of us, like Adam and Eve, has a choice to make every morning when we get up: whether to choose what God has for us or to choose what we selfishly desire: materialistic things, worldly acclaim, appeasing our fleshly appetites.

Physical battles take place every day on this planet, but the unseen conflict is what is really at the heart of what we are

seeing happen in the world. Our nations have been in moral decline for decades. We can stand by and let them sink into oblivion or we can do something about it. We can throw up our hands and give up in the face of our postmodern age, or we can arm ourselves for battle.

In either case, war of the greatest magnitude is here. Are you ready?

The Bible's Greatest Warrior

Throughout this book we will look at the life of King David, the Bible's greatest warrior, and other biblical heroes, in order to learn how they prepared for and engaged in battle. We will also look at ways to emulate them and find the hidden biblical truths that can unlock God's supernatural power in your life.

As you read the Bible, you get the picture that conflict is part of life. The Bible describes more than ninety battles, and David was in about sixty of them. We can learn a great deal by studying these conflicts. And as you read this book, you will find out what it takes to become a warrior of God in the last days; how to prepare yourself and those around you for coming catastrophic events; and what practical exercises are most effective in transforming you into a battle-ready believer.

While obtaining a Master of Strategic Studies at the U.S. Army War College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, I often studied the life of David and the battles he was involved in. Studying the biblical figure God called a "man after his own heart" (1 Samuel 13:14) helped prepare me for my last assignment at the Installation Management Command (IMCOM) at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, Texas.

At IMCOM, I was responsible for overseeing religious support at all 75 Army installations worldwide, along with

more than one thousand chaplains and several thousand volunteers worldwide. I was the strategic advisor to a three-star commanding general and chief executor to the chief of chaplains. The generals and other high-ranking officials I worked under also studied the life of David, since there is much to learn from the biblical account of one of the greatest warrior-kings of all time.

Signs of Jesus' Return

A Barna Group poll several years ago found 41 percent of American adults, 54 percent of Protestants, and 77 percent of evangelical Christians believe the world is now living in the “biblical end times.”³ And as the COVID-19 coronavirus was spreading around the world in late 2019 and 2020, a LifeWay Research poll found that nine in ten pastors saw at least some current events matching those that Jesus said would occur shortly before His return to earth.⁴ Many high-ranking military officials, along with faith leaders and Bible scholars interviewed for this book, agree that the world is on the precipice of major events that will change life dramatically on this planet.

As the world edges closer to what Matthew 24:3 describes as “the end of the age,” we see signs everywhere that point to the return of Jesus Christ. The world is at a precarious point with many Scripture prophecies either fulfilled or in various stages of fulfillment.

One of the primary developments that tell us we are living in the end times is the rebirth of Israel in 1948. Isaiah 66:8 tells us:

“Who has ever heard of such things? Who has ever seen things like this? Can a country be born in a day or a nation

be brought forth in a moment? Yet no sooner is Zion in labor than she gives birth to her children.”

Israel was literally born in a day with the Balfour Declaration, a statement of British support for “the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people.” The declaration was made in a letter from British Foreign Secretary Arthur James Balfour to Lionel Walter Rothschild, a leader of British Jewry, on November 2, 1917.⁵

Then, several decades later, on May 14, 1948, following a United Nations plan to partition Palestine into Jewish and Arab sections, Jewish Agency Chairman David Ben-Gurion proclaimed the State of Israel, establishing the first Jewish state in two millennia. Ben-Gurion went on to become Israel’s first premier.⁶

Israel and the surrounding Middle Eastern countries have since taken center stage in world events. The last days are centered on the Middle East. Israel lies at the very heart of biblical prophecy, and it is where Christ will return to set up His eternal Kingdom. He will reign from Jerusalem. Consider these Scriptures:

The Lord will rule over them in Mount Zion from that day and forever. As for you, watchtower of the flock, stronghold of Daughter Zion, the former dominion will be restored to you; kingship will come to Daughter Jerusalem.

Micah 4:7–8

At that time they will call Jerusalem The Throne of the Lord, and all nations will gather in Jerusalem to honor the name of the Lord. No longer will they follow the stubbornness of their evil hearts.

Jeremiah 3:17

Other last days events include the recapture of Jerusalem in the Six-Day War in 1967 (see Luke 21:24); the realignment of the Middle East with Iran and Turkey as major military powers; plans to build the futuristic city of Neom in Saudi Arabia (we believe it could be what Revelation 17–18 describes as “Babylon the Great,” the headquarters of the Antichrist); and plans to build the Third Temple in Jerusalem (Matthew 24:15).

We are on the edge of some extraordinary events, including the rise of the Antichrist and the fulfillment of many other Bible prophecies. Nearly one-third of Scripture is predictive in nature, and the world has watched many of these prophecies unfold in recent decades. When you look at the world today, you can see that Jesus’ predictions and Satan’s plans are coming to pass.

The devil is doing everything he can to Balkanize and segregate the world to break us up into increasingly hostile groups. Thus we fail to recognize that we are all created in the image of God and that there is only one enemy, according to Scripture—the adversary, Satan himself. He has convinced most of us that we are each other’s enemies.

Today there is profound division among mankind: “Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom” (Matthew 24:7). Meanwhile, natural and manmade disasters are demonstrably increasing in both frequency and intensity. Scientific studies reveal that earthquakes, or natural disasters resulting in significant destruction of property or loss of life, are also increasing in number and intensity.⁷

Further, some of today’s technological advances—weapons of mass destruction, electronic banking, microchip implants, the internet, artificial intelligence, and the surveillance state—mirror events the apostle John described in the book of Revelation.

Consider Revelation 9:2–6:

When he opened the Abyss, smoke rose from it like the smoke from a gigantic furnace. The sun and sky were darkened by the smoke from the Abyss. And out of the smoke locusts came down on the earth and were given power like that of scorpions of the earth. They were told not to harm the grass of the earth or any plant or tree, but only those people who did not have the seal of God on their foreheads. They were not allowed to kill them but only to torture them for five months. And the agony they suffered was like that of the sting of a scorpion when it strikes. During those days people will seek death but will not find it; they will long to die, but death will elude them.

In the military, the advent of weaponized autonomous drones is already here. These sophisticated unmanned drones can swarm like locusts and are encoded with “algorithms for countless human-defined courses of action to meet emerging challenges.” Perdix autonomous micro-drones have already been dropped from an F-18 fighter jet in a successful test.⁸ Such drones can be weaponized and, in the future, potentially bring down the population of an entire city without destroying the buildings or leaving residual radiation as nuclear weapons would. The prospects of these autonomous technologies—whether flying drones, underwater vehicles or other lethal weapon systems—are the future of war.

I was given an opportunity to witness the General Atomics MQ-1C Gray Eagle drone at a U.S. Army installation. It is an upgrade of the MQ-1 Predator. One of its operators told me that this drone can be put into autonomous mode in which it can take off, perform the mission and return—all on its own.

Technologically advanced warfare is looming on many fronts. Iran seeks to dominate the Middle East, including Israel. Turkey also wants to be the regional power and new Islamic caliphate. China and Russia seek to be regional and world powers and peers with the United States.

Former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger warned a crowd in Beijing in 2019 that China and the United States are in the “foothills of a Cold War”—adding that the trade war between the two nations, if unchecked, could escalate into a global armed conflict.⁹

These are just a few of the signs that Jesus told His disciples in Matthew 24 that would indicate that His return is approaching. As polls show, most evangelical Christians have looked at events and concluded that what Jesus and the prophets predicted thousands of years ago is coming to pass.

Virus Outbreak

As Troy and I were finishing this book, the COVID-19 pandemic erupted, gripping the world with panic and trepidation. In the middle of it, my wife and I traveled to Israel and then went to Petra, a historical and archaeological city in southern Jordan where, according to tradition, Moses struck a rock and water gushed out. Prophets like Daniel and Isaiah, and even Jesus Himself, spoke about the monumental structures at Petra in connection with end-times prophecies. You probably glimpsed Petra in movies like *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* and *The Mummy Returns*.

While returning from Petra to Jerusalem with a tour group of forty people and six personnel, things became tense at the first checkpoint in Jordan. The first person to greet Esther and me was a Jordanian dressed in surgical garb with a mask to take our temperatures. It was surreal. After crossing the

Jordanian border with a myriad of questions, we arrived at Israel border security, where we were asked many questions about the sites we had visited.

We made it out of that area, thinking we were home free, and headed toward Jerusalem where the Israeli Defense Forces had another checkpoint set up. Our driver asked us to pray that they would not stop us, although they had stopped every tour bus coming into the city before us. We prayed and they waved us through—and our bus erupted in jubilation!

In the year prior to going to Israel, while in prayer and meditation, I asked the Lord about the timing of the release of this book, which is designed to prepare you for living in the end times. He told me that 2020 would be a year of signs that the end times are upon us. He also told me that by the time the book is released, people will need the book due to all the things happening on the earth.

Well, it does not take a rocket scientist—or a prophet of the Lord—to figure out that we are in the midst of end-times events. These have already happened at the time of our writing: not only the coronavirus epidemic, but locusts invading East Africa and the Middle East, massive fires in Australia and around the world, murder hornets invading America, economic woes, fear, and a host of other phenomena.

Here is our take on the coronavirus outbreak. After it subsides, there will be a lull, until the next wave hits the earth. This cycle will repeat with more intense peaks and fewer times of calm, just like a pregnancy—until the return of Christ.

Jesus told us in Matthew 24:6–8 (WEB) that there would be plagues (or virus outbreaks) in the end times:

“You will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you aren’t troubled, for all this must happen, but the end is not

yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there will be famines, plagues, and earthquakes in various places. But all these things are the beginning of birth pains.”

Author and political commentator Joel C. Rosenberg points out that the Bible uses ancient Hebrew and Greek words for *pestilence* and *plagues* at least 127 times. He writes:

Throughout the Bible, we see repeated examples of God using diseases to accomplish His divine and sovereign purposes. There are also Biblical prophecies that warn us that God intends to use terrible, infectious diseases to accomplish His divine and sovereign purposes in the future. . . . In the Gospels, the Lord Jesus Christ warns His disciples that “pestilences” will be one of the signs of the “last days” of human history, a time of shaking the world to wake up and realize that Christ’s return to judge and reign over the earth is increasingly imminent.¹⁰

The Church Is Not Ready

This book is a wake-up call to prepare for the last of the last days. We don’t know the day of the coming of the Lord. But we need to be ready and prepared for that day by being the warriors God intended us to be—not by hiding or fretting, but by preparing for the coming King.

We don’t know what hardships we will face, but let’s be ready. In becoming a warrior ready for the rigors of battle, there are some clear steps to take. We will look at these action items closely throughout this book.

Powerful forces are lined up for battle. We see it every day in the news. The battle rages for supremacy in the

political, social, environmental, religious and governmental spheres. Just when you think you have heard and seen it all, an even deadlier and more vicious attack overshadows the rest.

We are in a battle for our souls. Our eternal destinies, as well as those of billions of people worldwide, hang in the balance. Every day we have choices to make. You are on either one side or the other. If you are not aware of this battle, then you are already one of its victims and a POW (prisoner of war).

Yes, spiritual battle is uncomfortable. It is not politically correct and can be downright scary. We would rather talk about warm feelings, love and the weather. But while many preachers say we are in the age of moral relativism and post-modernism that cannot be reversed, we must not lay down our weapons and give up.

Benefits of This Book

This book is about how best to prepare yourself and your family for the unseen war, the battle of the ages, that you have already entered. As I noted near the beginning of this chapter, this war began before the Fall of humanity and will continue until Christ returns on His white horse with the armies of heaven during the last great battle—the Battle of Armageddon. The times we live in and the vast array of signs, converging as never before in history, are pointing us to the very time of the end and the great distress coming upon the earth.

The Military Guide to Armageddon will help you get ready through what is known in the Army as the process of “the making of a warrior.” As a beneficiary of the military and spiritual wisdom condensed in this book, you will:

1. Learn how to apply important military disciplines and strategies to energize an amazing spiritual life.
2. Undergo a personal “great awakening” to the fact that the end times are upon us.
3. Become a dynamic, energized and fully armored warrior of God.
4. Discover and develop spiritual gifts to be able to walk in the supernatural power, provision and protection of the Holy Spirit in the end times.
5. Find out how to engage the enemy on a new level of spiritual warfare based on biblical and military principles.
6. Experience a reinvigoration and passion for reading and studying the Bible as real-time world events and biblical prophecies intersect.
7. Gain an understanding of historical Christian persecution to help you weather the hostility toward believers during the run-up to the return of Christ to establish His Kingdom on earth.