

WHEN FOOTMEN BECOME HORSES

PART THREE

CONTENDING WITH HORSES

A Five-Day Devotional from Jeremiah 12:5b

SUNDAY, 18 OCTOBER 2026

*Greater resistance requires convictions rooted in
Scripture and strength supplied by Christ.*

CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCHES OF GREAT BRITAIN

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THIS WEEK

This devotional continues the message preached on Sunday, 18 October 2026. Read the assigned passages slowly, then work through the devotional, reflection questions, and prayer. Each day is designed for approximately four to six minutes of reading, with additional time for personal prayer and Scripture meditation.

Weekly theme: Greater resistance requires convictions rooted in Scripture and strength supplied by Christ.

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DAY 1 | MONDAY, 19 OCTOBER 2026

THE WARNING IS MERCY

READ: Jeremiah 12:5b; Proverbs 22:3

“Then how canst thou contend with horses?”

JEREMIAH 12:5

DEVOTIONAL

The verse changes speed. Footmen move at the pace of men; horses bring force, momentum, intimidation, and danger. God was not merely asking Jeremiah to run farther. He was showing the prophet that heavier resistance lay ahead.

Jeremiah would face more than opposition in Anathoth. Priests would resist him, false prophets would contradict him, princes would despise him, and kings would reject his message. He would be beaten, imprisoned, accused of treachery, and forced to watch Jerusalem fall. God saw all of this before Jeremiah did.

That is why the warning is mercy. The Lord did not wait until the horses were charging to tell Jeremiah that endurance mattered. He spoke during the lesser contest so weakness could be addressed before greater responsibility arrived. Biblical warnings are not signs that God delights in frightening His people. They are evidence that He prepares those He loves.

A prudent person sees danger and responds. Preparation is not panic. Panic imagines that the future is outside God's control; preparation believes God enough to obey His present instruction. Noah prepared an ark because he trusted the warning of God. Joseph stored grain because God revealed a famine. Daniel purposed in his heart before Babylon's table tested him.

We should not live obsessed with every possible difficulty. Christ commanded us not to worry about tomorrow. Yet freedom from anxiety is not an excuse for spiritual carelessness. We can trust tomorrow to God while taking today's preparation seriously.

If Scripture warns that error will increase, we should know truth. If temptation is real, we should guard the heart. If families will face pressure, we should disciple our children. If ministry brings resistance, we should root our identity in Christ instead of applause. If suffering is part of following Jesus, we should learn His sufficiency now.

Do not resent the warning. Receive it as grace. The Lord who sees the horses before they arrive is already at work strengthening you before they charge.

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Identify one area in which Scripture has already warned you but urgency feels low. It may concern finances, purity, parenting, health, ministry preparation, or reconciliation. Write the warning in one sentence and the needed preparation in another. Then complete the first step within twenty-four hours. Preparation rarely feels dramatic; it looks like a conversation, a boundary, a saved amount, a memorised verse, or a scheduled responsibility. Receiving warning as mercy means acting while there is still room to prepare calmly.

REFLECT

- *What biblical warning have you treated casually because the danger did not feel immediate?*
- *What faithful preparation can you begin today without giving place to fear?*

PRAY

Lord, thank You for warnings that prepare rather than terrify. Give me prudence without panic, seriousness without fear, and grace to obey today before tomorrow's pressure arrives. Amen.

DAY 2 | TUESDAY, 20 OCTOBER 2026

WHEN THE WORLD WILL NOT ENDURE TRUTH

READ: 2 Timothy 4:1–5; Romans 1:16

“Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season.”

2 TIMOTHY 4:2

DEVOTIONAL

Paul warned Timothy that a time would come when people “will not endure sound doctrine.” The issue was not simply that they would fail to understand truth. They would refuse to tolerate it. They would turn away their ears and gather teachers who confirmed what they already desired.

That is the world of horses. Resistance is no longer mere indifference; it becomes organised rejection of biblical authority. In such a climate, the temptation is to soften the message until it no longer offends anyone. Paul gives the opposite command: “Preach the word.” The remedy for resistance to truth is not less truth, but truth delivered with longsuffering, doctrine, clarity, conviction, and care.

The church does not need to be quarrelsome to be courageous. Biblical boldness is not loudness, rudeness, or an appetite for controversy. Christ was full of grace and truth. We must speak plainly without speaking proudly, love people without lying to them, and refuse the false choice between conviction and compassion.

This matters in South Wales and throughout Britain. Many know church buildings but not the Gospel. Religious memories remain while biblical knowledge fades. Confusion surrounds identity, marriage, morality, authority, and truth itself. The answer is not retreat or imitation of the culture. It is a church that knows Scripture, loves sinners, preaches Christ, and lives what it proclaims.

The same courage is required in the home and workplace. You may be called to explain a biblical conviction to a child, refuse a dishonest practice, or answer a question about your faith. Prepare your heart before the conversation. Pray for wisdom. Speak graciously. Do not be ashamed of the Gospel, for it remains “the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.”

Horses do not weaken the truth. Darkness does not diminish the light. Resistance does not cancel responsibility. Keep the message anchored in Scripture, the spirit governed by love, and the outcome surrendered to God.

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Prepare a two-minute explanation of one biblical conviction you may be asked to defend. Begin with the relevant Scripture, explain the truth in plain language, connect it to the character or redemptive purpose of God, and express genuine care for the listener. Practise saying it without anger or apology. Then pray for a real person rather than arguing with an imaginary opponent. Courage grows when conviction is clear, compassion is personal, and the outcome is left with God.

REFLECT

- *Where are you tempted to remain silent because biblical truth may be resisted?*
 - *How can you combine clearer conviction with more evident compassion?*
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PRAY

God of truth, make me unashamed of the Gospel and faithful to Your Word. Guard me from both cowardice and harshness. Help me speak truth in love and leave every result with You. Amen.

DAY 3 | WEDNESDAY, 21 OCTOBER 2026

WHEN HUMAN RESOLVE RUNS OUT

READ: 2 Corinthians 12:7–10; Philippians 4:13

“My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.”

2 CORINTHIANS 12:9

DEVOTIONAL

The horses cannot be answered by a harder personality. Natural courage fades, adrenaline settles, and human determination reaches its limit. If Jeremiah's future depended only on Jeremiah's temperament, he would fail. The same is true of us.

Paul learned this through a thorn in the flesh. He asked three times for its removal, but Christ answered, “My grace is sufficient for thee.” The Lord did not tell Paul that weakness was imaginary. He revealed that weakness could become the setting in which divine strength was displayed.

This is very different from self-confidence dressed in Christian language. Philippians 4:13 does not say, “I can do anything I decide because I believe in myself.” It says, “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” The strength is supplied. The believer's confidence rests not in unlimited personal capacity, but in the sufficient Christ who enables obedience within His will.

Weakness can humble us into usefulness. A person who knows his need prays differently. He handles others more gently. He prepares more carefully. He depends less upon talent and more upon grace. Pride says, “I can manage this.” Faith says, “Without Christ I can do nothing, but through Him I can obey whatever He assigns.”

You do not have to pretend that horses look small. The opposition may be genuinely intimidating. The responsibility may exceed your experience. The burden may expose the limit of your emotional, physical, or intellectual resources. But your limitation is not the limit of God.

Bring your weakness into communion with Christ. Name it honestly. Refuse both despair and boasting. Ask for wisdom, power, courage, and endurance. Then take the step obedience requires. Grace is not always the removal of the horse; often it is strength to stand when the horse charges.

When human resolve runs out, the believer has not reached the end of his resources. He has reached the place where the sufficiency of Christ can be known more deeply.

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Name one assignment that currently exceeds your natural confidence. Divide a page into “My responsibility” and “Christ's supply.” Under the first, write the preparation, counsel, repentance, or action obedience requires. Under the second, write the wisdom, courage, patience, and strength you must receive. Pray over both lists. Dependence is not inactivity; it performs the responsibility while refusing to claim the power as its own. Take one step today and thank Christ in advance that His grace will be sufficient in the step He has commanded.

REFLECT

- *What limitation are you trying to hide, manage, or overcome without depending on Christ?*
- *How could that weakness become a doorway to prayer and supplied strength today?*

PRAY

Lord Jesus, my strength is limited, but Your grace is sufficient. Deliver me from self-confidence and despair. Let Your power rest upon me, and strengthen me for every act of obedience You require. Amen.

DAY 4 | THURSDAY, 22 OCTOBER 2026

BUILD BEFORE THE BATTLE

READ: Psalm 119:9–11; Daniel 6:10; Hebrews 10:24–25

“Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.”

PSALM 119:11

DEVOTIONAL

Crisis is a poor time to begin building foundations. The convictions that hold during battle are usually formed before the battle begins. Daniel did not invent a prayer life when the decree was signed. He opened his windows and prayed “as he did aforetime.” The public crisis revealed a private pattern already in place.

Preparation for horses must be doctrinal. Shallow slogans will not withstand sustained resistance. The Bible must become more than a book carried to church; it must govern the mind, conscience, affections, and decisions. Truth hidden in the heart becomes strength when temptation or confusion arrives.

Preparation must also be devotional. Information alone cannot substitute for communion with God. We need Scripture read personally, prayer practised consistently, sins confessed honestly, and worship offered sincerely. Public courage is often the fruit of private fellowship.

Preparation must be moral. Secret compromise drains spiritual courage. A defiled conscience makes a person vulnerable when pressure comes. “The wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion” (Proverbs 28:1). Put away the private habit that weakens public faithfulness.

Preparation must be relational. God did not design Christians to face the battle alone. Hebrews commands us to assemble, exhort one another, and provoke one another unto love and good works, especially as we see the day approaching. The local church is not an audience gathered around an event; it is a body whose members strengthen one another.

Preparation must be missional. We are not preparing merely to survive. We are preparing to serve, witness, disciple, and advance the Gospel in the presence of resistance. Horses are not an excuse to hide. They are a reason to become ready.

Examine the structure of your spiritual life today. Which beam is weak—doctrine, devotion, holiness, fellowship, or mission? Do not wait for the battle to expose what peace has already allowed you to strengthen. Build now, while the warning can still become preparation.

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Choose one foundation to strengthen for the next thirty days. Keep it simple and measurable: read one chapter of Scripture before checking your phone, pray with your spouse or children three evenings each week, memorise one verse weekly, attend every regular church service unless providentially hindered, or share the Gospel with one person. Tell a mature believer what you are building and invite accountability. Strong structures are formed by repeated practices, not occasional intensity. Begin while conditions are peaceful enough to establish the pattern.

REFLECT

- *Which area of present preparation most needs deliberate attention?*
- *What repeatable practice can you establish before the next crisis arrives?*

PRAY

Lord, help me build before the battle. Root me in Scripture, deepen my prayer life, purify my conduct, bind me faithfully to Your church, and keep me active in the Gospel. Amen.

DAY 5 | FRIDAY, 23 OCTOBER 2026

CONSIDER HIM

READ: Hebrews 12:1–3; Luke 9:51

“For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.”

HEBREWS 12:3

DEVOTIONAL

The greatest example of contending with horses is the Lord Jesus Christ. Every faithful servant is only a faint reflection of Him. He faced betrayal, denial, abandonment, false accusation, mocking, scourging, crucifixion, and the judgment our sins deserved. Yet Luke says, “he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem.”

Christ did not move toward the cross because the path was easy. He moved in perfect obedience to the Father and perfect love for sinners. He endured the cross, despised the shame, and finished the work He came to accomplish. The full cavalry of hell, sin, death, and judgment did not turn Him back.

Hebrews does not merely command us to admire Him. It tells us to consider Him “lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.” Weariness grows when the soul stares endlessly at its own weakness, the size of the opposition, or the unfairness of the struggle. Strength is renewed as attention is fixed upon Christ—who He is, what He endured, what He accomplished, and where He is now.

He is not only the pattern before us; He is the life within us and the High Priest interceding for us. Because He finished His course, salvation is secure for every believer. Because He rose from the dead, no opposition has the final word. Because He endured, He understands the tired servant without excusing unbelief. Because He lives, grace is available now.

Consider Him when criticism feels heavy. Consider Him when obedience costs more than expected. Consider Him when you are tempted to answer hostility with hostility. Consider Him when results are slow. His faithfulness corrects our perspective, His love governs our spirit, and His victory secures our hope.

The horses may be stronger than you, but they are not stronger than Christ. Your calling is not to manufacture enough courage to impress Him. It is to look unto Him, receive His strength, and follow where He has already led. The servant who keeps Christ in view can remain faithful even when the battle intensifies.

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Set aside ten uninterrupted minutes and read Hebrews 12:1–3 aloud twice. On the first reading, mark what Christ endured. On the second, mark what the passage commands you to do. Then describe your present opposition in one sentence and Christ's sufficiency in a longer sentence. This deliberately gives Him more attention than the problem. Carry one phrase—"looking unto Jesus" or "consider him"—through the day. Use it as a prompt to redirect your mind whenever criticism, fear, or discouragement becomes dominant.

REFLECT

- *What has occupied your attention more than Christ this week?*
 - *Which aspect of His endurance and victory most directly answers your present weariness?*
-

PRAY

Lord Jesus, turn my eyes from myself and fix them upon You. Let Your endurance steady me, Your love govern me, and Your victory fill me with hope. Keep me from weariness and fainting in my mind. Amen.

WHEN FOOTMEN BECOME HORSES

CONTENDING WITH HORSES

*Greater resistance requires convictions rooted in Scripture
and strength supplied by Christ.*

*Let us run with patience the race that is set before us,
looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.*

HEBREWS 12:1-2