

**Towers ministry short reads**

# **Spiritual warfare**

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## **Spiritual warfare - Contents**

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What principles do towers intercessors need to know?

### **\* 1. The battle will come to them.**

**Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. The tempter came to him and said, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.” (Matthew 4:1-3)**

The spiritual battle will come to intercessors - into their lives, into their homes, into their work and their families. Here is why -

#### **Satan was thrown out of heaven.**

It begins here – **War broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.** (Revelation 12:7-10)

#### **He is determined to reclaim his position.**

The enemy never gives up - **Again, the devil took Jesus up on an exceedingly high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to Him, “All these things I will give you if you will fall down and worship me.”** (Matt. 4:8-9)

#### **To do this he has to chain humanity.**

His first step on his deluded idea of victory must be to destroy the creation God is made and steal its freedom – **“He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.”** (Revelation 13:16-17)

To make this work he must destroy the church which is his sworn enemy and the only group that can expose him. Saul set out to do that - **But Saul was going everywhere to destroy the church. He went from house to house, dragging out both men and women to throw them into prison.** (Acts 8:3)

#### **The key**

The key to his destructive plan is to break the intercessory stream because he knows they can do move the heart of God and have the power to destroy him. - **During that long period, the king of Egypt died. The Israelites groaned in their slavery and cried out, and their cry for help because of their slavery went up to God. God heard their groaning and he remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac and with Jacob. So God looked on the Israelites and was concerned about them.** (Exodus 2:23-25)

## \* 2. It's a long struggle against a disciplined enemy

**Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armour of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. 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. (Eph.6:10-12)**

There are no quick solutions in this war. It is a long hard battle against a relentless enemy. It is, as Paul teaches a struggle (Greek - "wrestling") and a long one. It is a spiritual struggle, although it will often reveal itself in the earthly places - in lives, bodies and families. There is no truce. "The thief comes to kill." (John 10:10) The enemy is strong and well organized, using the systems of this world against us and evil dark powers in the spiritual world -

**"But against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world."**

## . \* 3. The fight touches the heart and mind.

**Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives, and his disciples followed him. On reaching the place, he said to them, "Pray that you will not fall into temptation." He withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed, "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done." (Luke 22:39-42)**

The spiritual battle is fought out in the hearts and minds of intercessors -

**\* Doubt:** "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe." (John 20:25)

**\* Deceit:** "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?" (Genesis 3:1)

**\* Lies.** "You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires.... for he is a liar and the father of lies." (John 8:44)

**\* Death.** Then the Pharisees went out and began to plot with the Herodians how they might kill Jesus. (Mark 3:6)

In the end, it comes down to a battle of wills, and this is the defence - **"Abba, Father," he said, "everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will."** (Mark 14:36)

## \* 4. It is tough and dangerous.

Apostle Paul makes this clear - **I have worked much harder, been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again. Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was pelted with stones, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, I have been constantly on the move.**

**I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my fellow Jews, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false believers. I have laboured and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked. Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches. (2 Corinthians 11:23-28)**

God calls the toughest soldiers to the toughest tasks, and intercession is one of the toughest, as it brings intercessors into direct opposition to dark spiritual powers. Intercessors must expect it. They need determination, endurance and protection.

### **\* 5. It is active.**

**Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. (1 Peter 5:8-9)**

Many intercessors miss this point. The enemy is prowling around - moving from place to place looking to attack. This is not a static battlefield, but one which is very active and mobile. The enemy switches his attack and the defence.

*To cling to God and the things of God - this must be our major effort and this must be the road the heart follows unswervingly. (Breastplate of Laidcenn.)*

## **What can be done?**

The weapons of spiritual warfare have not changed since we began to fight in this way.

### **\* Prayer**

**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 Lord's people. (Ephesians 6:18)**

One old Intercessor put it like this:- *"Prayer is the indestructible wall of the church, the unconquerable fortress which terrifies the demons and protects us in the way of righteousness."*

Intercession is hard work, but help is at hand - **Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. (Romans 8:26)**

### **\* Authority**

**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. (2 Corinthians 10: 3-4)**

Intercessors must fight with the certainty of victory. Jesus is the stronger one who has overcome the strong man. (Matthew 12:22-29) "We are more than conquerors." (Romans 8:37) Nothing can stand against us. (1 Samuel 17:45-47)

#### \* **Love**

**This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.** (1 John 4:10)

Intercessors win and overcome by the power of love, not the power of aggression or anger. They have to be firm, but firm in the victory of love. Many intercessors do not understand this. They shout and rave! The danger here is that they begin to pray in their own strength. One of the ways of fighting is by turning inwards and absorbing into the spirit the sacrificial love of Jesus. This makes intercessors incredibly strong and completely baffles the enemy. Love is the victory - **For every child of God defeats this evil world, and we achieve this victory through our faith.** (1 John 5:4)

#### \* **Confront**

**David said to the Philistine, "You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This day the Lord will deliver you into my hands, and I'll strike you down and cut off your head. This very day I will give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds and the wild animals, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel. All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the Lord saves; for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give all of you into our hands."** (1 Samuel 17:45-47)

In the end Intercessors have to face the enemy and David shows the way -

\* **The name of the Lord.** There is no greater name (Philippians 2:9-11) and it should be used.

\* **Defiled.** Satan is a defiler, an invader, a thief and a liar. (John 10:10)

\* **The Lord will deliver you.** Victory, already won on the cross, is guaranteed. Goliath should have surrendered. But Satan never recognises his defeat.

\* **Not by sword or spear.** David has it exactly right. Power belongs to God, and as that power is released, so God establishes his victory. His people are merely the agents by which that victory is won.

#### \* **Plead the blood**

**For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.** (1 Peter 1:18)

One older Intercessor put it like this - *To enjoy the victory that is ours in the Lord, we must be clothed with truth, righteousness, the gospel of peace and the helmet of salvation – all given us freely at no price, having been purchased by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.*

### \* **Spiritual weapons**

**The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.** (2 Corinthians 10:4)

An old Intercessor said this - *We must be well equipped with the sword of the spirit which is the word of God. One must not neglect the communications link with the command and control centre through the practice of unceasing prayer.*

There are many weapons at our disposal; Paul lists these:

**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.** (Ephesians 6:14-17)

But we often stop there - but the next verses are critical -

**“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”** (Ephesians 6:18).

Our old friend again - *In a battle environment with constantly changing fronts, any soldier that is not in continuous contact with the centre is doomed. God guarantees the link and frequency but the choice to keep the line switched on is the individuals. Similarly, we must not neglect the strength and support derivable from being in communication and fellowship from fellow soldiers. No soldier goes to battle alone.*

### \* **Worship**

**“Whenever the living creatures give glory, honour and thanks to him who sits on the throne and who lives for ever and ever, the twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne and worship him who lives for ever and ever.”** (Revelation 4:9-10)

Heaven is full of worship, and in the spiritual battle, intercessors must be full of powerful worship. What does worship do?

\* Worship brings closeness to God.

\* Worship brings access into the heavenly places, and then to the throne of God.

\* Worship gives that encouragement and strengthening which flows from the presence of God.

Within this worship, intercessors are established again in the victory of the cross of Jesus -

**“He forgave us all our sins, having cancelled the written code with all its regulations that was against us and stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross. And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.”** (Colossians2: 13-15)

**“Now has come the salvation and the power and the Kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ. For the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night has been hurled down.”** (Revelation.12:10-11)

Within worship, God speaks through the prophets, and prepares a way for the preaching of the word of God. The Church at Antioch worshipped, and their hearts were prepared to hear from God about the direction of the Church. The same must be true for intercessors.

\*\* Look in the library of the website for other articles on spiritual warfare and especially the article on sacrifice and the blood of Jesus.