

Spiritual Warfare

Part 2

Introduction

In Part I of Spiritual Warfare we learned that we are all soldiers in the Lord's army and that our job is to enforce Jesus' victory over Satan which He won by His death on the cross. We also learned what the Bible teaches about Satan and about our commander-in-chief Jesus Christ.

In Part 2 we will look at the authority every Christian has and the weapons our commander-in-chief has issued to us.

Our Study

Centuries before Jesus' birth, prophets spoke of the coming of a Messiah, the "anointed one," who would free the Israelites from their captors. Here is what the prophet Isaiah said.

The Scripture: Isaiah 9:2, 4

"The people walking in darkness have seen a great light....you have shattered the yoke that burdens them, the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressors."

1. How does the prophet describe the people? _____

This was true of the people of that time, both spiritually and physically.

2. What would the coming Messiah do? _____

The Scripture: Isaiah 49:25

"Captives will be taken from warriors, and plunder retrieved from the fierce; I will contend with those who contend with you, and your children I will save."

3. What did Isaiah say would happen? _____

4. What else would the Messiah do for them? _____

Throughout history, whenever the Israelites obeyed the Lord, they prospered, but when they disobeyed Him, they were defeated by their enemies, taken prisoner, and treated cruelly. This was their condition when these prophecies were given—prophecies which spoke of a time when the Messiah would come and free them from oppression.

When Jesus began His public ministry in a synagogue in Nazareth, He read another well-known prophesy from Isaiah.

The Scripture: Luke 4:18

"The Spirit of the Lord is on Me, because He has anointed Me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight to the blind."

5. What does this prophesy say the Messiah would do? _____

The Scripture: Luke 4:20

"The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on Him, and He began by saying to them, 'Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.'"

6. What did Jesus say? _____

By this amazing statement Jesus announced that He was the Messiah, and He had come to do all the things the prophets said the Messiah would do. Sadly, most religious leaders of Jesus' day didn't believe that Jesus was the Messiah. They were looking for a great political figure who would come as a military commander and free them from the dominion of a foreign government. Consequently, when Jesus spoke of establishing a spiritual kingdom and the breaking of spiritual bonds, they rejected Him and His message.

In His lifetime on earth Jesus proved to those who would hear that He truly was the Messiah. He demonstrated His power and authority everywhere He went—performing miracles, healing the sick, even showing His authority over the elements of nature.

On several occasions before He died, Jesus delegated His authority to His followers.

The Scripture: Matthew 10:7, 8

"Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons."

7. What did Jesus' tell his disciples to do? _____

The Scripture: Luke 10:17

"The seventy-two returned with joy; and said, 'Lord, even the demons submit in Your name.'"

8. After one such occasion, how did the disciples return? _____

9. What did they say? _____

The disciples returned with great excitement. Using the authority Jesus had delegated to them, they were able to do the same miracles that He did.

One person in Scripture who understood the principle of delegated authority was a heathen, a Roman centurion, who asked Jesus to heal his servant. When Jesus agreed to come to his home, the centurion told Him it was not necessary for Him to come.

The Scripture: Luke 7:7, 8

"Say the word and my servant will be healed. For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me, I tell this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and that one, 'Come,' and he comes. I say to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."

10. The centurion told Jesus it was not necessary for Him to come to his house in order for his servant to be healed. What reason did he give? _____

Jesus was amazed at the centurion's faith and understanding, and He healed the servant.

After His resurrection, Jesus gave His disciples their "marching orders."

The Scripture: Matthew 28:18-20

"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the end of the age."

11. How much authority does Jesus have? _____

12. What three things did He tell His disciples to do? _____

13. What promise did Jesus make to His disciples? _____

Jesus delegated His authority to the original disciples. In the same way He delegates that authority to His followers today.

The Scripture: Mark 16:17, 18

"And these signs will accompany those who believe: In My name they will drive out demons, they will speak in new tongues, they will pick up snakes in their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well."

14. What signs will accompany believers? _____

This is our commission! As we said at the beginning of this lesson, our primary job as soldiers is to enforce Jesus' victory over Satan. We do this by making spiritual warfare against Satan and his satanic forces. As formidable as Satan sounds, we should not fear him. Our Commander-in-Chief has issued powerful weapons to us which fully equip us for battle.

Before we look at our weapons, let's review some scripture from Part 1.

The Scripture: 2 Corinthians 10: 3, 4

"For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds."

15. What does the Apostle Paul say about the weapons he uses? _____

16. What divine power do they have? _____

Paul reinforces this idea in Ephesians.

The Scripture: Ephesians 6:12

"For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms."

17. Who is our struggle not against? _____

18. Who is it against? _____

In both scriptures Paul emphasizes that we are fighting a spiritual war.

The apostle has much more to say about the armor and the weapons the Lord has issued to us.

The Scripture: Ephesians 6:10, 11

"Finally be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes."

19. What are we to be strong in? _____

It is essential that we realize that we are not making war in our own power, but in the Lord's.

20. What are we to put on? _____

21. Why? _____

We must always remember that we are fighting against a spiritual enemy—Satan and his forces, and they will do their utmost to stop us.

In Part 1, we learned that Paul's physical model for the soldier and his armor was based on the Roman soldier whose loyalty to his commander and his fighting ability were legendary.

The Scripture: Ephesians 6: 13-18

"Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm, then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints."

22. When the day of evil comes, what should we be able to do? _____

23. How are we to be after the battle? _____

Yes, we are to be the victors in this war, still standing after the battle.

24. List our weapons. _____

The belt of truth strengthens our loins for strenuous activity. The breastplate of righteousness covers our breast where our heart is located. The Gospel of peace enables us to face the enemy with firm-footed stability. The helmet of salvation covers our head and thus our minds.

25. What does the shield of faith enable us to do? _____

The book of Isaiah shows us how to care for our shields.

The Scripture: Isaiah 21:5

"...Get up, you officers, oil the shields."

26. How does a soldier care for his shield? _____

Shields made of several thicknesses of bull hide were stretched over a frame of wood and sometimes strengthened and ornamented with metal rims and pieces of metal. Rubbing with oil prevented the leather from drying out and the bull hide from cracking with dryness.

In times of battle, this oiling was especially necessary and so "anointing" the shield was equivalent to preparing for war.

Oil is one of the symbols of the Holy Spirit.

27. What is the sword of the Spirit? _____

Just as Jesus did, when we fight the evil one, we use Scripture as one of our most important weapons.

28. What else are we to do? _____

Along with the heavenly forces, we are engaged in a great struggle against Satan and his troops. God has given us everything we need for the battle.

In Part 3, we will look at examples of warfare taken from the Old Testament and see how they apply to our spiritual warfare today.

The Answers

1. Walking in darkness
2. Shatter the yoke that burdened them, the rod of their oppressors
3. Captives would be freed, plunder retrieved
4. Contend with those who contended with them, save their children
5. Preach good news to the poor, proclaim freedom for prisoners and recovery of sight to the blind
6. *"Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."*
7. Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons
8. With joy
9. *"Lord, even the demons submit in Your name."*
10. He was a man under authority with others under him. When he gave a command to any of his soldiers they obeyed him.
11. All authority on heaven and earth
12. Make disciples of all nations, baptize them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and teach them to obey His commands
13. He would be with them always
14. In Jesus' name they will drive out demons, speak in new tongues, be able to pick up snakes, drink deadly poison without being hurt, heal the sick
15. They aren't weapons of the world; they are divinely powerful.
16. They have divine power to demolish strongholds .
17. Flesh and blood
18. Rulers, authorities, the powers of this dark world, the spiritual forces of evil in heavenly realms
19. The Lord and his mighty power
20. The full armor of God
21. So we can take our stand against the devil's schemes
22. Stand our ground
23. Standing
24. Belt of truth, breastplate of righteousness, feet fitted with the Gospel of Peace, shield of faith, helmet of salvation, sword of the Spirit, praying in the Spirit
25. Extinguish the flaming arrows of the evil one
26. With oil
27. The word of God
28. Be alert, pray for the saints

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