

Spiritual Warfare

I. Introduction

There are many false notions of who God really is, and what is His true nature. Some think of God as a non-personal god who exists in every living thing. Others regard God as a type of comic Santa Claus that hands out goodies based on whether one is naughty or nice. Still others consider God as a type of Heavenly Father, who they relate to as they do their own fathers, which can be good or bad. Jesus pointed out that God is our Heavenly Father who is good. But there is another side to God which most people do not comprehend: He is a God of war.

Ex 15:3-4 The LORD is a man of *war*: the LORD is his name. 4Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea: his chosen captains also are drowned in the Red Sea.

LORD-Strong's 3068-self-Existent or Eternal; Jehovah Jewish national name of God

War-Strong's 4421-battle, fighting

Josh 10:8, 11-13 8And the Lord said unto Joshua, Fear them not [Amorites]: for I have delivered them into thine hand; there shall not a man of them stand before thee... 11And it came to pass, as they fled from before Israel, and were in the going down to Beth-horon, that *the Lord cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah, and they died: they were more which died with hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword.* 12Then spake Joshua to the Lord in the day when the Lord delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon. 13And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies.

A facet of God's personality includes being a man of war. He fought for Moses and the Israelites against the Egyptian Pharaoh at the Red Sea, and for Joshua and the Israelites against the Amorites, as well as countless other battles in their history. As the Israelites fell away from the Lord, He would chasten them with drought, famine, pestilence, and especially with enemies who warred against them.

II. Testing of the Israelites

God left some of the enemies of the Israelites in the land to test them.

Jud 3:1-4 Now these are the nations which the Lord left, to prove [test] Israel by them, even as many of Israel as had not known [experienced] all the wars of Canaan; 2Only that the generations of the children of Israel might know to teach them war, at the least such as

before knew nothing thereof; 3Namely, the five lords of the Philistines, and all the Canaanites, and the Sidonians, and the Hivites that dwelt in mount Lebanon, from mount Baal-hermon unto the entering in of Hamath. 4And they were to prove [test] Israel by them, to know [find out] whether they would hearken unto the commandments of the Lord, which he commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses.

Psalms of King David:

Ps 18:34 He teacheth my hands to war, so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms.

Ps 144:1 Blessed by the Lord my strength, which teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight

The Lord left some of Israel's enemies in the land to teach them to war, and to test them to see whether they would obey the commandments of God. Note: Modern day Israelis fight the Palestinians who are the descendents of the Philistines.

III. Teachings of Jesus

A. Jesus came with a sword!

Mt 10:34-39Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a **sword**. 35For I am come to set a man at variance [apart from] his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. 36And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. 37He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. 38And he that taketh not his **cross**, and followeth after me, is not worth of me. 39He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.

Sword-Strong's 3162-knife, fig. war, judicial punishment

Cross-Strong's 4716-a pole or cross as an instrument of capital punishment; fig. exposure to death, self-denial

Even though Jesus is know as the "Prince of Peace" and proclaimed the gospel of the good news that God and mankind would be reconciled, Jesus came with a sword to separate believers from non-believers. Jesus said family members would oppose one another. Bottom line: you must follow Jesus! [note: This is the first mention of the cross, showing that Jesus knew the type of death He would suffer.]

B. Jesus taught us how to fight the REAL enemy (the devil).

After His water baptism and Baptism of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness to fast for 40 days, and be tempted by the devil.

With each temptation, Jesus quoted scripture:

Mt 4:4 But he answered and said, *It is written*, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

Mt 4:7 Jesus said unto him, *It is written* again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

Mt 4: 10 Get thee hence, Satan: for *it is written*, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

Jesus battled the devil with scriptures from the Word of God, and told Satan to leave!

C. Jesus fought Satan who entered Peter.

When Jesus told His disciples that He was going to be killed and raised on the third day, Satan rose up in Peter.

Mt 16:22-27 Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. 23But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offense unto me: for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men. 24Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. 25For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. 26For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? 27For the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.

*When the devil used people against Jesus, Jesus knew it and told the devil to leave.
We must resist enemies in the camp!*

D. Jesus taught on how to treat your human enemies.

Mt 5:38-48 Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. 39But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. 40And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. 41And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. 42Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away. 43Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. 44But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; 45That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. 46For if ye love them which love you,

what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same? 47And if ye salute your brethren only, what do you more than others? do not even the publicans so? 48Be ye therefore perfect, even as you Father which is in heaven is perfect.

Jesus told us to love and pray for our enemies, and to do good to them.

IV. Teachings of Peter

Peter said that our adversary, the devil, seeks to destroy Christians.

I Pet 5:8-9 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: 9Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in [experienced by] your brethren that are in the world.

Kingdom believers are to be sober and on watch, ready to resist steadfast in the faith.

V. Teachings of Paul

A. Paul told Kingdom believers not to war in the flesh.

II Cor 10:3-5 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after [according to] the flesh: 4(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal [of the flesh], but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds;) 5Casting down imaginations [arguments], and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

B. Paul said to put on the whole armor of God.

Eph 6:11-17 Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to *stand* against the *wiles* [schemes] of the devil. 12For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. 13Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. 14Stand therefore, having your *loins girt about with truth*, and having on the *breastplate of righteousness*; 15And your *feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace*; 16Above all, taking the *shield of faith*, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. 17And take *the helmet of salvation*, and the *sword of the Spirit*, which is the word of God: 18Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints

Stand-Strong's 2476-abide, continue

Wiles-Strong's 3180-trickery, lie in wait

Principalities-Strong's 746-chiefs in rank order
Powers-Strong's 1849-force, potentate,
Rulers-Strong's 2888-world ruler, an epithet of Satan
Withstand-Strong's 436-stand against, oppose, resist
Evil-Strong's 4190-hurtful, bad, wicked
Loins-Strong's 3751-hip or waist
Truth-Strong's 226-to be true (in doctrine and profession)
Breastplate of Righteousness-Breastplate-Webster's armor for the breast
Righteousness-Strong's 1343-equity of character or act; justification
Webster's-acting in a just, upright manner; moral

Preparation of the gospel of Peace-

Preparation-Webster's-to make ready for a particular purpose; readiness
Gospel-Strong's 2098-a good message, good news
Peace Strong's 1515-prosperity, quietness, rest

Shield of Faith-Shield-Strong's 2375-large, door-shaped shield
Faith-Strong's 4102-persuasion, conviction, assurance, belief

Helmet of Salvation-Strong's 4992-defender or defense

Sword of the Spirit- Strong's 3162-knife, fig. war, judicial punishment
4151-devine God or Christ's Holy Spirit

Eph 6:11-17 Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to *stand* [abide or continue] against the *wiles* [schemes, trickery] of the devil. 12For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities [chiefs in rank order], against powers [authorities], against the rulers of the darkness of this world [world ruler, an epithet of Satan], against spiritual wickedness in high places. 13Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand [stand against, resist] in the evil [bad, wicked] day, and having done all, to stand. 14*Stand* therefore, having your *loins girt* [hips belted] *about with truth* [true doctrine], and having on the ***breastplate of Righteousness*** [justification, freedom from blame; a moral life]; 15And your *feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace* [made ready for the good news of *peace with God*]; 16Above all, taking the ***shield of faith***[a large shield of belief], wherewith ye shall be able to quench [extinguish] all the fiery darts [missiles, spears, arrows] of the wicked. 7And take ***the helmet of salvation*** [for defense], and the ***sword of the Spirit***, which is the word of God [rhema, selected verses of Scripture]: 18Praying always with all prayer and supplication [petitions] in the Spirit, and watching [keep awake] thereunto with all perseverance [persistency] and supplication for all saints

Paul instructed us to put on the full armor of God just like an ancient soldier would don his armor before battle. The six items are the belt of truth, breastplate of

righteousness, shoes of the preparation of the gospel of peace, shield of faith, helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit. In addition, saints are to resist the devil our enemy, and to pray to God for all things for ourselves and others.

VI. Know the Truth

A. The main war is between God and Satan, but Satan is defeated in heaven.

1. Lucifer (Satan, Devil, Adversary, Serpent, Dragon) is cast out of heaven.

Rev 12:7-12,17 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, 8And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. 9And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. 10And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. 11*And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.* 2Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! For the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time....17And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with *the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.*

The devil has been cast out of heaven to the earth, but Kingdom believers overcome the devil by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony.

2. Jesus witnessed Satan's fall from heaven.

Lk 10:18 And he [Jesus] said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.

3. Jesus called Satan a thief who came to steal, kill and destroy.

Jn 10:10 *The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.*

4. Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil.

I Jn 3:8 He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.

B. Jesus is Lord

1. Jesus defeated the devil at the cross.

Col 2:9-15 For in him [Christ Jesus] dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. 10And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: 11In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: 12Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. 13And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; 14Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; 15And having spoiled [disarmed] principalities and powers, he made a show [spectacle] of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

2. Jesus was exalted by God the Father.

Phil 2:8-11 And being found in fashion [appearance] as a man, he [Jesus] humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. 9Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: 10That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; 11And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Jesus totally defeated Satan at the cross. We are saved by our belief in Jesus. Through water baptism we died with Jesus, and were raised with Jesus, and He is our Lord.

VII. How to Fight

Kingdom believers must understand that Jesus defeated the devil and demons. God allows the devil and his demons to test us like Joshua and the Israelites to see if we will love God and obey His commandments. We must learn to fight!

A. Repent to remove legal ground the Accuser has against you.

I Jn 1:8-9 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

B. Forgive so that the Father may forgive you.

Mk 11:25-26 And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. 26But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.

C. Put on the full armor of God and stand.

Eph 6:11 Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to *stand* [abide or continue] against the *wiles* [schemes, trickery] of the devil

I Thes 3:8 For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord.

D. Submit yourself to God and resist the enemy.

James 4:7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

Repenting, forgiving, putting on God's armor, and resisting are all defensive Strategies in battling with the devil.

E. Bind the enemy and loose the Holy Angels to attack them.

Mt 16:19 And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. (Also Mt 18:18)

Mk 3:27 No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil [plunder] his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house.

Binding the enemy and loosing the angels in warfare are extremely important in an offensive against the devil.

F. Use the Sword of the Spirit

Mt 4: 10 Get thee hence, Satan: for *it is written*, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

As Jesus modeled for us, we should tell Satan and the demons to go, and use selected scriptures to fight him.

VIII. Summary

Illustration of house robbery. Fight the good fight of faith!