

WORLD TRUMPET MISSION – PRAYER TEACHINGS

8 – COMBAT IN THE HEAVENLIES Spiritual Warfare (2)

Ephesians 6¹⁰⁻¹²

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. ¹¹Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹²For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

Here Paul was talking to the Ephesians. This was a powerful church at that time. If you read about this church, it was situated in a very difficult place. If you read in Acts this is where they had involved themselves so much in witchcraft and they also rioted at one time that Artemis the god of Ephesians is the great one. Even the temple of goddess Diana was in Ephesus. This church was situated where witchcraft was rampant. This was the centre of witchcraft in the then known world. Since they tended to be situated in that area they needed to be a strong church.

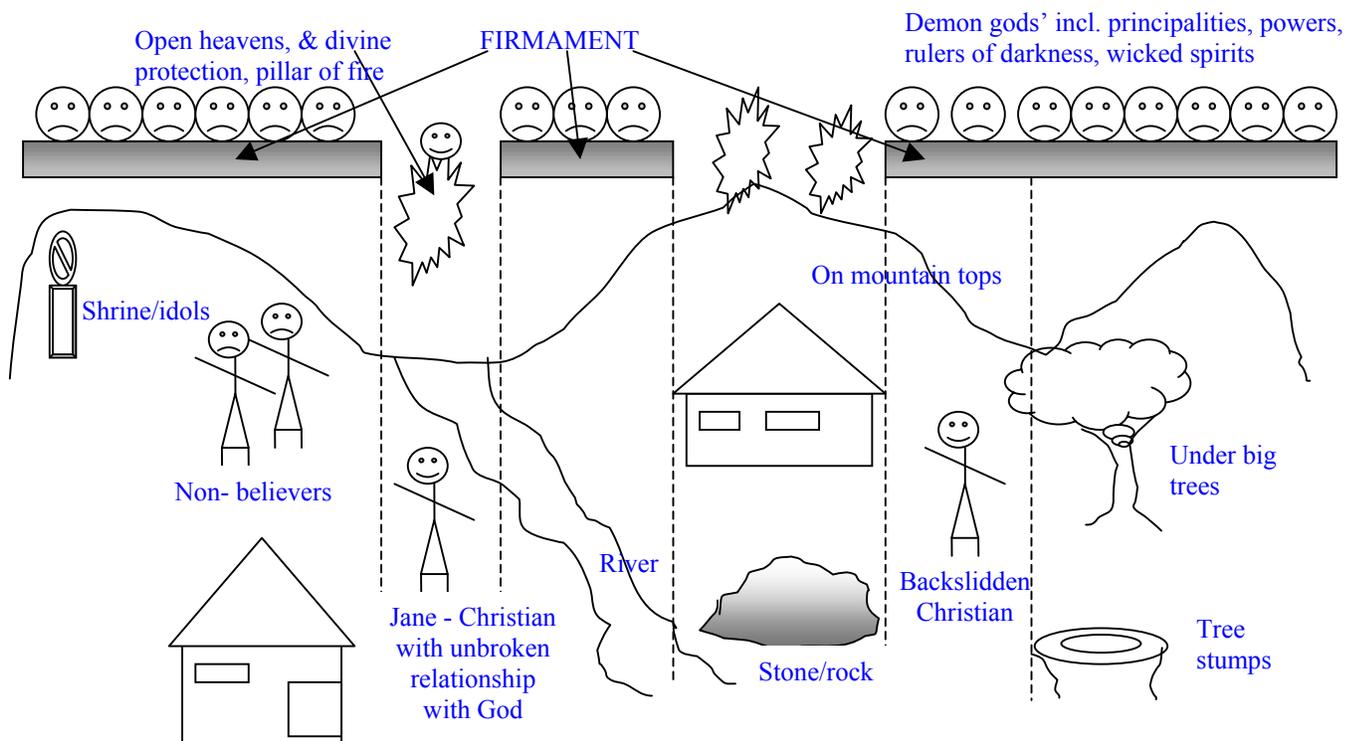
As Paul was concluding his letter he says *“finally my brothers be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.”* These are two different things. To be strong in the Lord means create your fellowship and relationship with the Lord. With that fellowship comes the strength of God, then the presence of God in your life. He goes on to confirm *“even in the power of His might”*. That means they had to move from the presence and take legal authority.

So they had to come, not in fellowship and relationship with God alone, but also have a platform to stand for the kingdom of God. Why? Because they are in the midst of war. There were battles coming against the church now and again. He told them *“you wrestle not against flesh and blood”*. In other words, he was telling them *‘please there is a war. You are not just to go and sit’*. This is the most fearful thing the Christians want to hear of today. They don't want to talk of spiritual warfare. They say *“leave the devil alone, we are going to heaven.”* However, even before you were created, when you were not already here on earth, God created you to be a man or woman of war because there was already a devil who hates anything made in the image and likeness of God.

As we talk about spiritual warfare, it is not something new. That is what failed man in the Garden of Eden. When Satan came and corrupted the woman they stopped subduing and having dominion. The devil was passing himself off as a serpent to corrupt the plan of God. When God judged the serpent he said, *“There will always be enmity between you and the seed of the woman.”* Enemies are always at loggerheads, so you must know that today you are in the war. Do not be scared. That is it. Even if you don't want to hear such things, it will not stop being there.

In a war there are so many battles. You may come from one battle to the next. You wrestle not against flesh and blood but against principalities, powers, rulers of darkness and against spiritual wickedness in high places. From the beginning, the devil has been fighting the fellowship and relationship of man with God. In Eden he overcame. But through Jesus we received back that dominion, in that we can go back into fellowship and relationship with God.

After the devil was defeated on the cross and Jesus going to hell and taking the keys from him, the devil went in the high places and put there something like a blanket, which is called a firmament. In that, the devil wants to block the fellowship and relationship with God's people so that, because of the blanket, the people would be cut off from God. So, you find that above the firmament, there are certain demon gods residing there.



In our picture we have the firmament. It is like a blanket that refuses the presence of God to come down or our prayers to go up to God. Above the firmament, are the rulers of darkness, principalities, powers, wicked spirits etc. You find that this is the army of the devil. And this army up there has got some connection with other lesser demons, which are working between the heavens and earth. No spirit is allowed to inhabit the earth and they only come on invitation or because of covenants with human agents e.g they reside within people, shrines and altars of sacrifice. Psalms 118 says, "The earth he has given to the sons of men. And He inhabits the heavens.

The devil rules this world in different hierarchies from top coming down and further down. So the principalities can rule a whole region like the whole of Uganda. Below them you find there are some powers, and they are assigned to different works in the kingdom of the enemy. For instance, the rulers of darkness are the demons which keep people blinded and in darkness to the knowledge of God. Even if you preach the gospel, you find that even if a person is saved and it touched their life, you find the person walks away and says, "That is for mad men and women or fanatics, to accept". The rulers of darkness blind such a person.

Spiritual wickedness in high places; those are the demons which bring all the wickedness in people. Remember, rulers of darkness blind the eyes of the people not to see the truth. Spiritual wickedness brings all wickedness around.

There is a principality ruling over your nation, another over the region another over the continent. Powers are like forces, which push people to sin. They push people to do evil especially through the mind. "Do this and that. Go and rob!" And you find someone is caught in daylight robbery. Then you wonder, "Why has he done this?" There was a force behind, pushing him.

These powers we read about have other lesser demons that work with them. These are like authorities up there. You find that, for all these demons to be working in the land, they have covenants with that land. Maybe upon certain stones/rocks in the land; you find that there are certain stones people sacrifice on, because of the sacrifice they make here, they are giving legal ground for the demon to rule over the area. It may be under big trees, or tree stumps it may be rivers where they go and sacrifice. There may be idols and shrines on mountain tops. Wherever it

may be, as long as they make these sacrifices, maybe in houses or factories wherever they give those sacrifices, they give legal ground for the demons to rule on the land.

The devil will not rule over an area unless the people of that area have given him legal ground. It is the same with God. He cannot work in an area in the land unless the people have given him legal ground. So if it happens that one day the people refuse to give sacrifice to the devil, he will have no legal ground - so it is the people who are responsible to invite the kingdom of God or the kingdom of darkness into their area.

The above illustration represents your village or community. The principalities are ruling up there above the firmament. You find that most of the names of villages or towns are the names of the demon gods ruling over that area as we saw in the testimony earlier. For example in Daniel 10¹². Then he said to me, "Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words."¹³ But the prince of the Kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I have been left alone there with the kings of Persia

Daniel had engaged himself in prayer and was fasting and seeking God; but the answer did not come until after 21 days. The angel comes to bring the message to Daniel and helps us to understand what goes on in the spiritual realm. This was an angel dispatched from God to bring an answer to Daniel on the first day. Because of the principality ruling over Persia, the angel of God was withheld for 21 days!

The angel reveals something and says, "*I was withheld by the prince of Persia*". But go back and see, which kingdom was ruling at that time here on earth? This was the kingdom of the Medes and Persians. So you find that the kingdom ruling down here most times, it is named after the principality that rules up there. They have connections. When you go back and read about Israel, you find that even these other nations could come against Israel, they could first offer sacrifice to their god.

At one time they said "maybe their God is the one of hills, let us take them to the valley. Maybe we will take them to the valley and see if we win." Before war is fought in the physical, it starts in the spiritual. It is first fought in the spiritual. That is why the Palestinians cannot take Israel, because the Prince ruling over Israel is Jehovah God. The demon gods will try to contend for the Israelite firmament, but because of the altars Abraham raised to Jehovah God, they try to overcome the principality over Israel but they cannot fight over the principality of Israel for it is God Himself. He is the one who gave Jacob that name Israel meaning "Prince of God."

Everyone who is not saved is under the rulership of the kingdom of darkness in the area (Ephesians 2:1-2). Every one house without saved people is under the principalities that rule the area. However, if we come to the Lord, the day you accept Jesus as Lord and Savior and then you walk in His statutes, there is a pillar of fire that comes upon your life and a new principality.

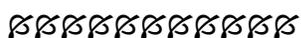
For instance we have Jane in the above illustration. She is saved and God brings a pillar of protection upon her life. As we learnt, we need to cultivate a personal altar within our hearts. As you continue walking with God in your life, wherever you are moving, your pillar will go with you. And it is through this pillar of fire, which is upon your life that the angels pass through and bring messages and answers to prayer. So keep up your fellowship and relationship with God. You find that as you do that, always your heart will be in prayer. Because of the fire, everywhere you are the presence of God is there. Even if you are in a public bus, even if you are digging, because of your heart yielded to God you find that you are praying and working. Even if you are in your offices, you find the presence of God will be there, because of your fellowship and relationship.

Angels won't move unless you pray. Angels move because of your prayers. They can sustain the pillars of fire and pass through them while the demon gods cannot. And you find that, as you pray and keep the fellowship unbroken with God, you have an open heaven. The principalities cannot be above you. The demon gods have to run away. You have divine protection. So keep it. Even if there are hard things the demons are throwing at you, because of this protection above your life, they are just wasting time.

God is calling us to a time of prayer. We will look at the backslidden Christian, what we need to do in family altars, where do demons get children and wealth and give those who go to witchdoctors. Etc.

Today we continue giving up our lives to God as living sacrifices, but we will pray against spiritual witchcraft and repent on behalf of the sacrifices and the bloodshed from our past, then after that we go into spiritual warfare.

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