

Our Spiritual War

Eph 6:10-12

10 ¶ Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 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.

In this passage Paul tells the Ephesian believers that it is necessary to put on the proper equipment in order to fight against Satan. Satan is a spiritual being. He does not have a fleshly body like we do. And he also has at his disposal an enormous spiritual army that we must wage war against. That is why Paul warns these early Christians that they must be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. But God is not going to do it all for us. We must put on the armor God has specified in order to stand against the ways of the devil.

Paul tells us that our battle is not with flesh and blood. It is not a physical battle. But we fight against “principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of the age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in heavenly places.

Listen to the New Living Translation on this verse. Eph 6:12 For we are not fighting against people made of flesh and blood, but against the evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against those mighty powers of darkness who rule this world, and against wicked spirits in the heavenly realms. NLT

When Jesus was here on earth He often encountered spirits who were inhabiting people. Often they would confess Jesus as the son of God but Jesus would not receive testimony.

Mark 1:23-27 23 Now there was a man in their synagogue with an unclean spirit. And he cried out, 24 saying, "Let us alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Did You come to destroy us? I know who You are — the Holy One of God!" 25 But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be quiet, and come out of him!" 26 And when the unclean spirit had convulsed him and cried out with a loud voice, he came out of him. NKJV

We can say that the Bible is false and things like this never happened, or we can say that these evil spirits only plagued people during the ministry of Jesus, or that this type of thing continues today.

The physical world is something we can comprehend, while the spiritual world seems to be in a different dimension, a realm which we cannot as easily detect.

The Bible teaches that there is a spiritual realm of beings that are just as real as ourselves. These spirits all have intellect and purpose in their actions. And like humans there are two basic groups. Those who align themselves with God and those who oppose Him. The one group supports and helps the Christian in this life while the other plots and tries to bring about the Christian's downfall.

I. There are an innumerable number of spiritual beings.

A. God Himself is a Spiritual being.

1. John 4:24 "God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."
2. 2Co 3:17 Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.
3. 1Ti 1:17 Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

B. God also created a spiritual class called angels

1. Da 7:10 A fiery stream issued And came forth from before Him. A thousand thousands ministered to Him; Ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated, And the books were opened.
2. Mt 26:53 "Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels?"
3. Lu 2:13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying:
4. Heb 12:22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels,

II. The general purpose of angels in connection with people seems to be to serve God toward them.

A. Heb 1:14 Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?

B. An angel rescued Hagar, Abraham's concubine and the whole Arab race.

1. Ge 16:7 ¶ Now the Angel of the LORD found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, by the spring on the way to Shur.

C. Angels rescued Lot and his family from Sodom.

1. Ge 19:16 And while he lingered, the men took hold of his hand, his wife's hand, and the hands of his two daughters, the LORD being merciful to him, and they brought him out and set him outside the city.

D. God used an angel to sustain the prophet Elijah.

1. 1Ki 19:5 Then as he lay and slept under a broom tree, suddenly an angel touched him, and said to him, "Arise and eat."

E. Angels minister to God's people for protection.

1. Ps 91:11 For He shall give His angels charge over you, To keep you in all your ways.

F. God used an angel to protect Daniel in the lion's den.

1. Da 6:22 "My God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths, so that they have not hurt me, because I was found innocent before Him; and also, O king, I have done no wrong before you."

G. Angels even ministered unto Jesus in the days of His flesh when He was subject to earthly trials.

1. Mr 1:13 And He was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan, and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered to Him.

H. Angels usher God's saints at death.

1. Lu 16:22 "So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried.

I. An angel released the apostles after they were put in prison.

1. Ac 5:19 But at night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out, and said,

J. An angel released Peter from prison.

1. Ac 12:7 Now behold, an angel of the Lord stood by him, and a light shone in the prison; and he struck Peter on the side and raised him up, saying, "Arise quickly!" And his chains fell off his hands.

K. Angels are used to communicate God's will

1. Ac 27:23 "For there stood by me this night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve, 24 "saying, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; you must be brought before Caesar; and indeed God has granted you all those who sail with you.'

III. Some of these created spirits have sinned and are in rebellion against God.

A. Mt 25:41 "Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels:

1. Here we see that not only the devil has sinned but also those angels that are his.

2. We notice also their end and that the lake of fire was prepared to them and not people.

B. Rev 12:3 And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. 4 His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. 9 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.

1. This verse seems to tell of future events.
2. It refers to a time when Satan, who is spoken often of as a dragon will try to wipe God's people from the earth, and would do so if God did not protect them, using angels no doubt.

C. 2 Pe 2:4 For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment;

1. This seems to speak of a special group of angels that are already incarcerated for some particular wickedness.

D. Jude 1:6 And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day;

1. This verse seems to agree with 2 Peter 2:4 and defines these angel's particular sin as not keeping their original state in which they were created.
2. There is much disagreement as to what that might be.

IV. In Summary

- A. We are surrounded by an innumerable number of spirit beings.
- B. Some will do us nothing but good.
- C. Others seek only our misery and destruction while promising us freedom, wealth and pleasure.
- D. These spiritual beings seek to influence us in various ways and by various degrees.
- E. Those who belong to God help us in difficult situations and protect us and even might influence others on our behalf.
- F. Those who belong to Satan want to possess people and destroy them.
- G. The best news is that those who belong to God have what is needed to defeat the devil and his angels.
- H. We want to talk more about that next week.