



Positioned for Victory

**A Battle Briefing
On Spiritual Warfare**

John L Owens

“Watch, stand fast in the faith...be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For 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.”

(1 Corinthians 16:13, Ephesians 6:10-12)

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Quotations are taken from the authorized King James translation of the Bible.

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Forward

For too many years of my life, even after becoming a born-again believer in the Risen Lord Jesus Christ, I dwelt in a realm of spiritual ignorance and defeat. I had learned a little about the Bible but not enough to make much of a difference. It's the place where average church-goers dwell – a Laodicean land with a powerless form of religiosity.

No one had mentioned that we were in an invisible war. The days were sunny and the golfers were swinging. Everything looked normal to me. Sunday was the day of rest, following a lifting sermon. And the rest of the week was the daily grind. I did the best I could with what I had, believing the mantra that God helps those who help themselves. Family arguments were a way of life and when there were problems, well...who didn't have them?

Such a state might have gone on indefinitely if it had not been for a phone call that came one Christmas Eve... It was *a weak and trembling female voice*. My wife and I had agreed to spend the holidays watching over a Christian retreat center. While we were celebrating in our own insulated world, a desperate young woman had found the number... *"I need help. I'm about to commit suicide..."* Suddenly, our party ended.

I was totally unprepared, but had to do something quickly - *"God really loves you...Have you ever read John 3:16?"* The only thing I could think of was to slowly repeat the verse and pray that the Word of God would take hold. She was quiet as I spoke the words through the phone. Then, I thought – *get her to say it and put her own name in place of "the world"...* *"For God so loved Lisa..."* But she could not do it.

It was not that she refused – I could tell that she wanted to cooperate – but for some unknown reason was being stopped. As I pressed her to speak, the uncanny thing happened that sent a chill up my spine and turned my understanding of Christianity upside-down.

It was a different voice that emerged – raspy and snarling – spewing profanities with a stench of evil and hatred to everything holy. It had blocked Lisa’s name and prevented her from completing the verse. The message of love and forgiveness could not be received. She was being closed off in a vile prison of darkness.

Periodically, Lisa’s real voice would return, but she would have no memory of the evil words that had passed through her lips. She attempted to cooperate but every time she came close to connecting with the truth, her voice changed. This went on until I realized that I was powerless to truly help her. I needed help. Later I remembered that I had asked God a day earlier to *open my eyes to the spirit world...if what the Bible claimed was real today!* I had grown tired of playing church and wanted more. God had surprisingly answered my request in a way I would never forget.

Lisa was set free that night with the help of some of my Bible-believing friends. As commands were repeatedly issued in the authority of Jesus’ Name, I heard clusters of ethereal high-pitched screams lifting, then trailing off. It took several hours until she was finally at peace. Lisa renounced her involvement in the occult and witchcraft and received Jesus Christ as her personal Lord and Savior with great joy.

As I lay in bed that night, my eyes would not close. Looking up, all I could repeat was, *“My God...It’s real!”*

Since that day, I have served as a pastor, teacher and missionary to the former USSR. My worldview was transformed that night and many other experiences have only validated the truth of God’s Word in the Bible – There is a warfare going on that is largely hidden from human view. The nature, weapons, and outcome of this battle need to be understood if we are to “fight the good fight” and be more than survivors. For the Christian soldier, victory is assured. And soon the faithful will behold the rewards of their struggle.

John L. Owens

For a fast-moving well-researched novel dealing with the mystery of the Genesis giants (Nephilim) and the pre-flood earth, read [The Ninth Generation](#), by John L. Owens – reviews and synopsis at www.TheNinthGeneration.com.

War Briefing

The Battle

In many ways our modern armies are a picture of the highly organized foes which wage a constant warfare in heavenly places. Unlike earthly armies of flesh and blood, these warriors are invisible, their battle being fought in a different plane or dimension (except when visibility is granted).

The fact that such a battle is taking place is clearly supported by Holy Scripture, which is God's Word – "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God (lit.-*God-breathed*)."
See 2 Timothy 3:16. The Bible is our given Authority. In Daniel, chapter 10, we get a glimpse of the nature of the cosmic conflict from the report of an angel sent by God: "*Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day...thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me...*" Obviously, an earthly prince could not have halted an angel of God. These princes are angels.

Our present spiritual battle is described by the Apostle Paul in Ephesians 6: "*For 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.*"

Another description of this invisible war is found in Revelation 12: "*And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.*"

If such a battle seems remote and of little consequence, it may be that one is being lulled to sleep by the world's drumbeat. For surely, as one awakens, commits himself to Christ and seeks to grow by studying His Word and walking in obedience, such a person will soon realize that there are active forces working in opposition to stop him. The believer has His written Word as both warning and weapon. Consider 1 John 3:13 – "*Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.*", John 16:33 – "*...In the world ye*

shall have tribulation...” and 1 John 5:19 – “...*the whole world lieth in wickedness.*” It was the world, moved by Satan, which crucified the Son of God. The hostility is now primarily directed at those who belong to Jesus Christ and at those who are prophetically destined to share in Christ’s eternal reign – the Israel of God (Galatians 6:16).

The Opponents

The word for Satan in the Greek is “satanas” which means “adversary” (1 Peter 5:8). Other descriptions of him from God’s word include, “an angel of light” (2 Corinthians 11:14), “tempter” (1 Thessalonians 3:5), “deceiver” (2 Corinthians 11:3), “hinderer” (1 Thessalonians 2:18), “beast” (Revelation 19:19), “roaring lion” (1 Peter 5:8), the “god of this world” (2 Corinthians 4:4), and “prince of the power of the air” (Ephesians 2:2), “father of lies”, and “murderer” (John 8:44).

It is important to understand that Satan and Holy God are not equal opponents. The Creator is far greater than the created, as the watchmaker is superior to the watch – They are not even in the same category of being. Though powerful and highly networked with other dark powers, Satan was and is a created angel, limited in location, ability and knowledge. There are references in Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28 that describe him as an anointed covering cherub who was perfect in his ways when first created. His place was on the Holy Mountain of God. But his prideful ambition to exalt himself to God’s position and eventual filling with violence resulted in his downfall.

It is not clear at what point in time Satan became “god of this world”, but physical dominion over the earth had been given to Adam and Eve in the garden before their disobedience (Genesis 1:28). Worldly dominion probably was gained by Satan through man’s rebellion. Jesus recognized Satan’s right to rule the world when that “tempter” offered it all to Him in exchange for His worship – Rather than disputing the offer, Jesus overcame the temptation with Scripture: *“And the devil, taking Him up into an high mountain, showed unto Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto Him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.”* (Luke 4:5-8) Somehow, the power and glory of this world was put in Satan’s hands, and none of Adam’s descendents had the authority to take it from him.

God, in His Holy Will, had ordained that if man obeyed Satan, he must suffer the consequences and become subject to his tyranny. Because of the disobedience of the first Adam, a second Adam was required - a man without sin who lived in perfect obedience to the will of Holy God. Jesus became that One, bypassing the sinful bloodline of the first Adam through a virgin birth - His mission, to *“destroy the works of the devil”* (1 John 3:8), even to destroy the devil himself: *“Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.”* (Hebrews 2:14-15) Throughout history Satan could appear before God in heaven as the accuser of all humanity and in opposition to them, keeping man spiritually imprisoned...until the second Adam became the Holy Sacrifice for sin.

Born under the law, the Son of God obeyed it perfectly. He resisted the temptations of Satan to withdraw Himself from under its authority. Jesus willingly gave Himself up to bear the lawful punishment for the sins of the whole world. When the law had been thus perfectly fulfilled, the authority of sin and Satan was brought to an end. Therefore, death could not hold Him. *“Through the blood of the everlasting covenant”* God brought Him *“again from the dead”*. So also He *“entered heaven by His own blood”*, to make reconciliation effective for us. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the evidence that His sacrifice was acceptable to His Father, giving power over death. And the good news to man which He proclaimed is that *“God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life”*, and *“If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.”* (John 3:16, 8:36)

So, the age-old conflict between God and Satan has been rightfully won by God-in-the-flesh. *“All power in heaven and earth”* has rightfully been given to Jesus our Savior (Matthew 28:18). Make no mistake about who He is and what He has done: *“...the image of the invisible God...by Him were all things were created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him and for Him (Jesus)...For in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in Him, which is the head of all principality and power.”* (Colossians 1-2)

Why the Battle Continues

Why then, if Satan has been defeated, is there still a battle and who is it between? This situation on the earth today has been compared with that which existed following D-day in World War II. Although the war had been declared officially won, there were still enemy regiments in remote areas that refused to surrender. A longer time was required before complete victory was realized. While this illustration may be of some help, it is not a perfect comparison. God's end-time plan is more complex.

In the twelfth chapter of Revelation, we can see where the conflict is intensified on earth. *“Woe to the inhabitants of the earth” exclaimed the voice in heaven, “for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time...And when the dragon saw that he was cast down unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man-child.”*

The woman signifies the Jewish nation, and, having been grafted in (Romans 11), the church (true believers), both of which have suffered terrible persecutions throughout the centuries. Although Satan is a foe who has fallen, he is not yet finally done away with. He cannot now reach the glorified Jesus, so instead seeks to foil God's continuing plan by attacking His people. It has always been Satan's desire to be worshipped and this is his last desperate attempt on earth to destroy all opposition and to establish his kingdom with the aid of his rebellious angels, territorial overseers, unclean spirits, and as many humans as remain under his antichrist deception.

While we are called to *“fight the good fight”*, the battle belongs to the Lord. He is the Almighty, the Head of the Body, and the One who directs it. Our duty as soldiers is to remain submitted, ready and obedient, being careful not to give ground to the enemy.

The Outcome of the Battle

Just as Scripture describes the history of Satan's rebellion, it also tells us the final outcome. At some future point in time there will be a total consummation of victory over him, as revealed in Revelation, chapter 20:

“And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having a key to the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil, and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, that he should deceive the

nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled; and after that he must be loosed a little season.”

Finally, after the thousand years, Satan will be loosed from the pit for a season only to face the hosts of the Lord in the Battle of Armageddon and total defeat. Then Satan with all his own will be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone and tormented day and night for ever and ever (Revelation 20:10).

It is important to realize that Satan is an already-conquered foe through the blood of Jesus Christ. The victory belongs to believers because the Victor has come and conquered through the cross. Satan knows of his defeat – past, present and future – and trembles before Holy God. He cannot deny, but he can bitterly oppose, contest, argue and struggle. For the believer, even apparent losses are turned into gains supernaturally by God (Romans 8:28). And as the kingdom of Christ advances, those who have been bound by deception and held captive by Satan are set free by the Truth of the Gospel.

Preparing for Battle

Putting on the Whole Armor

“Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.” (Ephesians 6:11)

Because our warfare is far mightier than conventional warfare, our battle gear must be of a spiritual nature issued to us through Jesus Christ. Every Christian is commanded to “take” and “put on”.

First, the believer must have his loins girded with truth. The loins are the chief seat of bodily strength. Of behemoth (God’s mightiest land animal) it is said, “His strength is in his loins” (Job 40:16). The loins are to the body as the keel is to the ship – the sustaining center of strength and movement. To “smite through the loins” (Deuteronomy 33:11) is to cause destruction and ruin. Applying this spiritually, we must understand what is meant by the “loins”. In 1 Peter 1:13, the command is given, “gird up the loins of your mind...” It is our spirits and minds which must be bolstered by truth. Such truth, to keep us strong in battle, must be truth of doctrine from God’s word, as well as truth of heart or sincerity. The father of lies, Satan, must be given no access to loose the loins of our minds, thus robbing our spirits of strength. Applying this means giving more time to the word than to the world’s media.

Secondly, we must have on the breastplate of righteousness. To sustain spiritual life we must live in the absolute perfection of the law of God. But, how? Only by Jesus Christ who is our righteousness – imputed from the cross, and imparted by the Holy Spirit. We must cling to Him to maintain the power of holiness and righteousness in our life and conversation. It is not an outward form of godliness or good show that the devil maligns, but the inner power. Not the name “Christian”, but the new Christ-nature is what brings this lion out of his den. We know from God’s word that “all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution” (2 Timothy 3:12). But we also have the promise of victory, “in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us” (Romans 8:37).

The third piece of armour is a covering for our feet – “and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace.” The revelation of Jesus Christ, His kingdom, and the peace with God that He alone offers is without comparison the best news that poor sinners can hear. True and manifold peace is contained in the gospel of Christ: Through His sacrificial blood, there is peace with Holy God (reconciliation), peace within (conscience), and peace with one another (love and forgiveness). The Christian soldier should have a good understanding of and a readiness to communicate the gospel truth. A right perception of salvation is a guard against pride, and evangelistic preparation – being ready to give the reason for one’s own hope – is a mark of obedience that will bring great reward.

The Christian’s spiritual shield is impressed with special importance with the words, “Above all, taking the shield of faith”, and the promise, “whereby ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.” The crucial place of such a shield is made clear by the Apostle John – “This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith” (1 John 5:4). Let the shield of faith be raised and Satan will soon retreat. The fiery darts which the believing soul must quench may be of two types: One is that which is pleasingly enticing and bewitching with promises of satisfaction. The other is that which frightens and carries horror with it. Both are fiery and quenched only by faith. A measure of such faith has been dealt to every man (Romans 12:3), but the exercise of our faith in battle determines our victory.

The fifth piece of armor is the Christian’s “helmet of salvation”. The helmet defends the head – the seat of the soul – our mind, will and emotions. The hope / assurance of salvation is vital to protect us from dangerous and deadly impressions communicated by the world, the flesh, or the devil. Such hope is stated in 1 John 5:13

and provides the inspiration for mighty endeavors. The hope of salvation makes a man diligent and faithful in all types of service, provides patience during great suffering, and quiets the spirit during times of waiting.

The sixth and final piece is “the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God”. This is the only actual weapon mentioned – the sword, a synonym for “war” itself. And what soldier would be without one and without training in its use? It is equally absurd to think of a Christian without knowledge of the Bible, and some practice in referring to it. Let us consider what a weapon it is: *“For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart”* (Hebrews 4:12).

As the sword defends the soldier, it unseats his enemy, making it a keeping as well as killing weapon. While it restrains the believer from yielding to the force of outward temptations (James 1:12-14), by it he kills and renders powerless his lusts within – making the victory complete (Romans 6:11-14). It is the “sword of the Spirit” in three ways: First, God the Spirit is the Author of it, moving holy men of God to speak and write the precise words purposed by Him. Second, God’s Holy Spirit is the only true interpreter of His Word – “No prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation.” (2 Peter 1:20-21) Third, it is the Spirit of God who gives the Word its efficacy and power in the soul – *“Thy words are spirit and they are life.”* (John 6:63) The sword of the Spirit can be used effectively against persecutors, heretics, the army of lusts lodged within ourselves, and the spirits behind many afflictions.

Assessing Strengths & Weaknesses

Let us consider the strengths and weaknesses of our adversary first. We learn from Scripture that Satan has been in existence from before the world was spoken into being, and was first created as an anointed cherubim angel – a guardian of God’s heavenly throne. Satan was not only gifted with great wisdom, but also great beauty. Five deadly desires led to his fall: (1) not to be responsible to anyone but self, (2) to have power over others, (3) to have a position of absolute authority, (4) to receive the highest esteem and recognition / glory, and (5) to be like the Most High God – of infinite perfections (Isaiah 14: 12-14).

His super-angelic intelligence and craftiness which he employed in persuading a third of the angels to follow him in rebellion against God is now being targeted against the followers of Jesus Christ and those who are the prophetic inheritors of the coming Kingdom – Israel. Despite the tremendous powers and clever abilities which he has developed over thousands of years, and a highly organized army of evil agents, there is one fatal weakness which will result in his ultimate destruction: Neither Satan nor his agents have any way to resist the power in the blood of Jesus Christ – the death and resurrection of the Son of God. It is written of the saints (true believers) that *“they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb (Jesus), and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.”* (Revelation 12: 11) And ultimately it will be the power and authority of Jesus Christ gained over Satan through the cross that banishes him to the eternal lake of fire.

When we consider our own strength in the face of such an adversary and in a world system which he diabolically manipulates, we are no match, regardless of our charm, intellect and fleshly powers. Our only hope for victory is in dying with Christ to our carnal selves (Galatians 2:20) and presenting a cleansed vessel / our bodies as a living and holy sacrifice (Romans 12: 1-2). Only the presence of the victorious Christ and the indwelling power of His Holy Spirit gives us assurance of victory.

Considering Position and Strongholds

Clearly the position of the saints in Christ is one of victory. For if we have truly died with Christ by faith, we have also been raised with Him and are seated with Him at the right hand of God. Such is our Scripturally-stated position – spiritually – granted through faith.

Far too many prayer meetings are conducted with a mind-set of defeat. Reports of Satan’s workings are almost glorified and faith is practically quenched as members huddle together with talk of principalities and powers of great darkness spread overhead. No wonder so little is accomplished through such prayers. Instead of thinking this way, the believer needs to consider what the Word of God declares as to the saints’ position in Christ. It does far more for one’s prayers to be looking down from the highest Throne - having all authority in heaven and earth, and to see those dark powers as subject to the Name of Jesus.

In daily practice this victorious position will be frequently challenged and disputed by Satan – thoughts of unworthiness and condemnation for sins are among his arsenal - thus we must always keep up our shield of faith and utilize our sword skillfully when the enemy draws near. If, by chance, a fiery dart finds entrance or the enemy has gained access to us in some way, we may still use the sword, which is the Word of God, in uncovering him and sending him running.

We are warned in Ephesians 4:27, “Neither give place to the devil.” Such a place amounts to a stronghold or position of spiritual ground whereby he will war to spoil us of our victorious walk in Christ. The context in Ephesians speaks of failing to completely put to death the old carnal nature – by continuing to lie, lust, steal, or remain unforgiving. There are many ways for the flesh to give ground to Satan, and these must be considered if Jesus is truly one’s Lord. For no flesh will ever glory in Christ.

Maintaining a position of victory involves warring against thoughts – the mind is the main battlefield. Strongholds can manifest as imaginations or ideas that exalt themselves against the knowledge of God – why we must have the Word of God in our hearts through Bible reading and memorization. Such thoughts are to be cast down and brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ (2 Corinthians 10:5).

Studying Enemy Tactics

Consider some of the titles for Satan and it becomes quickly apparent that he is not a fair fighter. He will use closest friends, even family members, to plant ungodly suggestions and advance his wickedness. He is capable of cleverly disguising evil to seem acceptable, even good, and that which is of God to seem foolish, even ugly.

Satan is no ally of any man, even of those who are so deceived through this “father of lies” to serve him. After being used and drained of all hope and life, for the rejection of Christ’s sacrifice, such lost souls go to face a holy judgment for their sins (Hebrews 9:27). There is no safe middle ground for the uncommitted. Those who are not “*born again*” into the family of God are left with their father, Satan, who blinds and manipulates them for his own purposes (Acts 26: 18, Ephesians 2:2). It is good to keep in mind that we all, at one time, were in such a condition, deceived and dead in our trespasses and sins (Ephesians 2: 1-3). Recalling our own deception can help us in ministering to others. The adversary’s tactics don’t change that much.

While there seems to be no limit to the snares and devices Satan and his demons can use, there are basically three ways that he manipulates human nature to his advantage. They are the same appeals which he used on Eve in the garden, and the same three he used when tempting Jesus Christ in the wilderness. These three primary channels of temptation are (1) the lust of the flesh, (2) the lust of the eyes, and (3) the boastful pride of life. Note that these are all characteristics of our old nature that we are told to mortify (put to death by faith / Romans 6). *“Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry;”* (Colossians 3:5)

It is essential to realize the reality of this warfare. One of Satan’s best tricks is in blinding many Christians to this fact that they are in a bloody, soulish war. Little wonder that so many drop out of Christian ranks when they sense any pressure from the enemy – They have been duped to *“walk in the flesh”*, according to *“the natural man”* (1 Corinthians 2:14). A popular lie is that it was acceptable for Christ to die, but it is not “Christian” to accept one’s own suffering – a part not usually explained when recruiting church members. The good food, supportive friends and material comforts have become such a part of their fleshly living that they would rather bend or ignore the Scriptures than suffer loss through obedience. Satan likes to keep some Scripture hidden, such as, *“friendship of the world is enmity with God. Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.”* (James 4:4, 1 John 2:15-16)

Satan concentrates much of his activity in attacking, confusing and draining the power from the church, which is the Body of Christ. He works craftily and with stealth to gain access to the pulpit to distort truth, discredit the messengers of God, create rifts and resentments among members, to question and carnalize programs, and to instill fear and timidity in carrying out the will of God for witnessing and missions.

His tactics and diversions will alter with the times, but there is always one sure way to spot him – a corrupt tree always bears corrupt fruit. *“By their fruits ye shall know them.”* (Matthew 7:20) Although God will in His own way succeed, Satan will never seek to further God’s purposes.

Going to War

Recapturing Lost Ground

We have seen earlier that it is possible to give ground or place to the devil in our lives. How then do we get it back? Perhaps the problem lies with the question, “what is it that we want back?” If it is the peace and joy that comes from a right relationship with God, then fine. But if it is the old pleasure-centered way of life with its worldly happiness, then we are not yet fit for the Kingdom – Spiritual boot camp is needed.

When a soldier signs up for the army, he must make a break with civilian life. In the same way, when we commit ourselves to Jesus Christ, we surrender the right to ourselves – we are bought with a price, by the very blood of Jesus. Our lives are no longer our own. If we have parted with the old man by joining ourselves to Jesus and becoming a new man (2 Corinthians 5:17), we dare not ask for the old life back.

The devil has no use for that which is dead – good reason for keeping the old man and his ways dead / crucified with Christ. And he has no right to that which belongs to Christ. So if Satan has gained ground in our lives, then we must ask how it happened. Did we invite him in through some sinful act? Was there an offense by someone we have not been able to forgive? Are we harboring a grudge? If the answer is not apparent, then prayer and possibly fasting are Scriptural methods of getting at the truth.

Once the gate of entrance is discovered, and the hidden sin revealed, it must be confessed to God, and that ground surrendered to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. In some cases the stronghold may be the result of sins of the fathers transmitted down from three or four generations back – possibly, involvement with false gods or occultism. Once revealed, these ancestral sins should be confessed, renounced and removed through the blood of Jesus Christ. Any unclean spirits that were attached by these sins can then be easily dismissed in the authority of Jesus' Name.

These same Scriptural principles apply in helping other Christians out of bondage, and for non-Christians in making Jesus Lord and Savior of their lives. In some cases, bondage may be so strong that extensive prayer and exercise of spiritual authority in the Name of Jesus Christ may be necessary to free them; however, the faith of one righteous believer can work a great deliverance. Remember that Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost, and to destroy the works of the devil. But the victim must be willing to forsake their sins. As with alcoholics, it may be necessary for a

person to hit rock-bottom before they will see the seriousness of what they are doing. Likewise, the outward manifestation of a demonic spirit can be a real eye-opener.

Seizing New Ground

As we go in obedience to Christ's great commission and allow the Holy Spirit to direct our lives, we are sure to enter Satan's domain. Those Christians who experience no trials or persecution are very likely staying out of the devil's way – traits of a Laodicean luke-warmness, if not isolation.

When we realize that we are under Divine protection as we go and are empowered by the Holy Spirit, we need have no fear of men, devils or circumstances. The believers' steps are ordered by the Lord. *"Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall by any means hurt you."* (Luke 10:19)

Like the prophet, Isaiah, we can say, *"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me (as part of Christ's spiritual body) to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord (Today is the day of salvation), and the day of vengeance of our God..."* (Isaiah 61: 1-2)

The believer's greatest joy is to be instrumental in leading a lost person to Jesus Christ resulting in a new birth into the Kingdom of God. Those who win souls are wise and will shine like the stars forever. This is the front line of battle - one area where the devil will marshal every degree of craftiness and pull everything possible out of his diabolical arsenal. He knows from Scripture that all history points to the time at which the final soul is won, and the devil will be bound in a bottomless pit, later to be cast into the eternal lake of fire. Satan also knows that every soul that is saved causes the holy angels around God's throne to rejoice – this he vehemently opposes.

Seizing new ground through soul-winning takes some preparation and equipping. But for those who are fully yielded, it comes quite easily through the Spirit within, and in answer to prayer. The believer should be ready with a personal testimony, able to present the Gospel (which is the power of God to salvation), and know how to lead a person out of the enemy's ranks to salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. Some are

saved through written tracts. However it happens, though, it must be a work of God – the Father must draw and the Spirit must lead.

Withstanding and Holding Ground

“Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong” (1 Corinthians 16:13)

“Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.” (Ephesians 6:13)

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage” (Galatians 5:1)

“For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord” (1 Thessalonians 5:8)

In Jesus Christ, we are more than conquerors, and the devil will flee before us as we exercise our true faith and authority through His Name. Beware however, that in-between battles, the enemy doesn't slip in unawares and find the armor lying loose, or that the sweet taste of victory makes one confident in something other than Christ. A strange warfare it is, where the victorious side must humbly advance on its knees.

Herein is the real test for the Christian, just as it was for ancient Israel once they had settled in the Promised Land. When the victor has arrived, it is then that he often relaxes his defenses. Satan surely realizes this and takes every advantage. We find the God-given warning repeatedly in Scripture, *“Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness”* (2 Peter 3:17). Even as Christ was tempted at the very end of His ministry, just moments from final victory, to come down from the cross and save himself, the devil will often seek to steal away our prize in the closing stretch of the race. Let us keep Christ's words in our hearts – *“Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown”* (Revelation 3:11).

With all the armor in place, the final admonition is to pray – *“always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints”* (Ephesians 6:18). We must be sober, vigilant, watchful and prayerful at all times.

Use of Superior Weapons

“For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds” (2 Corinthians 10:4)

The good soldier of Christ has a working knowledge of the Word of God and is directed by the Spirit – therein is the power and the superiority of weapons. While others indulge in fleshly pursuits and worldly entertainment, he dares not waste time or jeopardize his mission by allowing the sword to become dull and rusty. He spends valuable time memorizing the written Word, applying it, and ministering it to others.

When Jesus called His twelve disciples together, He gave them power and authority over all devils (demons), and to heal diseases (Luke 9:1). His prayer for them was also extended to us who believe on Him through the Word (John 17:20). The Christian’s faith-acceptance of his seat with Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:6), *“far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion,”* provides him with authority and power for full victory, so long as he maintains his place, wearing the spiritual armor, and wielding the offensive weapons. He sits with the exalted Lord in the heavenly places (Ephesians 1:20), which is the apex of all authority for the universe. This is meant to be a present experience of faith. As we look through the eyes of faith into the invisible realm, aligned with the Holy Spirit and the Word of God, we may speak those things as directed and witness His power at work.

Just as Moses, lifting up his hand holding the rod, took authority in the name of Jehovah over the foes of God’s people – so today, every consecrated hand that lifts the rod of the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ against the powers of darkness is directing the Throne-power of Christ against Satan and his hosts. Moses was given authority to part the Red Sea. We are promised, *“If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, ‘Remove hence to yonder place’; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you” (Matthew 17:20).* *“...and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven” (Matthew 16:17).*

While our weapons are mighty in Christ and are sure to bring joyful victories, Jesus leaves us with one final thought: *“Rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven” (Luke 10:20).*

“I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing.” (Paul, the Apostle - 2 Timothy 4:7-8)

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For a fast-moving well-researched novel dealing with the mystery of the Genesis giants (Nephilim) and the pre-flood earth, read The Ninth Generation, by John L. Owens – reviews and synopsis at www.TheNinthGeneration.com.