

Spiritual Warfare

by David Ravenhill

To advance the kingdom of God, we must know something about the enemy and engage in spiritual warfare, using the weapons of our warfare, which are mighty through God.

Duration: 1:04:23

Scripture: Acts 13:11-12, Colossians 3:18

Topics: "Spiritual Authority", "Christian Obedience"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the importance of submission in various areas of life. He starts by emphasizing the need for children to obey their parents, as they are the authority placed over them by God. He then addresses fathers, urging them not to provoke or threaten their children, as God is watching and expects them to treat their children with respect. The preacher also talks about the concept of serving masters, encouraging slaves to be obedient not just outwardly, but from the heart, as they are ultimately serving God. Additionally, the sermon touches on the idea of tackling principalities and powers in the spiritual realm, highlighting the need for a corporate body to rise up and confront these forces. The preacher shares examples of individuals who have experienced breakthroughs in spiritual warfare through prayer and intercession.

Transcript

I was hoping we could just bask in the presence of the Lord all morning. Imagine what it's going to be like when we no longer see through a glass darkly, but face to face. I was thinking of Keith Green, wrote that song, Lord You're Beautiful.

He is buried just walking distance from where I live, and about just a few feet away from his tombstone is where my father's buried. And I would love to be there on resurrection morning. My dad loved the old hymns and taught Keith Green, Holy, Holy, Holy, that he sang.

He'd never heard it before. Came out of a sort of hippie background, didn't have the rich sort of heritage, but became one of his favorite songs, Holy, Holy, Holy. And now I can see them both on the front row in heaven, just singing away for all the world.

Amen. Let's just pray again. Hallelujah, thank you.

Thank you, Lord, there's going to be a day when those from every kindred, every tribe, every tongue, every nation are going to sing the song of Moses to the land. The Lord, that veil again is going to be removed. No longer again seeing you through a glass darkly, but face to face.

And all your beauty, all your majesty, all your holiness. Lord, not for an hour or two hours, but throughout all eternity. Lord, we ask again today that Lord you would come and unveil your word to us, Lord.

Open our eyes, open our understanding again, in Jesus' name, Amen. I trust this morning that I have the mind of the Lord. After a time of worship like that, it seems strange to talk about spiritual warfare.

But I want to speak to you this morning about spiritual warfare. It's an area that I have been interested in for, I guess, the best part of 25 years or more. It's an area that I have tremendous concerns about.

In the last 10, 15, 20 years there's been all sorts of strange doctrines, if you like, crop up, strange things around the realm of spiritual warfare that I grapple with, struggle over. But nevertheless, there is a battle that you and I are in. And I believe in order to advance the kingdom of God, we need to know something about the enemy.

The Bible says, we're not to be ignorant concerning his devices, his operations, his schemes. Let me begin by taking you to a passage of Scripture in 1 Samuel, chapter 13, verse 19 to 23. Now no blacksmith could be found in all the land of Israel.

For the Philistines said, lest the Hebrews make swords and spears. And so all the men of Israel went down to the Philistines, each to sharpen his plowshare, his mattocks, his axe, and his hoe. And the charge was two-thirds of a shackle for the plowshares, the mattocks, the forks, the axes, and to fix the hoes.

An interesting glimpse into the history of Israel on this particular occasion. The Philistines had concocted a plan that they carried out meticulously, whereby they went through the entire nation of Israel and systematically eliminated every blacksmith's shop. We don't have any more detail, as far as I know, than this.

I don't know how long it took them. I don't know how they did it. But the Bible says they did it.

And Israel, who was an agricultural nation, was rendered powerless when it came to looking after their agricultural implements. If something broke, they had to go down to the Philistines to get it repaired. If something needs sharpening, they had to go to the Philistines to get it sharpened.

If they wanted to buy a new plow or something, they had to go to the Philistines, because nobody was producing plows anymore, nobody was fixing them, nobody was looking after them. Every blacksmith's shop in the land of Israel was eliminated. But the strategy behind this was not simply to cripple the nation agriculturally.

The purpose behind it was to cripple the nation from their fighting power. Notice in verse 19, lest the Hebrews make swords and spears. The blacksmith's shop was not only the place where the agricultural implements were made, but it was a place where the weapons of war were fashioned.

It was a blacksmith who hammered out the shields and the spears and the daggers or whatever else they used. They were the ones that worked, again, in the iron and the steel. And all of this was in view of one thing, verse 22.

So it came about on the day of battle, that neither sword nor spear was found in the hands of any of the people who were with Saul and Jonathan. But they were found with Saul and his son Jonathan. So it came about on the day of battle.

Israel was powerless. There was not one single sword in all of Israel, apart from in the hand of the king and his son. I find that hard to believe, but that's what the Bible says, so I believe it.

So thorough was their elimination of the blacksmith's shop. On the day of battle, there was no fighting power in Israel. The blacksmith's shop today is the prayer meeting.

And the enemy concocted a plan long ago, whereby he moved through the house of God, the nation of Israel, if you like, spiritual Israel in that sense, and systematically eliminated the fighting power of the church. And so we can have congregations, you know, of thousands, hundreds, Sunday night meetings the same, midweek meetings, maybe a little less, and then the prayer meeting, just the king and his son, basically. A couple of old ladies, thank God for the old ladies and the intercessors, but nobody else.

And on the day of battle now, when the enemy is coming like a flood, when we see our young people ravished again by drugs and sex and everything else, and nations just falling apart before our eyes, Israel is powerless. We have to regain the fighting power. We have to get used to using the sword and the spear, the weapons of our warfare, and our carnal, but their mighty through God, to the pulling down of strongholds.

And so we want to look a little bit into some things concerning spiritual warfare. Matthew chapter 12, verse 22, "...there was brought to him a demon-possessed man who was blind and dumb, and he healed him, so that the dumb man spoke and he saw. And when all the multitudes were amazed, they began to say, this man cannot be the son of David, can he? And when the Pharisees heard it, they said, this man casts out demons only by Beelzebul, the ruler of demons.

And knowing their thoughts, he said to them, any kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, any city or house divided against itself shall not stand the importance of unity. And if Satan casts out Satan, he's divided against himself, how then shall his kingdom stand? And if I, by Beelzebul, cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast them out? Consequently they shall be your judges. But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

O how can one enter the strongman's house and carry off his property, unless he first bind the strongman, and then he will plunder his house?" Jesus did not say, as a last resort, we bind the strongman, but he says he must first bind the strongman, if he is going to destroy and carry off the strongman's goods. Everything Satan does is a replica, a copy, if you like, of what God does. And there are many parallels.

He has his doctrine, he has his apostles, he has his communion, he has his house, he has his kingdom, you know, you can go on and on. And just as we are God's house, and God is the great shepherd of the flock, and he watches over his own, likewise the enemy has his house, and he is, if you like, the false shepherd, but nevertheless he guards those who are under him. And he doesn't like anybody stealing, those that he has blinded, those that he's confused, those that he's got in bondage.

He protects his house. And the only way we will plunder that house is by, first of all, binding the strongman, Jesus said. Otherwise we will never carry off his property.

2nd Corinthians 4 and verse 4 says this, the God of this world is blinded, the minds of those that believe not, lest the light of the gospel should be revealed to them. And whether we are involved in mass evangelism, personal evangelism, door-to-door evangelism, child evangelism, the God of this world has blinded that person's mind for one reason, lest the light should penetrate. And so we're in a spiritual battle, whether you're praying for an unsaved loved one, a husband, a wife, a wayward child, a next-door neighbor, whatever, the God of this world has already blinded that person to keep the light from penetrating.

We are in a spiritual battle, no matter what type of evangelism we're concerned about. And certainly when it comes to reaching the nation, the enemy has blinded this nation. My brother, who is a missionary in South America, had the privilege of working for something like 10 or 12 years, with a man by the name of Brother Edward Miller, a friend of Les and Dot's down here.

I went to school with one of his sons. And Edward Miller now is in his, what, 70s at least, I imagine. But he was the father, the pioneer of the Argentine revival.

And what is going on in Argentina today, much of that can be accredited to this one man. He was in Argentina when that nation was a land of darkness, nothing was happening, very tough going. Catholicism literally bound the nation, witchcraft.

Peron was the president. His wife, Eva Peron, was involved in all sorts of satanic stuff. And God spoke to this man and said, there will never be a move of God in Argentina until the Prince of Argentina is bound.

This nation is governed by a principality. And then God said to him, if men can work eight hours a day, you can pray eight hours a day. And so along with some other intercessors, he began to wrestle against this principality, if you like, against these forces of darkness and spiritual wickedness in high places.

And at the end of something like six months, day after day of spending time in the presence of God and coming against these powers, there was a breakthrough. God suddenly broke through and opened the heavens over Argentina. Angels came to the Bible school.

There was all sorts of supernatural activity. God gave one man prophetic insight to where he was going to move, various cities and so on and so forth. He wasn't able to speak.

They finally figured out that he was supposed to write things out and so he wrote things out where God was going to begin to move. On the heels of that, an American evangelist by the name of Tommy Hicks, went down to Argentina just to take some meetings while he was there. Got impressed upon him that he was to get permission to use the great arena there in Buenos Aires, great stadium seating 50 or 60 thousand people.

People laughed at him, said you're crazy, you'll never get it. And so he decided that he would go and talk to Peron, the president of the nation. So he went to the pink house, as they call it, and was greeted at the gate by one of the guards.

And the guard was about to turn him away, asked him why he was there, why he wanted to see the president and so on. He explained he was evangelist. He believed in the power of God, the God that can heal and deliver and so on.

The man was sick, he prayed for him, he was instantly healed. He said, come back and I'll get you in to see Peron. Peron at that time was not seeing anybody.

He had some sort of, if I remember correctly, skin disease or something, eczema. Was not being photographed, not seen in public. But true to his word, when he went back, the guard was able to get him access into Peron's office.

He prayed for Peron, to cut a story short, he was healed. That opened the nation. He was able to get the arena there and they had possibly one of the greatest moves of God that we have seen in our century.

Tens of thousands of people saved, healings, miracles that took place and so on. That was the beginning of the Argentine revival that is still going on to this day. Because a man realized we don't wrestle against flesh and blood, we wrestle against principalities and palates, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

And so there are two realms of spiritual warfare. There's the minor leagues and the major leagues. Most of us know about the minor leagues because those are the conflicts we face ourselves, when the enemy comes and tempts us and so on and so forth.

But very few ever transition, if you like, into the major leagues. Ed Miller was an exception. But I believe in these last days, God is wanting to raise up, not individuals, but a corporate body that will tackle the principalities and palates.

And there's numerous ways of doing that, I believe. I believe what we've done this morning can be one way. Let God arise and his enemies be scattered.

That as we produce an atmosphere for God to inhabit, the powers of darkness cannot stand. And if we go into it knowing what we're doing, not just so this is a time of worship again, and there are certain songs and so on, I believe that we can make declarations to principalities and powers. But I want us to look at this idea, if you like, of the strongman for a while.

Turn with me to Mark chapter 5. We're going to look at a strongman over an individual, the strongman over a group of individuals, a strongman over a city and a strongman over a nation. In Mark 5 we have the story of the Gadarene demoniac. And you know the story, this man had incredible power.

They bound him with chains and so on. He was able to break those chains. Nobody was able to subdue him.

And he was crying out amongst the tombs. Jesus comes along, verse 9, and Jesus said to him, what is your name? And he said, my name is Legion, for we are many. And he began to entreat him earnestly not to send them out of the country.

Notice now, you have a spokesman. My name, singular, is Legion, we are many. A Legion was somewhere around five to six thousand troops, under the command of some sort of a general.

And in the spiritual realm, obviously there's a hierarchy, if you like. And this man is the captain, if you like. He is the one in charge, my name is Legion, but we are many, under me, under my ranks, under my authority.

There are thousands. We know that of course, because when they were cast out, there were two thousand head of swine, that each received at least one, maybe half a dozen, I don't know. But certainly

there were two thousand demons in one man.

And the one in charge again, Legion, and he's the one that begins to entreat and sort of become the spokesman. He entreated him, Jesus, earnestly, not to send them out of the country. And so he was pleading, if you like, on behalf of his troops.

And so here is a strong man over an individual. We go into the book of Acts, Acts chapter 13, and we have a situation here where Paul is making his way through the island of Paphos. And word reaches one of the political figures, one of the provincial governors, and he summons Paul and Barnabas.

He wants to hear about the Word of God. And so it says in verse 6, when they had gone through the whole island of Paphos, they found a certain magician, a Jewish false prophet, who was named Bar-Jesus, who was with the pro-council, Sergius Paulus, the pro-council, simply a provincial governor, mayor, if you like. And it says, this man, the pro-council, summons or called Barnabas and Saul, because he wanted to hear the Word of God.

It's not very often that the phone rings, and some political authority is on the other end, asking you if you would make your way down to his office, because he wants to hear the Word of God. That's a rarity, isn't it? This is not just a next-door neighbor, this is a man that's got tremendous clout, if you like, tremendous power, tremendous authority. But he's heard about a greater authority, and he wants to know about it.

And so Barnabas and Saul respond. Now notice, he is open to the gospel. He wants to hear the Word of God.

He initiated this. He is the one that is interested. But along with him, we have a magician.

And it says, but where verse 8, but Elamus the magician, for thus his name is translated, was opposing them, seeking to turn the pro-council away from the faith. So here you have a battle right now. A man that is open, he's receptive, he's interested in receiving the Word of God.

You've got spiritual opposition in the form of this magician, who is standing opposing, seeking to confuse, seeking to turn this man away from the faith. And we don't know again the time that goes by here, but after a while it dawns on Paul that he's up against some demonic strategy. And in verse 9, Saul, who was known as Paul, filled with the Holy Ghost, fixed his eyes upon him, or his gaze upon him, and said, you who are full of all deceit, you fraud, you son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease to make crooked the straight ways of the Lord? Now Paul was the one that was speaking, and yet somehow this man is interjecting, and everything that Paul is trying to make straight, this man perverts and makes crooked, and brings confusion to the simplicity and the clarity with which Paul is speaking.

Here is an apostle, here is a man with incredible authority, and yet there is another authority there that is distorting and twisting what is straight. And Paul says, how long? In other words, a period of time has gone by, and finally Paul realizes this guy that's sitting here, maybe keeping his mouth shut or whatever, you know, once in a while opening it, this man is a plant of the enemy, if you like. And everything I'm trying to make direct, and simple, and straightforward, is being twisted and made crooked.

And so he says, you are a son of the devil, you're an enemy of all righteousness, how long are you going to make crooked the straight ways of the Lord? And now, verse 11, behold the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you'll be blind and not see the sun for a time. And immediately a midst and a darkness fell upon him, and he went about seeking those who would lead him by the hand. Then the procounsel believed,

when he saw what had happened, and being amazed at the teaching of the Lord.

You see the strong man had to be bound. Then the procounsel believed. He believed for two reasons.

First of all, because he saw a greater demonstration of power, number one. But then he became amazed at the teaching of the Lord. That teaching that before was crooked, and perverted, and twisted, because of this man that didn't make sense.

All of a sudden became clear and wonderful. I'll never forget when my wife and I were first married, we again had the privilege of working in New York City with David Wilkerson. And our first assignment at Gene Challenge was to work with David's mother, Mum Wilkerson we called her.

And she ran a coffee shop in the heart of Greenwich Village, right in the heart of Manhattan down there in Greenwich Village where Barbara Streisand and all these stars had their beginnings. And those days it was back in the sort of beatnik era. LSD was just coming on the scene and so on, and we had this sort of subterranean coffee shop on MacDoodle Street, one of the main streets.

And we would serve free coffee and doughnuts. And people would come in, especially in the winter, we'd have upwards of 200 people a night, from about 7 till midnight. And I'll never forget one night being there, and a couple of men came down.

We had tables, it was all painted black, the place, and flagstone flooring, little coffee tables. And a couple of guys came, sat down at my table. We had sort of people at various tables, and I began talking to them.

They were totally, seemingly open to the gospel. One of them in particular kept asking all the right questions. He seemed to have a sincerity about him.

A little while later, a couple of other guys came down, joined the table, because they could just sit wherever they wanted. And one of them in particular kept interjecting, what about this, and what about that, and so on and so forth. And after a while, it was so confusing.

I mean, I knew he was not sincere. He was just there to try and, you know, trap me and twist the Scriptures and so on and so forth. And I remember in that moment, it doesn't always happen like this, but I just simply looked at the man without uttering a word, and I took authority, and I said, in the name of Jesus.

I didn't point my finger, but I just looked at him, and I said, you know, underneath my breath, I take authority over you, and I bind you, Satan, and all your confusion. And within about 30 seconds, he sort of stretched his head, and he said, I forgot what I was going to say, and sort of handed that conversation back. See, we need to recognize the God of this world is blinded.

And as soon as the obstacle, the opposition, he was opposing the gospel. And the moment it was removed, immediately, the man believed. Over into Acts 19.

So you can have a strong man, if I can use this expression in a sort of a loose way, over an individual. You can have a strong man over a company of individuals, because he had influence even over Paul for a while, and certainly over this man. But then you can have a strong man over a city.

Acts 19 deals with Paul's time in Ephesus. And as you know, in Ephesus, there was tremendous occult activity. Paul, writing, is it to the Corinthians, says that, there is a wide and effectual door of ministry open

to me in Ephesus, but there are many adversaries.

So he says, while there is a tremendous opening, there is tremendous opposition in Ephesus. And Paul, of course, has a wonderful time. We can read about it there from 17 to 20.

Verse 18, many of those who kept coming, were confessing and disclosing their practices. Many of those who practiced magic, brought their books together, began burning them in the sight of all. They counted up the price, and found it to be 50,000 pieces of silver.

I once figured that out to be about 140 years wages. Can't remember how I did it now, but anyway, a denarii, a common copper coin, was a day's wages. And you have 50,000 pieces of silver.

It shows you the magnitude of the occult, the witchcraft, the magic that was going on in one city. On one occasion, one bonfire, 50,000 pieces of silver. Imagine what that translates to in today's language.

50,000, maybe silver dollars, 50,000 shillings, I don't know. But 2,000 years ago, that is a lot of money. Still is.

And so there is this darkness that hangs over the city of Ephesus. Why? Because the city of Ephesus was the guardian of the goddess Diana, or Artemis, depending on the translation. And people are getting saved, and there is an uproar in the city of Ephesus.

All the silversmiths get together, because they are losing their trade. People are not buying their little shrines, and their little goddesses. You see, Ephesus was the center of worship for this goddess Diana.

They believed there was a time in their history, somewhere in the past, where this goddess came down out of heaven, and established her throne in the city of Ephesus. And such was her power, it says in verse 27, when these silversmiths got together, not only is there danger that this trade of ours fall into disrepute, but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis, or Diana, be regarded as worthless. And she whom all of Asia and the world worship, should be dethroned from her magnificence.

This goddess had a worldwide impact. All of Asia and the world were under the power of this goddess. And people would come from the surrounding nations, to worship here in Ephesus.

And they would buy, again, their little shrines and copies, I guess, of the temple of the goddess, and go back and bow down, make their grottos or whatever, and bow down to them, and so on. So the silversmiths are in an uproar, because of Paul's teaching and preaching. And so they rally the troops in the city, and there is an uproar for three hours.

They cry out, great is Artemis, great is Artemis, great is Artemis. They pledge their loyalty. Declare again, as we would declare, he is Lord.

They were declaring she is Lord. And finally the crowd is shouting, and then the town clerk stands up in verse 35, it says, and after quieting the multitude, the town clerk said, men of Ephesus, what men is there after all, that does not know that the city of the Ephesians is the guardian of the temple of the great Artemis, or Diana of the image which fell down from heaven. So she was the guardian.

She had her throne there. Again, they believe that she came down and she resided in Ephesus. No wonder then, Paul says, there is a wide and effectual door, but there is incredible opposition.

Another place, he says, I fought with wild beasts of Ephesus. Some people believe that those wild beasts were principalities and powers that transformed themselves into wild beasts. I know of missionaries.

We have a man that we have sent our teams to in Pensacola, down into Mexico, David Hogan, who has had something now like a hundred cases of people being raised from the dead. Quite a remarkable man. His lifestyle is to fast two days, eat one day, fast two days, eat one day, fast two days, eat one day.

That's his lifestyle. Why? Because he's in an area of Mexico where there is incredible darkness. He said, it is not uncommon for these warlocks to go into a cave and fast for 40 days and come out with supernatural power, where they can levitate, where they can walk across caverns and so on, and do all sorts of things.

And he has stories I've never read about in any books on spiritual warfare, stories that will make your hair curl. And he says, when you confront these principalities or these warlocks, you don't have time to run back and say, oh well, I'm not quite right with God. Give me a couple days to pray and fast.

He says, you have to live a lifestyle of prayer and fasting in order to equal them in their authority, so to speak, because they are so dedicated to what they're doing. I could tell you stories that he tells. Send shivers up and down your spine.

And he has seen demons manifest themselves in the form of beings. I remember Nicky Cruz. He was still at Teen Challenge when we were there, when we were first married.

His mother used to be some sort of involved in witchcraft in Puerto Rico, and he said it wasn't uncommon to see cats and dogs come flying through the house, sort of screaming and yelping and so on. Again, manifestations of demonic entities. And when Paul says, I fought with wild beasts of Ephesus, it's possible that all of hell broke loose.

I have a friend who has been a missionary in Italy for many, many years. Something like, what is it now, maybe 18, 19 years. Moved his family there.

He's not a funny guy at all. By funny, I mean, you know, he's not so strange when it comes to the things of the Spirit. He's very straight sort of a guy.

And one day he was walking across the Vatican grounds, and there was a shadow that went over him, and initially I thought, that's funny, and didn't think too much about it. A moment later, there was another shadow, and he sort of looked around, and thought, that's strange. There's no building sort of casting a shadow.

There's no cloud that would form a shadow. And a moment later, he went a little bit further, and again, the shadow, and he looked up, and here was this huge winged being. Hideous sort of thing.

And God said to him, this is what you're up against. Spiritual wickedness in high places. And so here in Ephesus, Paul confronts again, some of his greatest opposition.

We'll come back to this in a moment. Let's turn to the book of Daniel. We have a nation, oh sorry, a city now, that is under the authority, if you like, of this goddess Diana.

The influence of this goddess, that has got all this city now, in witchcraft, and occult, where they're burning finally their magic books, and confessing that they've been involved in all sorts of activities. Now you have a nation. Daniel chapter 10.

In this chapter, Daniel has been seeking God for revelation, and he has set aside some time. Verse 2, in those days, I Daniel had been mourning for three entire weeks. I did not eat any tasty food, nor did meat or wine into my mouth, nor did I use ointment at all, until the entire three weeks were completed.

So he's fasting, he's praying, he's seeking God, he set time aside. And finally, verse 10, behold a hand touched me, and sent me trembling on my hands and my knees. And he said to me, O Daniel, man of high esteem, understand the words I'm about to tell you.

Stand upright, for I've been sent to you. When he spoke this word, I stood up trembling. And he said to me, do not be afraid, Daniel.

Now this is an angel. Do not be afraid, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart on understanding this, on humbling yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to your words. From the first day, and I have come in response to your words.

And yet Daniel tells us he's been fasting and praying for three weeks, and it is at the end of the three weeks that the angel comes, and yet the angel began his journey on day one. God responded to the prayer of this wonderful man of God, commissioned his angel with all the details that Daniel was looking for, and yet the angel takes three weeks. I don't know if that proves conclusively that males, that angels are males and they're afraid to ask directions.

I don't know if angels get broken wings. Now you see, there is a reason. But, verse 13, but the prince of the kingdom of Persia was withstanding me.

The margin says in my Bible, literally standing opposing, or standing opposite. There is opposition. Where is Daniel? He's in Babylon.

Where is Babylon? He's in the kingdom of Persia, and in that kingdom there is a prince, the prince of the kingdom of Persia. Was not interested in seeing the advance of God's kingdom, was not interested in any of God's men receiving insight and revelation. This is my territory, this is my kingdom.

You can't get in here, you can't come in here, I'm going to oppose you. And so angel, you're not coming into my kingdom. And so the angel sends a message back to the throne, and God sends Michael.

Verse 13 again, but the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me 21 days. Then behold Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me. For I had been left there with the kings of Persia.

So there's a prince of Persia, there are kings of Persia. Again, I don't have revelation on all of that, other than these are spiritual beings. Verse 14, now I've come to give you understanding of what will happen to your people.

This is what Daniel's looking for. Verse 20, then he said to me, do you understand why I came to you? Now I shall return to fight against the prince of Persia. So I am going forth and behold, the prince of Greece is about to come.

Interesting insight here, this is one of the few cases in the Word of God, if not the only one, where you have a little glimpse behind the scenes over nations, as to what goes on over nations. The Bible, of course, in Ephesians tells us that there is spiritual wickedness in high places, and this angel says, listen I'm going back, because there is a battle going on. You see, just as this angel called in reinforcements,

seemingly God sent Michael, one of the chief princes, to deal with another chief prince.

So the prince of Persia sends word to the prince of Greece, hey you're not doing much today, we've got a warfare going on here, our kingdom's at stake, I need help. And so in comes the prince of Greece, to reinforce the battle. I share this, because I know there's a lot of teaching that says, the way you discover your principality over your city or region, whatever, is to go to the library, spend hours and hours and hours, as to why your city was established.

Easy to do in America, because nothing's much more than a hundred years old. England's a little tougher, isn't it? You know, you don't know whether you start at the Bronze Age, the Ice Age, or where you go. Believe me, I suffered during English history.

You know, it goes back forever, doesn't it? So never. Then moved to Ireland, and suffered through Irish history, moved to America, suffered through American history, and hated history ever since. But anyway, too many dates, too many dead people, too many facts and figures.

You know, give me geography, something present, I enjoy it. But they will tell you that, you know, maybe, you know, your city is built on some Indian burial ground, or some, you know, Nordic burial ground, or there was some great atrocity, or this happened, or that happened. And I'm not totally discounting that, but you see, if you were doing research on this occasion, it's pretty hard to come up in the local library, with the fact that the prince of Greece is about to come.

That's tomorrow's headlines. That isn't found in any archives, that's not found in any history book. That takes true discernment.

The prince of Greece is about to come. You can research all day long about the Kingdom of Persia, but it doesn't help you find out. Now it is a possibility that this can be looked at two ways, and that is, following the Kingdom of Persia, we have the Kingdom of Greece coming.

And so there's insight into what is going to happen. But you see, there are principalities, if you like, that can be in an individual, strongman, that can influence a group of individuals, that can influence a city, that can influence a nation. I tell people in America, that I was born here, still travel on a British passport, believe it or not, I've never renounced my British citizenship.

Britain never, never, no. Got to be careful in America. But I tell them that England, or the United Kingdom, is made up of England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales.

And I said, Wales is really called the Principality of Wales. You know that, Americans don't. Isn't that right? That's its rightful name, the Principality of Wales.

And the prince over that principality, is Prince Charles. That's his legal title, Prince Charles, Prince of Wales, or Prince of the Principality of Wales. And so a principality is a geographical area governed by a prince.

And not only can that be true, of course, in the natural, but in the spiritual realm, principalities. And here you have, if you like, a principality, a kingdom. This is my kingdom.

I'm going to oppose. I'm not going to let you in. I don't want revelation coming in here.

I don't want an open heaven here. This is my kingdom. I'm the Prince of Persia.

Let's go back now to Ephesians, Ephesians chapter 6. And out of all the churches that Paul established, out of all the places that Paul moved as an apostle, church planter, and out of all the letters he wrote to those churches, it's interesting that it was to the Ephesians more than anybody else that he deals with spiritual warfare. Why was that? Because there is great opposition here. There is a wide and effectual door of ministry, but I've run into the greatest opposition in Ephesus that I have in any city.

Greater than Corinth, greater than this, greater than that, and so on. And so he deals then in his letter to the Corinthians, and he says, listen, we don't wrestle flesh and blood. We're not up against town clerks.

We're not up against silversmiths. We're not up against just the gods at the temple of this goddess, people that sell things on the road, and so on and so forth. No, it's bigger than that.

There are principalities and powers. There is this spiritual wickedness over this city. That's what we're fighting against.

That's what we're wrestling against. Now it's interesting that there is a division in chapter 6, and so we have two separate thoughts. And for many, many years I responded one of two ways, especially as a child when I heard somebody stand up in my father's church and say, you know, tonight I want to have you turn to Ephesians 6. I thought, uh-oh, children obey your parents.

Here it comes. And then later it used to be, oh, we wrestle not against flesh and blood. And two things sprung to mind, you know, kids obeying their parents, and so on, and spiritual warfare.

And I thought, what do the two have in common? Nothing at all. Paul is in the middle of, you know, writing this seemingly. Maybe his candle's getting low, or his parchment's running out, or something.

And he finally thinks, boy, I don't have much time left. I better, well finally, and he sort of shifts gears and moves into something else. But one day, I was musing on this many years ago, and I realized that there is a progression that is building here.

In other words, the first part of Ephesians 6, in fact the latter part of Ephesians 5. Keep in mind, of course, this was a letter, so there was no real chapter divisions or verse, verses. But Paul is leading up to something, and there is a direct correlation to what he says prior to finally be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of his might, and what there is before. You see, before this, he speaks about submission.

Verse 22, wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. Husbands, love your wife, and so on. And so he deals with this whole area of submission to authority.

Wives, submit to your husbands. But then God always protects the underdog, if I can use that expression. And He says, hey guys, you are not the final authority, I am, so make sure you love her the way I love the church.

Easy for a wife to submit, when she's treated the way Jesus treated the church. He gave Himself up for her. He loved her with an everlasting love, and so on.

Many, many years ago, of course, there was all of this distorted teaching on submission, that basically made the wife out to be nothing more than a doormat, and the husband had supreme command, and she was nothing. And there was one of these men, you know, that had this distorted concept, and he, you know, was thundering away about the man's role, and position, and headship, and so on, and so forth.

And you know, the man was nudging his wife, making sure she got this, and didn't fall asleep during this important message.

And when he got home, he says, you know, I don't ever want you to forget who's boss around here. Drew back his fist, hit her as hard as he could. He said, I'm in charge, don't ever forget it.

And after that, he didn't see his wife for two weeks. And then he could only just see her out of one eye. But this is not the, I know it's mid-morning, and you're getting tired, but Paul deals here again, with the area of submission.

And then he goes right in, of course again, there's no chapter divisions to deal with children. Children, you obey your parents. They are the authority that God has placed over you.

And then to protect the children, the underdog, if you like, God says, and listen, Dad, don't threaten, don't provoke. I'm watching you, you're not the final authority, I am. I'm over you.

And so, treat those kids with the respect that they deserve. Don't get mad at them, don't provoke them, because I'm keeping track. And then he says, slaves, you be obedient to your masters.

Not just by way of eye service, as men please, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. In other words, serve your master, because ultimately you're serving me. Show them what it means to be a true believer.

Show them how you can submit, how you can do it, not just because you have to do it, but with genuine pleasure. Masters, he says, you're not the final master, I am. So master, do the same things to them, verse 9, give up threatening, knowing that both their master and yours is in heaven, and there's no partiality.

It's all going to be level ground, Jesus is saying here at the cross. That servant and you as a master are going to be absolutely equal in eternity. So treat him with respect, don't threaten him, don't beat him, so on and so forth, obviously treating, talking to masters in the church, and slaves in the church.

And then Paul says, finally be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of his might. And now he deals with spiritual warfare. What's the significance? It's very significant that we understand submission to authority, if we're going to be effective in spiritual warfare.

You see the devil one day said, I'm tired of being number two, I want to be number one. I'm tired of submitting, I'm going to take my throne, and I'm going to put it over your throne God. After all, I've got all this wisdom, all this beauty, and so on and so forth.

And I could run the shows better than you could. And I'm going to take my authority, and I'm going to usurp your authority. And of course, we know what happened, he became the devil.

And so Paul deals with submission to authority before he deals with spiritual warfare. Why? Because if there is an ounce, a smidgen of rebellion in you, towards your husband, towards the authority structure over you, you have already aligned yourself with the enemy. Therefore, you cannot effectively wage warfare against him when you've already sided with him.

The Bible doesn't say, resist the devil, he'll flee from you. It says, submit yourself to God, resist the devil, he'll flee from you. And Paul deals so often with submission before he deals with prayer.

In Colossians, we have the same list in chapter 3. Wives, be subject to your husband's husband, love your wife. Children, be obedient to your parents. Fathers, don't exasperate your children.

Slaves, be obedient to your masters, and so on. Verse 4, masters grant your slaves justice. So chapter 4, verse 1, he goes right on.

Verse 2, devote yourself to prayer. All of this chain of command stuff. Then devote yourself to prayer.

1 Peter chapter 5, Paul talks there, in verse 5, you young men likewise, be subject to your elders, and all of you clothe yourself with humility towards one another, for God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Humble yourself under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you, casting all of your anxiety upon him. So we humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God.

Verse 8, be sober. Be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, goes about as a roaring lion, but resist him.

How do you resist him? First of all, by submitting yourself to God. You see, time after time, submission, then the enemy. Submission, then prayer.

It's absolutely essential. I had a phone call while I was in Pensacola one day, from a gentleman who I didn't know, and he asked me why I was there in Pensacola, what I thought of it. Had that question many times, because my father's writings on revival, and you know, is this a real revival, what's going on down there, and so on.

And this man said, he said, well the reason I asked, he said, I've had a number of preacher friends, at least two, three I believe he said, but let's say two, so I don't exaggerate. And he said, they've had their churches destroyed, because of this move of the Spirit. I pricked up my ears, he began to go on, and basically this was the essence of what he told me, that his churches were destroyed because of intercessors.

And what happened, these ladies went to Pensacola, or some other place, Toronto, wherever, and they came back seeing the move of God, and seeing the wonderful things that were happening, and so on, so forth, and wanted to see their church experience the same. And so, you know, rallied some of their friends around, and began to pray, all out of sincerity, God, send revival to this church, send the move of God, Lord. Lord, we're dead, we're dry, you know, we need something, we need life, there's death everywhere, and blah, blah, blah.

And after a while of praying, and this is again incremental over a long period of time, we need to understand that didn't happen in 24 hours. As they began to pray, you know, God would quicken things to them, and then they go to the pastor and share it. And the pastor, of course, wasn't on the same wavelength, not having been to one of these places, and so on, and so, sort of, didn't maybe do what they thought he should do.

And so, you know, they said, Pastor, we really believe, you know, God's going to move, and da-da-da, you know. And again, the weeks went by, and the pastor didn't seem to do anything, and then they came, you know, they were getting words, and Pastor, you know, I believe we're supposed to, you know, call, you know, a couple of days of prayer and fasting, or whatever, again, all out of sincerity, and, you know, we've got to have revival, we've got, you know, again, nothing. And the weeks would go by again, they'd be praying earnestly, and then they go to the pastor once again, and maybe the pastor didn't do anything about it, and so, aha, the pastor's the problem.

So then the prayers, again, very sincerely turn to, Lord, open his eyes, Lord, soften his heart, he doesn't get it, Lord, he doesn't understand how dead this church is, and so on, Lord, we pray for our pastor, bless him, Lord, and blah, blah, blah. You know, again, go to the past, Pastor, we want you to know we're praying for you, we're asking God, you know. Again, seemingly the pastor wasn't responding the way they thought he should, and now, because of the amount of time, the pastor is obviously the blockage.

So, Lord, you know this man is standing in the way, Lord. We don't want Ichabod written over our church, Lord, we're asking you to remove this man. And then the transition, you see, to no longer submitting to authority, oh, very subtle.

And now we are opposing this man. We're no longer seeking to help him, we're no longer going to be servants, we're now going to work against the system. And so now, you know, we're going to have some meetings in our home, and we're going to pray for that particular man, and you know, the elders, and the board, who just, you know, and then they began to hear from God.

Oh, I don't think the same God that they were praying to a little while ago, because now there's rebellion, subtle, but rebellion. And now they're receiving all sorts of things, because now they've transitioned over into the enemy's camp, and then it was sort of come out from among them and be a separate. Oh, by the way, we're having a Friday night meeting, where we're going to believe God to move and have freedom and liberty that we don't have, you know, under Brother Jones's ministry.

That was the essence, really, of what he told me. Very easy, isn't it? Submit yourself to God, resist the devil, and he will flee from you. We've got to learn how to maintain, again, an attitude of submissiveness.

It's like David under Saul. If there was ever a guy that could have usurped, he'd been anointed. He had the prophetic word, the mandate, that I'm not going to touch God's anointed.

These men, this man, in the case of Saul, God placed him there. I may disagree with what he does, and so on and so forth, but God placed him there. I'm not going to touch God's anointed.

So, we've got to learn, again, the importance of submission. Our time has gone, and I have much to say, but maybe that's where we need to end it. Let me just say this, that the key that I find, all the way through the Word of God, to effective spiritual warfare is a holy life, an obedience to God, and I am greatly concerned, as I said, about all the trimmings and all the, you know, additions that we've brought in now to spiritual warfare, that you've got to visit a particular location, and not only a location, but an elevation in order to be effective, that if you can take two weeks off and spend five thousand dollars, and sort of go to Timbuktu to pull down the, you know, some particular queen or something, you can't do it in your own closet, and we have added to the atonement now, location, location, location, elevation, elevation, elevation.

I taught a little bit on prayer when I was at the Bible school in Pensacola, and they asked me if I would assign the students a book, and so I assigned them Reese Howells' Intercessor. They'd never read it before, one of the greatest classics, of course, Reese Howells, who was used in such a wonderful way of driving back Hitler, and the whole war machine that was going to devour this nation, and I don't think he was the only one, of course, but he was certainly a man that gave himself to praying, and you see, according to this theology, he would have been far more effective if he could have got into Germany to pray. After all, it can't really be effective praying in Wales, when the principality is in Germany.

You see, I thought that you went into your closet, and you touched the throne of God. That was the way I was raised. I mean, it's simple, but I sort of, you know, grew up that way.

Now we've complexed it all, you know. Now we've got to not only go there, but we've got to find some high place. Now we've got to do research into the city.

Now we've got to find all the entry points where the enemy came in, and that works in America, because, you know, in 60, 80 years, it's pretty easy to find out if there was a little bit of bloodshed here and there, but imagine going to Jerusalem, or Rome. We've got 2,000 years of history. Oh, this is where, you know, Pontius Pilate did this.

We'd better cleanse that area. This is where, you know, Herod did this, and we'd better cleanse that area, and this is where Judas betrayed the Lord. We'd better cleanse that area, and this is where Peter denied the Lord, and we'd better cleanse that area, and, you know, I mean, you've got 2,000 years of history, and 2,000 million entry points, if there are such things.

I don't know. And how you deal with all of those, I don't know, but you can spend a lifetime running around, and I thought the Bible says that we can get on our face before God, and we can pray, and the fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much, and now we have intercessory groups in America taking communion to the corners of the state, and having communion, and bearing the emblems in the corners of the state to ward off, and it's getting weirder and weirder and weirder, at least in America, and everybody's in. You see, when it talks about Jezebel, she taught the deep things of Satan, and there is an intrigue that comes in spiritual warfare that everybody's trying to outdo somebody else, and sort of revelation into all these deep things, and all sorts of things are surfacing, so that spiritual warfare now has nothing to do with your relationship to God.

It's all external. If I wave a banner a certain way, the demons stop flying. It doesn't matter what condition my heart's in.

If I blow the shofar long enough and loud enough, the demons are going to take off. It's all external. If I go to a state, and I take communion and bury the emblems, again, you know, if I can find research into the background of this, if I can climb up some tower, you know, if I can reconcile with this group because of the atrocities that my forefathers did, so like, you know, baptism for the dead, now it's reconciliation for the dead.

Let's face it, if I can ask forgiveness for the sins of my forefathers, then why don't we just have one great rally and forgive Eve? See, logically, logically you can. If you can go back a hundred years, you can go back two hundred years, you can go back five hundred years, you can go back a thousand years. Why don't we go back to the beginning? Just, let's put it all right.

Then now we have the redemptive value of cities. You know, God's got a redemptive value for your city. Yet God said to them, go in and annihilate, burn the cities in the Old Testament.

Do we go back now to Egypt and apologize that we were responsible for all the firstborn dying? What an atrocity. Tens of thousands of firstborn. Oh, we represent the church, you know, spiritual Israel.

We're sorry for what we did to you Egyptians, you know. We're sorry you lost all, you know. I mean, where'd you stop? And it gets more and more intriguing, doesn't it? But there was one simple law in the Old Testament.

Walk in obedience to me. Let me close with it, and then we will close. Otherwise, you'll get me going.

Psalms, Psalm 81, verse 13. Oh, that my people would listen to me, that Israel would walk in my ways, I would quickly subdue their enemies and turn my hand against their adversaries. Oh, that my people would listen to me, that Israel would walk in my ways, obedience.

I would quickly subdue their enemies. I will turn my hand against their adversaries. My father said to me as a young man growing up, he said, David, God's problem in the Old Testament was never with the Hittite and the Perizzite and the Jebusite, was never with the nations.

That was never a problem with God. It was always with Israel. And when Israel was right, no weapon formed against them was possible.

Absolutely none. Didn't matter if they were outclassed, outnumbered by the millions. As we saw last night, when you go out to battle, you encounter armies more numerous than you and don't, don't be afraid.

That's why the Bible says the weapons of our, the weapons of righteousness for the left hand and the right hand, the breastplate of righteousness. In righteousness, he wages war. His throne is established on righteousness.

You and I have authority, but one will chase a thousand and two ten thousand. And there is a collective power that God gives when we are right with God, right with one another in a place of holiness, that we can advance the kingdom of God. We can open up heavens, I believe, over cities where God can begin to move and the blinders are lifted.

And the God of this world can no longer bind and blind the eyes of those that believe not. And one of those things is praise and worship. The warfare of praise and worship, with high praises of God in our mouth, sharp two-edged sword in our hand, to bind nobles and kings with fetters of iron.

Bible says in the Psalms, he will subdue nations under our feet. Not just cities. Oh, I know I'm speaking out of, not of out of experience now, out of anticipation.

That one day we'll have a body of believers that will get together and be, as we heard last night, the church. And because of the righteousness and the holiness and the godliness of that church, no weapon formed against it will prosper. And these are they that turn the world upside down, will be repeated once again.

And they've come here as well. They're advancing up the nation, advancing over to Europe, a company of people who in righteousness they wage war.

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