

A DIFFERENT KIND OF WAR



by Denny Kenaston

*We wrestle not against flesh and blood—
We wrestle against principalities,
against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world,
against spiritual wickedness in high places.
Eph. 6:12 (adapted)*



The Apostle Paul makes many references to war in his writings. He uses terms like enemy, soldier and warfare. He also clearly defines a *different kind of war* than what comes to the mind of the natural man. This *different kind of war* is the true, spiritual war that is behind all wars that mankind has fought. Man, because of his lack of knowledge, has played into the hands of an evil, unseen enemy whose goal has always been “to steal,

and to kill, and to destroy” (John 10:10). Oh how foolish men would feel if for only a few minutes the veil of the unseen spirit world could be pulled back. They would see how Satan is using them to kill and to mutilate their fellow men. They would see how he has used their own selfish desires to pit one against another. He gets them fighting over borders, money and power so that he can fill hell with the souls of men.

This is a very sad reality. We grieve over the losses and destruction that Satan has wrought behind the scenes. We shouldn't be too hard on our unconverted fellow humans. We are guilty of some of the same kind of ignorant employment. Believers in Jesus Christ do not see how many times they have also been used in this unseen war. There are often “wars and fightings among you” as in James chapter four. Brother is set against brother, and divisions occur among much needed troops. We Christians are sadly ignorant of the amount of activity we are involved in with evil spirits. Have you ever considered the possible number of evil spirits that have gone out into the world? Revelation chapter five mentions one hundred million angels

singing around the throne. If that number represents the two thirds of angels that did not rebel, then that leaves fifty million fallen ones loose on this earth. That won't put a demon behind every rock, but does reveal more of them than most of us ever think. These lying spirits whisper many things into the minds of God's people, turning them against each other.

My meditations go to one of my favorite testimonies in the Bible. I remember the account of unseen forces recorded in II Kings 6:8-17. The armies of Syria encompassed the city where Elisha was staying, waiting to kill him. The servant saw this formidable army in the morning and went in haste to tell his master of the dilemma. I love the prophet's sanctified response. He calmly reassured his servant, "They that be with us are more than they that be with them." Elisha knew the other war very well. It seems he could even see behind the veil at times. He very calmly prayed that God would open the eyes of his servant, so his servant could see some of the soldiers in the real war in the spirit world. *Lord, open our eyes that we may see beyond the realm of flesh and blood.*

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people have an imaginary idea of the war. It is more of a pseudo war. They know there is a war because the Bible says so, but they don't have a clue what this war is really all about. Our enemy has done this, lest we should see him and arise and overcome him. It seems silly to

me. We are in a war where we are promised victory, and most of us never engage the enemy.

As there are rules in every war, there are rules in this spiritual war. How are we going to fight? Have you ever heard of foot boxing? It is a way of fighting in which you only use your feet. If you are going to engage an enemy in foot boxing, then you must learn how to box with your feet. Those who choose this method of boxing practice and become very good at it. Why do they do this? Because they must learn to fight by the rules. Brothers and sisters, we are in a spiritual war. Like the foot boxer, we must acknowledge the rules revealed in scripture, master them and engage the enemy. I would like to give some definition to the warfare that is raging all around us. Let us consider our weapons, consider our enemy and his strategies. Then we can see clearer and enter into the battle.

A SPIRITUAL WAR

"For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)...." II Cor. 10:3-4

Every war has defined perimeters which help those fighting to know how to engage their enemy. It would be ridiculous to come against an army of tanks with rifles, or to march in full formation against people who are hiding behind rocks in the woods. Warriors must discern the battle lines and engage the enemy accordingly. This holds true in the spiritual war. Paul writes about spiritual weapons, spiritual armor and evil spirits who are our enemies. He also speaks about strategies which will aid us in overcoming this enemy. We are in a *different kind of war*. We must learn about this war and how to engage our enemy. So many times God's

THE ENEMY IN THIS SPIRITUAL WAR

Lucifer

He is a fallen archangel who rebelled against God Almighty. He is the god of this world and ruler over all that is evil. He is an unseen enemy who functions in the seen and unseen realms. He is a formidable foe and an enemy of all righteousness. His goal is to dethrone God Almighty in every way he can. He is a destroyer and has set himself to damn as many human beings as he can.

Wicked Spirits

These are fallen angels who followed Lucifer in his rebellion against God. They are called demons in the New Testament. They are filthy, unclean spirits who still serve their master as they did in the rebellion in heaven. They join with him to defy God in every way they can,

to damn the souls of men in perdition and destruction. These wicked spirits are also invisible to our eyes. They are given many different names in the Bible. Many times they are named according to their evil character.

Evil People

The Apostle Paul used the phrase “enemies of the cross of Christ” when he was warning the Church at Philippi of certain men. Many wicked humans are used by these unseen hosts to attack and destroy God’s work and His people. We must recognize this fact: we have enemies who walk in bodies. Remember, we do not war with them after the flesh. This is a different kind of war. Some of these humans know what they are doing, and some of them are very ignorant of how they are being used by the devil.

THE STRATEGIES OF THE ENEMY

He Uses Humans

As I stated above, our fellow human beings are used to attack us in a multitude of ways. Some attack us on purpose, and some don’t have a clue what they are doing. We must be alert to what they are doing, or we fall into the traps of our enemy. The prophet Daniel teaches us that in the last days our enemy will “wear out the saints.” Many times this is done by humans. There is a phrase that I have adopted and use often in the ministry. It has helped me to remember this strategy. I will often say to myself, “Don’t take it personally,” as I walk through the real world of ministry to my fellow man.

He is a Liar

This tactic is one of the enemy’s most subtle weapons against us. He lies! Jesus said, “He is a liar and the father of it.” He hasn’t changed a bit from the beginning when he said to Eve, “Yea, hath God said?” He takes the truth and twists it. He sends forth lying spirits to whisper in our ears. He uses people to speak to us and try to convince us to go the wrong way. We must remember that a lie has no power over us whatsoever, unless we foolishly believe it.

He is an Accuser

The Bible calls our enemy “the accuser of the brethren.” Oh, how he uses false condemnation to dis-

courage us from serving God! Many times he will cause us to sin and then beat us unmercifully with condemnation. He will say, “So you say you love God? You don’t love God. How could you and do such a thing?”

He Tempts Us

Our enemy wants us to sin and lose fellowship with God. He wants us to sin and bring reproach to the holy name of our God. He loves it when we fail and fall into sin. He uses all means to make this happen. Evil spirits will whisper suggestions to us. Evil people will live a tempting life before us. Some will even out-and-out try to convince us to live in sin. This is a great deception and is most destructive in a spiritual war. Remember the sin of Achan. It affected the whole of Israel.

He Uses Pride

This is his most powerful weapon. It is the very essence of his being. By pride he brought destruction on his own life. Many mighty warriors have fallen by pride. Oh, the foolish thoughts that he puts in the minds of men who have won victories over him!

THE WEAPONS OF OUR WARFARE

When we think of the word *weapon*, we usually think of weapons to attack with, like a knife or a gun. This is not always the case in the Bible. The Bible uses the word to describe offensive and defensive equipment. A sword would be an offensive weapon; a shield would be a defensive weapon. As soldiers in this war, we receive great courage when God says to us, “the weapons of our warfare are mighty through God.” This statement gives us tremendous insight into the nature of the war and the nature of our weapons. It puts our God in the center of the battle. Like the psalmist said, “through God we shall tread down our enemies.” Spiritual weapons, against an unseen enemy, make a *different kind of war*. Lets look at some of our weapons:

Prevailing Prayer

Our most powerful stance in this war is the kneeling position. A soldier learns very quickly that his stance, or stand, is very important. If he loses his footing, he is at a great disadvantage. Satan and his demons tremble at a kneeling, praying Christian. He knows that God answers prayer, and therefore he will do all he can to distract you

from this holy exercise. He is very happy when we get too busy in the battle to check our stance and set our footing again. Through prayer in the Spirit, we see the unseen enemy advancing.

The Word of God

God says that His Word is the Sword of the Spirit. This powerful weapon is used to pierce the enemy and tear down his lies. How foolish it is to go into the battle without a knowledge of the Bible. We must become students of the Word. This Word is “quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword.” We are also told that the Word is part of our defensive weaponry. We protect ourselves against the lies of the enemy by having the truth hidden in our hearts.

Fasting

This weapon is probably hell’s best kept secret. The fasting prayer breaks the yoke of bondage placed on the souls of men. Fasting brings spiritual alertness. As I reflect upon my own experiences and the results that came, I don’t see how we can even enter into the battle if we don’t practice fasting from time to time. I have observed that when God’s people begin to fast, you will soon see clear spiritual victories in the war.

The Name of Jesus Christ

Jesus was given a name that is above every name. As we consider the inner dynamics of this spiritual war, it is nice to know that we are on the winning side. I know sometimes it doesn’t seem that way, but that is because we don’t enter into the victory that we have in Christ. When our Lord Jesus went to the cross, He “spoiled principalities and powers.” The name of Jesus Christ is a mighty weapon to a Spirit-filled believer. These unseen forces must obey us who use this powerful name in the fear of God.

The Blood of Jesus Christ

We sing that there is power in the blood. Sometimes I’m not sure if we know what we are singing. The blood saves us, and the blood sanctifies us. The blood has opened the way for us warriors to stay in the presence of God, which is the key to victory. Revelation twelve says, “They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb.”

To Speak with Our Mouth

Revelation chapter twelve also says, “They overcame him by the word of their testimony.” In this we see the force we have against the enemy when we open up our mouth. The devil will fight you more on this point than any other. This is because God has ordained that people get saved when we preach the gospel to them. That means they make a change of kingdoms. This is the last thing that the dragon wants. Through our words the eyes of the blind are opened. Let us get aggressive and seek and save that which is lost.



STRATEGIES IN THE WAR

Humility

The devil has his devices. We must not be ignorant of them. Our enemy tries to derail us through pride. God’s counter strategy is lowliness of heart. Humility releases grace into our lives, which in turn gives us power over the enemy. I can not emphasize enough the need of a humble, dependent heart. Many times in my own life I have felt like I was fighting a battle all alone. In my desperation, I broke before God and cried for help. God was there, wisdom was there, and I knew what to do. Our loving, all-wise God designed the war in such a way that we depend on Him all the way through. The enemy cannot defeat us if we are humble.

Praise and Worship

Some may say, “This is a strange strategy to use in a war.” Yes, in a natural sense this is true. If you understand the rules of this war, you will see the power and anointing that comes when we praise and magnify our God. There are several examples in the Bible when the battle was won through singing. God gave this strategy to Israel. It had powerful results. It confounds the enemy and sends him running in every direction. It will cause our foes to fight each other.

The Power of Love

Satan is ultimate hate personified. He openeth not the house of his prisoners. The dear lost people of this world serve a very hard taskmaster. He rules by hatred

and fear. Nothing will open the eyes of the lost more than genuine, “lay-down-your-life” love. It is one of the rules of this war. We must learn to love at all times. When the battle is raging the highest, we must manifest more love. I wonder how many executors were converted because they looked into the face of a martyr and saw love shining back at him.

Endure Hardness

Suffering and self-denial is part of a soldier’s normal life. This is true with an earthly warrior. It is the same for us. We must arm ourselves with a mind to suffer. Soldiers do that. It is no problem for them to have some hard times. They expect it. We must put on this mind. We will overcome our foe as we “love not our lives unto the death.”

THE CHRISTIAN’S ARMOR

Paul the Apostle gives a list of our defensive weapons in Ephesians chapter six. We find protection in the heat of the battle in our armor. Paul pleads with us to put it on. I wonder how many Christian soldiers he watched fall in the day of battle. This is no make-believe war. The devil is playing for keeps. Many of those who call themselves God’s people view the world as a playground. In

reality, it is a battlefield. Souls are perishing all around us, all the time. When we consider this *different kind of war*, these pieces of armor become our very life. Loins girt with truth; heart covered with righteousness; feet shod with a motivation to go and preach; these are a defense for us. A shield of lively faith can stop the strongest fiery lies the enemy shoots at us.

CONCLUSION

This *different kind of war* is a vast subject. It can not be fully covered in as short of an article as this. My desire is to stir you up unto the war that lies ahead of you. We must become students of these strategies. A good soldier will study the battle before he engages his enemy. In Israel all the youth prepared for war. All men twenty years old and upward went out to war. The young men knew this, and it stirred them in their youth. They dreamed of the day when they could set out in battle array with the brethren. We must do the same. I don’t believe in killing my fellow man; however, I am not a pacifist. I am an activist. I see a *different war*. As Christians we need to be full of zeal and holy grit. We need to learn the rules, enlist in the war and serve our generation. Will you do it, my friend? Let us rise up and engage the enemy. We are well able, by the grace of God. ◻