

**Word Notes Sunday 18/11/2012 Tony Hodge**  
**Spiritual Warfare**

**Summary** (read this bit out to remind cell members what was said on Sunday)

**Key Text: 2 Chronicles 20:1-31**

Judah is under attack! Where she had once been very strong and feared poor choice of alliance with Israel leading to a defeat meant that her enemies were ganging up on her. Only God could save them – but would He?

Jehoshaphat had established Judah as a Godly nation following the ways of his father David, ultimately this is why the Lord's favour still rested on Judah. Here are the key points:

- High Places and Asherah poles torn down.
- Baal worship had been stopped and the Law taught by Levites and priests.
- The nation were used to prayer – they all prayed and fasted.
- The Lord told them not to be afraid or discouraged for the battle was His.
- They listened to what the Lord said, and obeyed.
- They praised God – men were appointed to sing praises.
- Judah did not have to fight a physical battle – the enemy destroyed each other.
- They carried off huge amounts of loot.
- They praised the Lord again.
- There was peace for all Jehoshaphat's reign.

Spiritual warfare is not about going out looking for trouble! When Paul wrote to the church at Ephesus about spiritual warfare he told them to put on the whole armour of God, to stand and to pray continually not physically fight with those oppressing them. When we see that our battle is not against flesh and blood we are able to love our enemies rather than seeking to destroy them. Jesus didn't come into this world to condemn it but to save it – let's be like Jesus.

Just as Jehoshaphat had to clean up Judah, so our warfare starts with getting ourselves right. A lifestyle of prayer, keeping right relationships, a Godly lifestyle recognising our weaknesses and being alert is where we start. The Lord dealt with the battle for Judah – so it is for us!

**Application** (this is the bit where cell members get to participate. Lead discussions around these points)

In the 1985 film "Witness", Eli the Amish grandfather bids Philadelphia detective John Book goodbye at his return to Philadelphia, saying "You be careful out among the English" meaning among the "ungodly":

- What words would you use to describe how you feel when "in the world"? Careful, anxious, wary, strong, victorious, empowered?
- Why do you feel that way?

How can a lifestyle of prayer help keep negativity at bay?

What do you understand about the "forgiveness agreement" in Matt 6:12? Is it a nominal forgiveness or is there something deeper?

- Do we really want the Lord to forgive us in exactly the same way we forgive others?
- Should we get better at forgiving the Lord's way?

Read Romans 12:1-2 and 2 Cor 10:6. Do we recognise that we need to be renewed in our minds? How can we help each other to "take captive every thought"?

**Witness** (this is the bit where the cell talks and prays about how to share the Good News)

So if we're not meant to go out and fight against people what can we do? Having prepared ourselves on the inside, what can come out of us to touch our neighbourhood for Christ?