

7 PART STUDY ON “SPIRITUAL WAREFARE”

SESSION 1: Who is the enemy?

Introduction:

There is a saying that goes around in most militaries across the world, a common understanding, the more you know of your enemy, the easier it is to fight that enemy. The most dangerous enemy is the one which little is known about e.g capabilities, power, threat level, location. To use another example in boxing we often use the saying, it's not the most powerful punch that gets the knockout, it's the punch you don't see coming.

Well in spiritual warfare we have the same premise. Its not that we desire to be “obsessed” with everything demonic or want to place the devil in a position of importance in our lives. I would much rather spend my time contemplating the Lord Jesus Christ however we are called to have an awareness / understanding of the spiritual but also when diving deeper we are also called to “engage” in spiritual warfare itself.

So with this being said, although within this 7 part series it is evident we will not have covered all branches of this mystical and avoided topic, my hope by the end of this study is that in fact it will be less “mystical and avoided” and actually we will not only see the reality of it in our world but also it will be that we are a little bit more equipped to engage in the spiritual battles around us. Below is a scripture I believe truly resounds my heart behind this document and study, that none of you would be “ignorant” of Satan's designs.

2 Corinthians 2: 11

“So that we would not be outwitted by Satan, for we are not ignorant of his designs.”

TWO SIDES OF THE SAME COIN

In spiritual warfare we usually have two extreme camps in which most Christians can identity aspects of their understanding within. Below is an example of both camps.

At this point it would be good to identify which camp it is you lean towards, if any, to then help shape going forward you're understanding from a biblical foundation.

I have named the camps quite simply: **FIGHT or FLIGHT.**

FIGHT

Now because we see the word “fight” we straight away feel this is the positive one, the one we should be in.

ITS NOT!!

In this camp EVERYTHING is the result of demonic attack. The person sees Satan in everything, dogs barking, tripping over their doorstep, not finding a parking space, getting a headache, everything is a demonic attack. And they will usually use statement such as:

“The devil has really been having a go at me this week” or “that lady was really rude to me, clearly demonic.”

These people are eager to engage in spiritual warfare but unfortunately with the best intentions most of the time they do so with little or no biblical understanding on how to do so. Their warfare purely is derived from instinct and “experiences” many of which when scrutinized under the scope of scripture prove to be quite the opposite of spiritual warfare. I can’t help but be reminded of a scripture in 2nd Peter we studied recently in our bible study:

2 Peter 2:12

“But these, like irrational animals, creatures of instinct, born to be caught and destroyed blaspheming about matters of which they are ignorant, will also be destroyed in their destruction.

Now although the above scripture may seem a harsh addition to this study in describing this side of the coin, although the scripture in context is refereeing to false teachers, its does hit on an important point. These false teachers were taking it upon themselves to engage in what they thought was “spiritual warfare” but they did so with no understanding and actually bought upon themselves judgment because of invoking blasphemous judgements against things of which they did not truly comprehend.

Although I do not believe any true Christian to be in that list of “being destroyed” I have witnessed time and time again children of God performing “blasphemous judgments” in the thought, hope and false idea that they were engaging in spiritual warfare when in fact they were engaging in sin.

A truly worrying thought.

FLIGHT

Like the 1st camp, the camp of FLIGHT is neither better nor worse. Both are equally wrong and dangerous in their separate ways.

Flight is what I have labelled as someone who is unwilling to accept or engage in any such idea, thought or teaching in spiritual warfare. The idea here is

“if I can’t see them, they can’t see me” or “if I just don’t think about it, it won’t affect me.”

If only it were that easy. The biggest danger with this camp is not only is it unbiblical in nearly every aspect but it also leaves the believer in a very vulnerable condition. When spiritual warfare is simply neglected then you are, for lack of a better description, closing your eyes hoping for the best. This is neither wise, prudent, or sensible when we have enemies around us looking to trip us up and make us fall in our walk with the Lord. How much easier is it to trip someone if they were trying to run a race blindfolded. You have no awareness nor ability to see things coming and so in your desire to remain safe you actually place yourself in more danger.

Many churches across England’s today have adopted this mindset.

“We will talk about what makes people feel happy and safe and leave out the subjects that cause people to feel uneasy and unsafe.”

This is for lack of a better word, a travesty! Instead of preparing God’s army you are instead disarming them.

According to an American study 4 OUT OF 10 Christians don’t believe Satan is an actual figure but rather a symbol for evil. That’s 40% of Christians in the country with the most evangelical churches in the world don’t believe there even is a devil. (Link below).

[Most American Christians Do Not Believe that Satan or the Holy Spirit Exist - Barna Group](#)

To put simply hiding and pretending only works when your enemy is doing the same thing. However, he is certainly not, he is hunting, looking, and desiring to destroy people and regardless of how uncomfortable that may make us feel, it is the biblical truth. To be able to engage in spiritual warfare, first we must admit there is an enemy in this world whose desire is our destruction BUT that we have a Lord who is sovereign over that enemy in every way, and that our Lord desires our good.

1st Peter 5:8

Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

WHO IS NOT THE ENEMY?

So now let us begin our study in our first session of answering the above question. We will be going to several different scriptures today so please bear with me as we work our way through them.

To start please turn to Ephesians Chapter 6:12

Ephesians 6:12

“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.”

Sometimes the best way to answer a question of “WHAT IS?” is to actually start by asking the question:

What is it not?

And so, the question I ask first of all is.....who ISNT our enemy?

“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood but against the rulers”

For me at least, this particular scripture helps me narrow down WHO it is I am actually called to wrestle against. And as it clearly states it is NOT flesh and blood.

This then straight away brings to us a sometimes-difficult fact to comprehend.

None of the 7.9 billion humans on this planet (yes there are that many) are my enemies. I am not called to fight them, wage war against them, wrestle with them. They are NOT the target of my spiritual warfare. In fact, if I may, it is for THEIR SAKE that I engage in spiritual warfare as I pray and seek to share the Gospel with as many of my fellow man as I can.

This may seem like a standard observation, but I ask you, is it not that Christians tend to pray against people rather than the spirits behind them? Is it not that we often fall into the human way of thinking as placing certain individuals as enemies?

Let me give you an example:

In schools across the world is it not taught that HITLER was an evil man, a horrible evil twisted individual in which the world has been bought up to hate. Even the name Hitler brings about a disdain and anger.

Now for some who are getting uneasy already, you maybe thinking “is Aaron defending Hitler? Is Aaron saying Hitler wasn’t that bad?”

I am certainly not saying that. He, like all mankind who is not washed by the blood of Jesus Christ, will be held accountable for his sins, and will pay the price for his evil, that is a judgment not to be given by me but by the perfect God almighty. My point however is this:

How many people are taught about the “spiritual ruler” that led him? How many schools teach of the “devils influence” in what Hitler did? How much of this world hold Satan and his army as responsible for what happened in that war?

After all, it was and still is Satan’s desire to destroy Israel and he has been attempting to do so in many horrific ways a long time before Hitler was ever born. And so, my point is not to defend the actions of a sinful man but instead to help point your perspective at the UNSEEN spiritual leading BEHIND that sinful man.

The devil loves nothing more than to commit terrible crimes and no one even look his way.

And so, however difficult it may be to understand, for a spirit filled Christian there is absolutely no human being or animal whom we place as the aim of our spiritual warfare. Instead, it is:

“Against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.”

We have to be careful as believers that our thinking is not one which is in common with most the world. In Islam it is widely believed that in fact the ENEMY of Islam IS the people whom reject Allah.

We have to be so careful as Christians we do not fall into the trap, regardless of how “evil” the individual may seem, to do the same. The second we place another human as the aim of our spiritual warfare we are in fact shooting in the opposite direction to where the enemy is. We are made powerless against the true enemies of this world and that in itself is a weapon of the enemy believe it or not.

If when reading this, you realise that actually that deception has entered into your walk with the Lord, I eagerly ask you, repent and seek God in redirecting your perspective of whom your

enemies are so that you may be efficient in the GOOD FIGHT OF FAITH. Perhaps it would even be prudent to pray FOR those people who you may have been wrongly wrestling with.

THE LEADER OF THE ENEMY FORCES

He has many names.

1. Satan – Job 1:6

2. Day-Star – Isaiah 14:12

3. Son Of The Morning – Isaiah 14:9

4. The Anointed Cherub – Ezekiel 28:14

5. The Devil – Mathew 4:1

6. Tempter – Mathew 4:3

7. Ruler Of Demons – Mathew 9:34

8. Beelzebul – Mathew 12:24

9. The Evil One – Mathew 13:19

10. Enemy – Mathew 13:19

11. Liar – John 8: 44

12. Father Of Lies – John 8:44

13. Murderer – John 8: 44

14. Ruler Of This World – John 14:30

15. God Of This Age – 2 Corinthians 4:4

16. Angel Of Light – 2 Corinthians 11:14

17. Belial – 2 Corinthians 6:15

18. Ruler Of The Authority Of The Air –
Ephesians 2:2

19. Adversary – 1 Peter 5:8

20. Roaring Lion – 1 Peter 5:8

21. The Angel Of The Abyss – Revelation 9:11

22. Apollyon And Abaddon – Revelation 9:11

23. Dragon – Revelation 12: 9

24. Old Serpent – Revelation 12:9

25. Deceiver Of The Whole World –
Revelation 12:9

26. Accuser Of God's People – Revelation
12:10

Many of these descriptions also give us a vivid picture into his character, his being and also an insight into his desires. He is, as the Holy scriptures say:

OUR ENEMY.

Along with his army of unclean spirits and demonic forces.

WHERE DID OUR ENEMY COME FROM?

“If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles.”

Sun Tzu (Author of: “the art of war”)

Now although that quote is written from a human perspective of war and enemies, it is quite fitting for our study on spiritual warfare. For example, in more of a biblical reframing it may sound like:

If we do not know the enemy, we are blinded. However, if we do not have assurance of who we are in Jesus Christ we are powerless against that enemy.

The Holy spirit of God has often led me when facing any pastoral issue with any of my congregation to always go beyond the immediate issue and back into the foundations of their life. I think many clues and keys are found in the past of a person which can be essential in understanding their present. God has often taught me to look at the “foundations” of something to help get a better picture of the situation whether people, religions, groups, political movements and in this case, spiritual beings. A verse that has always encouraged me in the importance of foundations is:

1 Corinthians 3:11

For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

So, for the ENEMY, what are his foundations?

For this we will be looking at two scriptures which will take up most of our first session.

Isiah chapter 14: 12-15 and Ezekiel 28: 12-15

Let's start with Ezekiel (see next page for the verses).

Ezekiel 28: 12-15

“You were the signet of perfection,^[a]
full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.

¹³You were in Eden, the garden of God;
every precious stone was your covering,
sardius, topaz, and diamond,
beryl, onyx, and jasper,
sapphire,^[b] emerald, and carbuncle;
and crafted in gold were your settings
and your engravings.^[c]

On the day that you were created
they were prepared.

¹⁴You were an anointed guardian cherub.
I placed you;^[d] you were on the holy mountain of God;
in the midst of the stones of fire you walked.

¹⁵You were blameless in your ways
from the day you were created,
till unrighteousness was found in you.

You were the signet of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering, sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, emerald, and carbuncle; and crafted in gold were your settings and your engravings.

So far as we can see above this maybe a surprising introduction of who we now know as Satan.

An interesting perspective when we place it alongside the many different names which we saw earlier describing our enemy. In the beginning the words PERFECTION, WISDOM AND BEAUTY were something afforded to Lucifer (Lucifer being his original name). It was in this perfection and wisdom and beauty that he was made and yet it was also because of all of these attributes that he allows PRIDE into his heart which we will see later in the verses.

However, it is important to understand the beginnings to then understand the journey. For example, while this may be a strange description of what we now know as the devil it does highlight an important aspect: HOW FAR HAS HE FALLEN?

On the day that you were created, they were prepared.

Potentially one of the most un-taught parts of the devil and yet possibly the most important to understand.

THE DEVIL IS A CREATED BEING.

Now we get to the part of the study in which we can start to de-bunk some man-made myths surrounding our enemy.

The devil IS NOT:

- Omnipresent – he is not able to be everywhere at once. He is restricted, as are the angels, as are demons and unclean spirits and as our we in only being able to be at one place at any given time. The devil is right now in one place and NOT in all places at once.

This is important to understand for those who say “The devil is attacking me” it is most probably the forces of the devil e.g demons / spirits rather than the devil himself. Or it may not be any of the above depending on your understanding of spiritual warfare. There are many scriptures that back up these understanding, for example **Rev 2:13 / 1 Peter 5:8 / Job 1:1-12.**

The devil is NOT:

- Equal to God or ALL POWERFUL – It is widely taught either on purpose or by accident by film industries, overly charismatic preachers, some churches, and general public knowledge that is it GOD VS SATAN.

This however couldn't be further from the truth. Quoting from one of my favourite preachers Skip Heitzig from Calvary Church in America.

“God doesn't fight, he just wins.”

Although comical it is an important point. To place the devil and our God on an even playing field in terms of power is a TERRIBLE misunderstanding and to be honest an insult to our God. For example, in the bible who is it that fights Satan? Who is it that casts him out of heaven? Who is it that engages him in battle?

The archangel Michael.

It is never God. Because God would only have to “think” about it and the enemy would just not exist anymore. Please understand, God is no less sovereign over the enemy than he is over ALL of his creation.

Below is what the Holy scriptures say about how through Jesus EVERYTHING was created.

Colossians 1:16

¹⁶For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.

That INCLUDES the devil.

Now although this may raise the classic questions of

“Why did God create him?” or “If God knew he was going to fall why did he create him?”.

Although there are answers to these questions, for now to keep our direction I won't be answering those questions, however they are questions with answers which usually surround the topic of GODS WILL.

And so please understand, the devil is also under the dominion of our God as is all CREATION. And Satan is, as much as he desires to be God, at the end of the day a CREATED BEING. He is a very powerful being, one of the most powerful and yet that power amounts to that of an ant compared to the divine majesty of God almighty!

You were an anointed guardian cherub. I placed you;^[d] you were on the holy mountain of God; in the midst of the stones of fire you walked.

Cherub / cherubim

When we think of the word “Cherub” what usually comes to mind is one of those strange angelic babies painted in Hampton court and many other palaces in the land. Where they got the inspiration for such creatures in unknown, I can however confidently say, it was not from the Bible.

Cherubim couldn't be further from an “angelic baby creature”. Instead, a cherubim is among the highest of ranked angels in the kingdom of God. We first hear of a cherubim when in Genesis 3:24 (see below).

Genesis 3:24

“He drove out the man and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the Cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.”

Make no mistake about it. Cherubim are a powerful angelic being responsible for not only the guarding of Eden but also detailed as being responsible for:

- Throne bearers or associated with Gods heavenly dwelling. (Exodus 25:17-20)
- Guarding Gods glory on earth and in heaven. (Genesis 3:24)
- Associated with the worship and praise toward God.
- Living creatures quite literally supporting the throne of God in a vision. (Ezekiel 10)
- Appear in the book of Genesis, Kings, Ezekiel and Revelation.

In essence these beings had very close contact with the living God and had duties which reflected that. All angels have impressive qualities in light of human capabilities however cherubim do seem to be distinct from the rest in power and closeness with God.

Just to reinstate however, we must remember when studying any spiritual being, good or evil, that as we study, they like us are all CREATED beings. Remember in Revelation when the apostle John attempted to worship the angelic messenger, the angelic messenger said, “Do not worship me, I am a servant like you.” Our God is above all.

Although it maybe difficult to understand regarding the “stones of fire” and the “mountain of God” and even though I am not wanting to delve too deep into those descriptions for this study. One thing is clear, lucifer back then, was in close proximity to God and stood among a very holy, holy place.

You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created, till unrighteousness was found in you.

Once again “from the day you were created”.

The bible doesn't repeat itself just for the sake of it. A point is being reiterated here, a reminder, it was GOD who created him.

The Bible described lucifer as BLAMELESS in all his ways UNTIL unrighteousness was found in him. Its interesting, being blameless is only a good thing if you REMAIN blameless. It doesn't mean much to be blameless for a bit, there needs to be a consistency. And so, Lucifer was indeed blameless UNTIL sin was found in him. Until it was found he was NOT right before GOD.

WHAT WAS THE UNRIGHTEOUSNESS?

For the answer to this question lets turn to Isiah 14: 12-15:

Isiah 14:12-15

“How you are fallen from heaven,
O Day Star, son of Dawn!
How you are cut down to the ground,
you who laid the nations low!
¹³ You said in your heart,
‘I will ascend to heaven;
above the stars of God
I will set my throne on high;
I will sit on the mount of assembly
in the far reaches of the north;^[c]
¹⁴ I will ascend above the heights of the clouds;
I will make myself like the Most High.”

**“How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn!
How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the
nations low!”**

Here we have a vivid description given of Satan’s falls from position in heaven to his current state. Now it can be speculated as to whether the casting out from heaven is a past event or a future one or both. There are various scriptures (revelation chapter 12: 7-11) that seem to suggest a future battle in heaven which has not actually happened yet, speculation as to whether the rapture sets it into motion has been made.

However, before I open that can of worms my desire is not to get too deep into eschatology (study of end times) but rather focus on the character of our enemy.

The point here is emphasising HOW FAR SATAN FELL. The emphasis and the description here is to show just how devastating his actions were to himself but also how terribly catastrophic this moment was for him, heaven, and mankind.

You said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.’

THE FAMOUS 5 TIMES IT WAS SAID “I WILL”

Here we gain a fascinating insight into the thought processes of the devil himself. He is a Cherubim in heaven, perfect, beautiful, blameless and in and amongst that power, glory and honour – pride crept in.

The Bible actually describes that “because” of these qualities pride found its way in.

Ezekiel 28:17

Your heart was proud because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendour. I cast you to the ground; I exposed you before kings, to feast their eyes on you.

So despite God giving him these qualities for good they eventually became the way in for pride.

And notice where pride starts “YOU SAID IN YOUR HEART”.

Lucifer didn’t go around saying this, he didn’t make it known until he had already rebelled, this seed started in his heart, in the place where all sinful desire comes from.

THE 5 PRIDEFUL DESIRES OF THE DEVIL

1. **“Ascend above the stars of God”** - he wanted to ascend above the stars of God. Stars here refereeing to Angels. So, he starts by saying he wants to be the greatest among his peers, greater than all the others.
2. **“Set my throne on high”** - he then goes on to say he wants to SET HIS THRONE. He now wants a throne to sit on in the heavenly places. A throne is only ever accompanied by a KING (excluding the 24 elders in Revelation who sat on thrones, but their throne was not “on high” refereeing to where Gods throne is). In heaven there is only one KING upon high. So, in essence there is a coup happening in the devil’s heart.

3. **“I will sit on the mount of assembly”** – the same idea here is being played out, all of these descriptions are leading to the last “I WILL”. Satan wants to have and be what God is and therefore he wants to place himself in places only God can sit.
4. **“I will ascend above the height of the clouds”** – Its all about exalting himself rather than what he was created to do which is exalt the true God. The creation wanting to be the creator. A similar trait we see in a lost humanity. Each man wanting to be his own “god”.
5. **“I will make myself like the most high”** – here is the climax of it all. This is what lucifer wanted, this is what led him to do what he did. He wanted to be like God and in his own right wanted to be god.

Notice with number 5 – in the garden of Eden the devil tempts eve with the same prideful sin that led him astray.

“God knows that when you eat of it you will be like him.” – not a coincidence!

WHY IS IT THAT GOD HATES PRIDE SO MUCH?

WHY IS IT HUMILITY IS SO KEY IN THE CHARACTER OF CHRIST AND IN CHRISTIAN LIVING?

WHY IS IT THAT HUMANITY IS SO OBSESSED WITH BEING GREAT AND SUCCESSFUL AND HAVING MORE THAN WHAT WE HAVE ALREADY?

Like I said at the beginning.

So much can be learnt about the present if only we would take the time to look at the past. The foundations of sin can be found in the fall of lucifer and so much of that fall can be recognised in our society, our sinful natures, humanity in general and its preposition to pride.

In our next study which is titled: **The enemies objective’s**. We will look at:

His history with Israel, what is it about Israel that the enemy wants to destroy?

We will look at what the military objective is of the devil and his armies toward us.

What are his aims? What does he want to accomplish? How does he go about it?

Before we can combat anything first let us learn about his tactics, his manoeuvres, his weapons so that when it comes to learning spiritual warfare we are prepared and ready!

<u>SESSION ONE:</u>	Who is our enemy?
SESSION TWO:	The enemies' objectives. Israel / the church / humanity.
SESSION THREE:	The enemy's army. Who fights for him?
SESSION FOUR:	How are we called to fight? Our role in spiritual warfare.
SESSION FIVE:	The weapons of our warfare and how to use them!
SESSION SIX:	Engaging the enemy – what does that look like?
SESSION SEVEN:	The enemy defeated – now and then!