

## No Weapon Formed Against the Church Shall Prosper

*Isa 54:17 No weapon formed against you shall prosper, and every tongue which rises against you in judgment you shall condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is from Me," says the Lord.*

Pastor, how can God say that the weapons that have been formed against the church will not prosper? At the very beginning of history didn't Cain kill Abel because his offering was acceptable to God, and Cain's wasn't? Wasn't Joseph sold into slavery by his brothers? God had shown in dreams that his brothers would bow before him, and because of those very dreams his brother sold him into that slavery and while in slavery wasn't he was falsely accused and didn't he end up in prison? And then we read in the Book of Hebrews that many of the saints of the Old Testament "had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tested, and were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented — of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth. (Heb 11:36-38) Paul suffered on several occasions, and in the end was beheaded for his faith. John ended up on the isle of Patmos for the testimony of Jesus Christ. Early saints in the New Testament were covered with tar and oil and then set on fire and used for lighting in the arenas, still others were torn asunder by ravenous beasts in those same arenas. John Huss was burned at the stake because he took a stand on truth. Calvin had to flee from France to save his life. One could go on and on both from Scriptures and from history. Doesn't it sound like a contradiction when God says, "No weapon formed against you shall prosper?"

Maybe another question or two will answer the previous questions. The thief on the cross that repented and placed his faith in the Christ hanging on the cross next to him, did he enter Paradise that very day and why? Who would you choose to be today, the Roman emperor who ordered the death of Paul, or Paul? Or would you want to trade places with; the saints who were torn asunder or the Romans who mocked them? Who was most prosperous, the rich man or Lazarus? God speaks to us in terms of eternity, whereas as finite men we too often think in terms that are temporal and carnal. What I want to do this morning is observe how indeed, no weapon formed against the church can prosper and how no accusations brought against the church can condemn God's elect. And then conclude with the reason why this is true. So let us look then at the final thought of Isaiah 54. No weapon formed against the elect of God can prevail for the church serves under the banner of His righteousness.

A. No weapon formed against the elect of God can prevail. - *No weapon formed against you shall prosper, and every tongue which rises against you in judgment you shall condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is from Me," says the Lord.*

1. Let us take Joseph from the list above to see how even in trial God's purpose and protecting hand is evident.
  - a. The ungodly may often mean evil against us.
  - b. But we are always in God's purpose and will, we need never fear
  - c. God has purpose in all things to this end - to the very best for God's elect
2. Even faithful saints that were also carried away into captivity.
  - a. The three Hebrews are clearly an example of God's purpose and glory even when His servants are tested.
    - (1) I think we can rightly conclude they were not among the idolaters in Judea
    - (2) It is also true that in captivity they were put in a place of honor.
    - (3) Yet they were threatened with the flames of a fiery furnace.
    - (4) Did the flames of the furnace prosper?
    - (5) All of Babylon had to acknowledge that their God was the true God
    - (6) They meant it for evil - God purposed it to proclaim His power and His glory
  - b. Daniel is a prime example of a faithful saint suffering conflict in this present world
    - (1) Threatened with lions -
    - (2) Protected in the very den of lions
    - (3) Witness before the king and the pagan nation
    - (4) They meant it for evil - God had purposed to proclaim His power and glory before a pagan world.
3. Many unnamed Old Testament saints suffered but God tells us they prospered

*Heb 11:35 Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that **they might obtain a better resurrection.***

4. This brings us to the example of Paul
  - a. He was soon to be beheaded
  - b. Yet he expressed great hope and comfort.

*2 Tim 4:8 Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.*

5. The Jews did everything possible to destroy the witness of the church. - A.D. 70
6. Pagan Rome did its best to destroy the church - yet Rome is in ruins and the church remains.
7. No weapon prospers - even the tongue has failed.
  - a. They falsely state we are against science - fact: science proclaims an Intelligent Designer
  - b. They falsely state that reason speaks out against the Christian faith - fact: Christianity is the only reasonable faith in the world today
  - c. They falsely state that history is against the claims of our faith - fact: archaeology gives ample evidence that the history recorded in Scripture is true.
8. It remains true to this day - no weapon formed against God's elect has ever prospered.
9. Even that we are worshiping here this morning is evidence that the weapons formed against His church have not prospered.
10. The church today stands as a witness against the world. - *every tongue which rises against you in judgment you shall condemn.*

B. The Reason is two fold

1. *This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord.*
  - a. Nothing can separate us from God's love

*Rom 8:38-39 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

- b. We are more than conquerors

*Rom 8:37 Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.*

2. *And their righteousness is from Me," says the Lord.*
  - c. God's justice is perfect and will prevail
  - d. The ungodly will be brought to judgment, the redeemed will be rewarded.
  - e. No accusations brought against the church can condemn God's elect for the Lord is our righteousness.

*Rom 8:33 Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.*

CONCLUSION: - The enemies of God's people have and continue to assemble against the church yet they continue to remain subject to God's authority over them.

The church continues to be victorious for the message of Christ still saves the lost sinner

No weapon formed against the elect of God has or can prevail for this truth remains:

*Matt 5:10-12 Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. "Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.*

Founded upon these words - *Thus saith the Lord.*