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The Warfare of Christianity

Part 6 – "How does this enemy fight?"

Continued

"Put on God's whole armor [the armor of a heavy-armed soldier which God supplies], that you may be able successfully to stand up against [all] the strategies and the deceits of the devil.

For we are not wrestling with flesh and blood [contending only with physical opponents], but against the despotisms, against the powers, against [the master spirits who are] the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spirit forces of wickedness in the heavenly (supernatural) sphere." (Ephesian 6:11-12 amplified)

In part 5, we learned that not every battle is God's to fight but that there are times when we have to make sure that we are wearing our armor and get into the action ourselves.

We looked at a few of the tactics that our enemy will use against us by looking into the life of Job. We saw that the enemy could do the following in his attacks.

- The enemy uses people.
- He also can use the elements within nature.
- The enemy can attack our bodies with sicknesses.
- The enemy will use any fears that we may have to cultivate a plan to attack us.

We also noted that the strategies that are used against us are designed to discourage our hearts towards God by manipulating our minds through outward circumstances — creating doubts and despair and depression, as he did with Job.

In looking at this, I found an interesting article on the difference between depression and despair.

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"Depression by clinical definition is 'a period of 2 weeks or longer during which there is either a depressed mood, or loss of interest or pleasure that has at least four other symptoms that reflect a change in functioning, such as problems with sleep, eating, energy, concentration, and self-image'.

Depression is a very real, incredibly debilitating disorder that affects how people feel about themselves. It can last from a couple of weeks to months, even years. Untreated, it can lead to sleep disturbances, irritability & extremely low moods, as well as a number of physical symptoms and complaints. An individual may find it difficult to get out of bed in the morning, or not be able to get out of bed at all, lose interest in work, hobbies, and social interactions. Living day to day becomes extremely difficult, and in extreme cases, people may even contemplate suicide.

Despair is also a very real, debilitating disorder. It can be as debilitating as depression in many ways; however, despair differs in that an individual suffering despair is able to go about day to day tasks and can generally function quite normally. This doesn't make it any less serious. When an individual is in despair, they are feeling a complete loss of hope, usually accompanied by desperation, anguish, and sadness. People in despair may get up every day and go about their business, but there is no joy in life. No passion. Instead, desperation, anxiety, and hopelessness fill their day. Despair may come and go. Some days are good, and generally an outing or event may lift despair temporarily, but in most cases, and without intervention, it returns and can quickly lead to depression."

<https://wellness-centre.com.au/despair-vs-depression-knowing-the-difference/>

All of this we saw with Job—

In part two of this study, I want to reinforce what we have learned so far by looking at some other examples of these attacks, along with looking at a few others. As well as something else that we may not have considered.

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Instances of demonic possession

Mark 5:1-5; Luke 8:26-29 The demon-possessed man

John 13:26-27 Judas (during the last supper)

Acts 19:11-20 Sons of Sceva –They know who walks in the authority of Jesus the Christ.

Matthew 12:43-45 The unclean spirit

Mark 1:21-28 Possession

Instances of demonic physical attacks

Mathew 17:14-18 Jesus Heals a Boy with a Demon

Mathew 9:32-34 Jesus Heals a Man Unable to Speak

Mathew 12:22 blind and dumb man under the power of a demon

Matthew 15:22-28 Daughter is miserably and distressingly and cruelly possessed by a demon!

Luke 13:10-17 A Woman with a Disabling Spirit

Attacks through false teaching

1st Timothy 4:1-2

2nd Corinthians 4:4

In our last lesson, I said, "*It is in knowing the strategy of our enemies that we can develop either our defenses and our strategy of attack.*" I also stressed that it is essential that we stay close to God in prayer and our daily living so that we know what it is that we are indeed dealing with so that we can operate in either defense or attack when the battle arises.

But there is one more thing that might not have been considered while preparing to battle—

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❖ Sometimes God utilizes evil spirits to accomplish His will—

The lying spirit. 2nd Chronicles 18:21 I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouths of all his prophets

{To begin to grasp all that was going on here. You have to read chapter 17 and make sure to read the preceding verses to the 21st verse.}

Here is, I. Jehoshaphat growing greater. It was said before ([2Ch 17:5](#)) that he had *riches and honour in abundance*; and here it is said again that his wealth and honour increased upon him by piety and good management.

II. Not growing wiser, else he would not have joined with Ahab, that degenerate Israelite, who had sold himself to work wickedness. What good could he get by a man that was so bad? What good could he do to a man that was so obstinately wicked - an idolater, a persecutor? With him, he joined in affinity, that is, married his son Jehoram to Ahab's daughter Athaliah.

1. This was the worst match that ever was made by any of the house of David. I wonder what Jehoshaphat could promise himself by it. (1.) Perhaps pride made the match, as it does many a one, which speeds accordingly. His religion forbade him to marry his son to a daughter of any of the heathen princes that were about him - *Thou shalt not take their daughters to thy sons*; and, having riches and honour in abundance, he thought it a disparagement to marry him to a subject. A king's daughter it must be, and therefore Ahab's, little considering that Jezebel was her mother. (2.) Some think he did it in policy, hoping by this expedient to unite the kingdoms in his son, Ahab, perhaps flattering him with hopes that he would make him his heir when he intended no such thing.

2. This match drew Jehoshaphat, (1.) Into an intimate familiarity with Ahab. He paid him a visit at Samaria, and Ahab, proud of the honour which Jehoshaphat did him, gave him a very splendid entertainment, according to the splendour of those times: He *killed sheep and oxen for him*, plain meat, *in abundance*, [2Ch 18:2](#). In this, Jehoshaphat did not walk so closely as he should have done in the ways of his father David, who *hated the congregation of evil-doers and would not sit with the wicked* ([Psa 26:5](#)), nor desired to *eat of their dainties*, [Psa 141:4](#). (2.) Into a league with Ahab against the Syrians. Ahab persuaded him to join forces with him in an expedition for the recovery of Ramoth-Gilead, a city in the tribe of Gad, on the other side Jordan. Did not Ahab know that that, and all the other cities of Israel, did of right belong to Jehoshaphat, as heir of the house

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of David? With what face then could he ask Jehoshaphat to assist him in recovering it for himself, whose title to the crown was usurped and precarious? Yet Jehoshaphat, an easy man, yields to go with him: *I am as thou art*, 2Ch 18:3. Some men's kindnesses are dangerous, as well as their society infectious. The feast Ahab made for Jehoshaphat was designed only to wheedle him into the expedition. *The kisses of an enemy are deceitful.*

Matthew Henry's Commentary

2nd Corinthians 12:7-9 a messenger of Satan

With this thrown into the mix of the warfare of Christianity, it is no wonder that we are instructed in 1st Thessalonians 5:17 to "pray without ceasing" (KJV version.)

I like the way the amplified version states it. "*Be unceasing in prayer [praying perseveringly]*"

Per`se*vere" (?), *v. i.* [*imp. & p. p.* Persevered (?); *p. pr. & vb. n.* Persevering.]

[*F. persévérer, L. perseverare, fr. perseverus* very strict; *per + severus* strict, severe.

See Per-, and Severe.] **To persist in any business or enterprise undertaken; to pursue steadily any project or course begun; to maintain a purpose in spite of counter influences, opposition, or discouragement; not to give or abandon what is undertaken.**

In the final lesson of this series, we will look at the weapons of our warfare.