

# Spiritual Warfare: Soli Deo Gloria Exodus 6:28-7:7

The world is full of conflict and warfare – ever since Adam first sinned, and throughout human history, the world has been full of strife. It all started with Adam’s rebellion against God in the garden of Eden. Ever since sin came into the world, humanity has been fighting a long warfare against God, and the conflict has brought much trouble and pain and distress.

Of course, we know that humanity cannot possibly win this war. Since the creator is infinite, eternal, unchangeable, sovereign and omnipotent, he must inevitably win the war against his creatures. But we don’t have to wait “until the end” to see God glorified in the conflict – he is praised in all that comes to pass along the way; in every moment of the battle, through every aspect of the warfare, in all that takes place and all that comes to pass, God is honoured. As the Reformers stated, *Soli Deo Gloria* – glory to God **alone**. It is not as though man can claim some kind of glory, however temporary, from winning the odd skirmish, or putting God’s plans back here and there, or forcing a change of strategy – in everything that happens, God alone is glorified.

That’s what we see in the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt. We see **how** God is glorified in every aspect of the battle, including the final victory, but also everything else that comes to pass. That’s the message of these verses – in the spiritual warfare that rages, God alone is fully and comprehensively glorified from start to finish, especially in these five ways:

## 1. *The Unworthy Mouthpiece (6v28-7v1,7)*

God chooses Moses to be the mouthpiece of his demand to release the people. Yet he is unworthy to act this part. He is unworthy in his own eyes (v30), in Pharaoh’s eyes (5v2), in the eyes of the Israelites (5v21), and even in God’s eyes (4v24)). He is actually, truly and really unworthy, and in and of himself completely out of his depth. In addition to all his natural unworthiness and inability, he was very old, along with his octogenarian brother (v7).

So why did God choose him? Was God short of options? Surely not. He could have prepared and chosen anyone upon earth; if that did not suit, he could have sent an angel from heaven; if that did not suit, he could have created someone else. Yet he chose to send Moses. Why? Precisely because he was unworthy, for the purpose of *Soli Deo Gloria* (2 Cor. 4:7). Never underestimate what God may do through unworthy old people – they are a mighty force in the hands of a sovereign Lord who is worthy of all the glory! What if we really believed that our weakness is our strength? That God is glorified when he accomplishes his purposes and wins his victories through unworthy people, just like us?

Do you not think it extraordinary that, even when God did send his infinitely glorious and perfectly worthy Son into this world to be his mouthpiece and to fulfil his purposes, he was seen to be a man in weakness and poverty and frailty? Our faith is in a Saviour who **appeared** weak and unworthy, even when he was not in fact. Don’t let appearances fool you! What a lesson for us when we set apart ministers, men who will be the mouthpiece of God for us – let us choose what God chooses, those who are unworthy in the eyes of men, who depend upon the Lord in all things, through whom God will receive all the glory. Pharaoh underestimated Moses at his peril! Let us not make the same mistake and underestimate Christ’s ministers.

## 2. *The Bold Commandment (6v29, 7v2,6)*

But what is the minister of the gospel called to proclaim? It is beautifully summarised here in 7v2. The heart of the message is God’s redeeming purpose, to set his people free (v2b); but equally importantly, Moses was commanded by God to “Speak ALL that I command you.”

This is repeated from 6v29, and confirmed in 7v6. Matthew Henry says, ““Those that go in God’s errand must not shun to declare the whole counsel of God.”

The minister of the new covenant is called to preach the redeeming grace of God in Christ, but he is also bound to proclaim *all* that God has commanded, the whole counsel of God. And he is to proclaim it both to those who receive it and respond in faith, and to those who reject it and harden their hearts. Paul is convinced that this is the only way to be free of the blood of those who perish, Ac. 20:26-31. Christ himself was totally committed to proclaiming all that the Father had delivered to him, Jn. 12:49-50. Ministers are to be bold in declaring the whole counsel of the God who has called them, for his glory, just like Moses, and just like the Lord.

### ***3. The Hard Heart (v3)***

Notice in 7v3, the consequence of Pharaoh’s hardened heart. God is glorified as he multiplies his signs and wonders in the land. It is all about God! Pharaoh thinks it is all about his defiance of God, but that is not the case at all. His heart was hard even from birth, resisting the word of the Lord and fighting against God. Yet God further hardens Pharaoh’s already hard heart. Why? So that he might be glorified. M. Morales says, “God’s agenda is to publish his own glory through signs and wonders. The king of Egypt, a mere creature, could have been reduced to ashes within moments... Yet God upheld him, strengthening his heart, in order to allow further opportunity for God to display his strong arm.”

God is glorified in the resistance of the wicked to his redeeming power. That was true with Pharaoh before Moses, with the Pharisees before Christ (Mk. 3:5-6), and with every act of persecution against God’s people today. So beware if you are hardening your heart – you are God’s enemy, and he may harden your heart further for his own glory. Act now and plead with him to give you a new heart, for his own glory.

### ***4. The Escalating Battle (v3-4)***

The hardening of Pharaoh’s heart escalates the battle. Imagine if Pharaoh had capitulated after the second plague – there would have been no song of Moses on the shores of the Red Sea (Ex. 15). In the life of Christ, the battle reached its peak on Calvary, where Satan unleashed all he had – and was utterly defeated. That same pattern continues today. God’s people keep triumphing, Ps. 37:12-17. God is glorified in the escalating battle.

### ***5. The Emphatic Victory (v4-5)***

Victory is inevitable. Not only did God get glory from the lips of his people (15v1-4); even the Egyptians knew by the end that the LORD was God alone (v5). Matthew Henry says, “How God glorifies himself; he makes people to know that he is Jehovah. Israel is made to know it by the performance of his promises to them, and the Egyptians are made to know it by the pouring out of his wrath upon them. Thus God’s name is exalted both in those that are saved and in those that perish.” It was so even at the crucifixion, when the Centurion who supervised the destruction of Christ declared him to be the Son of God, Mk. 15:39.

It’s vital that we see how the full and final victory depends upon the course of the battle and the nature of the conflict itself. It is not just that Satan unleashes ALL that he has upon Christ; it’s also the character of what he unleashes that secures the victory. This can be seen in Col. 2:13-15 where all that Satan throws at Christ, death, the curse, the wrath of the Father, the condemnation of the law, the principalities and powers, are all turned back on Satan and used in his defeat. Truly, Satan’s sword entered his own heart, Ps. 37:14-15. In every part of the spiritual warfare, it is Soli Deo Gloria, and Satan knows it! Praise the Lord.