



Old Testament Reading – Psalm 20:1-9
New Testament Reading – Colossians 2:6-15

Spiritual Warfare

“Know Your Enemy”

1 Timothy 1:18-20

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Every born-again believer is engaged in a cosmic spiritual war. This war began in the Garden of Eden when Satan rebelled against God’s authority and led Adam and Eve to do the same. It will not end until Jesus casts Satan into the bottomless pit of hell, where he and his fellow rebels will live forever, world without end.

- God is a God of purposes and promises, and according to the Holy Scriptures, God’s whole purpose in doing what He has done and what He has promised to do is to glorify His name by redeeming those who put their faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior and serve Him as their Lord and then to judge those who refuse His offer of salvation by grace.

- Satan and his rebel forces oppose all that and will do all they can to oppose God's purposes and God's promises.
- Spiritual warfare is that cosmic conflict between God and Satan, the kingdom of Light and the kingdom of darkness, the kingdom of holiness and the kingdom of evil, a King who loves us, and a king who hates us, a King who protects and a king who is out to destroy us, and the outcome of this war is either eternal life or eternal death, and the good King has given us the freedom to choose which side we are on by which king we serve.

In 1 Peter 5:8, the Apostle warned us, ***“Our adversary, the devil, walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.”***

- There is a devil! Satan is real! His legion of demons is roaming the earth in search of those who are spiritually weak and, therefore, vulnerable to his deceptive lies and evil schemes.
- Those with the spirit of discernment can see the effects of this war in our world, our nation, our churches, our families, and in our personal lives.
- Those who doubt this have been taken captive by the enemy, and as Jesus said in John 10:10, ***“The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy.”***

Even though the Church at Ephesus was, in today's terms, a dynamic church, having been started and equipped by the Apostle Paul, false teachers had wormed their way into leadership positions, and false doctrines were being taught.

- What was once a fellowship of amazing love had become a display of spiritual war, and the Apostle Paul sent Timothy to get it settled.
- 1 Timothy 1:18- ***“This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good war.”*** (“fight the good fight” KJV)
 - Prophecies referred to the charge given to Timothy when he was ordained into the ministry – a prophetic word describing his future ministry and the need for spiritual strength.
 - The Greek word translated as “good” means “noble” or “excellent,” i.e., the most important war he could fight.
 - The Greek word translated as “war” means “fight,” “battle,” “combat,” or “to contend with.”
- Spiritual warfare is not a skirmish that will be over quickly but a campaign every Christian must wage daily against a relentless enemy who will never give up until God destroys him forever.

- However, spiritual warfare cannot be fought at the human level or with human weapons. As Paul said in 2 Corinthians 10:4-5, ***“The weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God.”***
- The culture of evil in which we live is the earthly manifestation of the eternal campaign between God and Satan, between holy and unholy angels, and between godly and ungodly men.
- Without the spirit of discernment, we may find ourselves in the middle of a spiritual war without the weapons to fight it.

In Luke 14:31-32, Jesus asked His disciples, ***“What king, going to make war against another king, does not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand?”***

- Before we engage the enemy, we need to assess his strengths, discern his strategy, and the depth of his resources.
- Behind all of the godless rulers in our world today is the archenemy of God, Satan.
- In Ezekiel 28:12-19, while the King of Tyre was the human being addressed, God’s Words through the prophet were intended for Satan, the evil one behind the wicked king.
 - God created the most glorious angel of the heavenly host, who then, because of his jealousy, rebelled against God.
 - His name was Lucifer, which means “day star – the son of the morning,” who was in charge of the praise of heaven.
 - Lucifer was perfect in every way until “iniquity was found in him.”
 - He not only rebelled against God, which was the beginning of the spiritual warfare in which we are involved today, but he also led a third of the angelic host to rebel against God.
 - The Bible doesn’t explain why such a thing could happen since Lucifer was a perfect creature living in a perfect environment.
 - However, Ezekiel 28:16-17 says – ***“You became filled with violence – your heart was lifted up because of your beauty.”***
- In Isaiah 14:12-21, while the ungodly leaders of Babylon were the humans being addressed, God’s Word through the prophet was to the evil power behind the corrupt leaders.

- Because of his beauty and perfection, the intrinsic sin of PRIDE rose up in Lucifer's heart, and since God was his only rival, he became jealous of God and wanted equality with God.
- Notice the five "I WILLS" in verses 13-14: "***I will ascend into heaven. I will exalt my throne above the stars of God. I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds. I will be like the Most-High.***"
- Even though Lucifer was the leading angel, he wasn't satisfied with his lofty position – he wanted equality with God.
- So out of the sin of Satan's pride came the spiritual warfare in which we are engaged today, and it will not be over until he is "***brought down to Sheol, to the lowest depths of the pit.***" (Ezekiel 28:15, and Revelation 20:1-3)

Job is an example of how Satan wages spiritual warfare against an individual.

- Job was a very successful man who feared God and did his best to avoid evil. However, Satan and a group of his unholy angels told God that if He lifted His hedge of protection from Job, he would curse God to His face.
- God permitted Satan to attack Job in every way, but he could not take Job's life. Even though Job lost his health, his wealth, his children, the support of his wife, and the sympathy of his friends, he never lost his faith in the sovereignty of God, and because of that, God gave Job twice as much as he had before, and he blessed him with a long life.

In Revelation 12, the Apostle John described how Satan works in the world today and how he will be manifested in the future.

- Satan is manifested as a "dragon" to represent the systems of the Anti-God world government. The seven heads represent the imperial governments that rule the world. The ten horns represent the ten-nation confederacy of the revived Roman empire.
- John described how the dragon's tail drew a third part of the angelic host to rebel against God, and since the Bible does not tell us how many angels God created, we cannot know how many unholy angels are on the earth to obey Lucifer's commands.
- The woman is the nation of Israel, the sun and moon refer to Jacob and Rachel, the twelve stars refer to the twelve sons, i.e., the twelve tribes of Israel, and the Child to whom the woman is giving birth is the Messiah.
- Revelation 12:4b, "***The dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born.***"
- Since Genesis 3:15, Satan has tried to destroy our God-sent Savior.

- Having failed to prevent the Savior from being born, Satan has continued to fight against the Church: ***“Those who keep God’s commandments, and the testimony of Jesus Christ.”*** (Revelation 12:17)
- During the final days of the Tribulation, the Antichrist, who will be possessed of Satan, will gather the world’s armies to come against Jerusalem.
- However, as Jesus returns, He will ***“consume him with the breath of His mouth and destroy him with the brightness of His coming.”*** (2 Thessalonians 2:8)
- Finally, at the end of the Millennium, God will cast Satan into the bottomless pit called HELL, and our spiritual warfare will be over.