

Unseen Enemies

Text : Eph. 6: 10-20 , II Cor. 10: 3-6

INTRODUCTION :

A. Our country has been under attack by radical Muslims for a number of years.

1. Our enemy is not a specific country, but an evil ideology which is very widespread.
2. The objective of this merciless enemy is not to dominate, but to destroy us.
 - a. They hate our freedoms.
 - b. They hate our financial success.
 - c. They hate the immorality which is associated with American culture.
(*When people are free, some will always choose evil. God only has those who choose Him.*)
 - d. Most of all, they hate us for not accepting their religion and their prophet.

B. Though they outnumber us, this evil enemy is no match for our military.

1. The American military is feared around the world.
 - a. Our soldiers are among the best trained in the world.
 - b. Our soldiers equipped better than any military in the world.
2. American military technology is far advanced above any other nation.
 - a. Our bombs are expensive, but we use few of them because most hit their target.
 - b. We have unmanned vehicles which are seldom detected before they strike.
 - c. We have smart artillery shells which precisely hit unseen targets from miles away.
3. We have the ability to move men and equipment to remote battle fields in minutes.
 - a. We have armored personnel carriers that can travel off-road at highway speeds.
 - b. Our helicopters and Osprey aircraft can drop men even in mountain terrain.

C. Though our enemy knows it cannot stand against our army, they keep attacking.

1. A military can kill all the enemy's soldiers, but no military can defeat an ideology.
2. Even after multitudes are killed, the ideology lives on in the hearts of the survivors.
3. Stories of their martyrs reinforce and strengthen the resolve of the living adherents.

D. Our military leaders are baffled.

1. The finest military minds in the free world have not been able to come up with a military strategy which will defeat this insidious enemy.
2. No matter how many we kill, they keep coming at us.

3. We field devastating new weapons against them, but they pick up their antique, often crude weapons and keep on coming back.
4. In the absence of weapons, they strap bombs on themselves and become an attack.

E. Short of one side being exterminated there appears to be no end to this war.

1. The radical Muslims will never surrender. (*The do not fear death.*)
2. If they keep coming at us the way they are, the cost of defense will impoverish us.

There is a direct parallel between this physical struggle and the spiritual war in which we Christians find ourselves. We are in a war that will never end until time is no more.

I. Every person on planet earth is a combatant in this spiritual war.

A. All Christians are engaged in the war between Satan and God ... good and evil.

1. Remember our texts :
 - a. **II Cor. 10: 3-4** For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, **4** for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.
(*We are really at war.*)
 - b. **Eph. 6: 12** – For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.
2. The Apostle Paul often referred to those who serve God as soldiers :
 - a. In reference to paying preachers :
I Cor. 9: 7 – Who at any time serves as a soldier at his own expense?
 - b. In reference to those who traveled with him and served him :
Phil. 2: 25 – But I thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger and minister to my need;
 - c. In reference to his trainee :
II Tim. 2: 3-4 Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. **4** No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier.
(*Don't be distracted by daily life.*)

B. This battle between good and evil started in the Garden of Eden.

1. **Gen. 3** ... Satan came in the form of a serpent to tempt mankind.
2. His objective was not to rule over the garden, but to destroy God's relationship with man. (*This same enemy seeks to destroy our relationship with God.*)

3. Satan has been at war with God from the beginning.
 - a. Satan refuses to submit to God's reign.
 - b. He does not want for God to reign over men.
 - * *All who do not submit to the reign of God in their lives, share Satan's destiny.*
 - c. All who oppose God oppose YOU because you are a child of God.
 - * **For example :** *In the physical realm, if someone was trying to destroy your father or your brother you would consider him your enemy.*

C. There are no non-combatants in the war against evil / Satan.

1. While discussing the battle against evil, Jesus said :

Luke 11: 23 – He who is not with Me is against Me; and (Bear fruit or be
he who does not gather with Me, scatters. cut off. John 15)
2. **THUS :**
 - a. The one who does not decide FOR Jesus has in truth decided against Him.
 - b. Failure to become an active combatant WITH Jesus is to become His enemy.
 - c. NO ONE outside Christ can say, “I’m a good person.” He is an enemy of Christ.
(Remember : **Rom. 5: 9-11** enemies .. wrath ; **Eph. 2: 1-3** dead in sin .. children of wrath)

D. You and I are locked in close hand-to-hand combat against Satan.

1. **Eph. 6:12** – For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.
 - a. There is a real enemy who seeks to destroy us.
 - b. That enemy is not physical.
 - c. Our enemy attacks us where we are, but he isn't from this plain. (*heavenly = spirit*)
 - d. This enemy is wicked. THUS, it is neither from God nor from God's Heaven.
 - e. The enemy is a ruler of evil so he has others serving under his reign. (*has power*)
2. We are fighting this enemy up close and personal. (*No drones from a distances*)
 - a. “**Struggle**” (*pale*) is unique work used only once in N.T.
 - b. Strong's Definition : To wrestling , Hand-to-hand combat.
 - c. It refers to “a contest between two in which each endeavors to throw the other, and which is decided when the victor is able to hold his opponent down with his hand upon his neck.”
3. Satan seeks to destroy you in order to hurt God.
 - a. He has neither love nor mercy.
 - b. There are no civilians ... his objective is as many casualties as possible.

II. Though the war is fought in a realm that we can't see, it has real physical affects.

A. This is not a strange concept. Many things we don't see affect our lives.

1. Many people die of carbon monoxide without knowing it is present.
2. Viruses kill people every day, but we can only see the effects, not the virus.
3. Looking through a microscope opens a whole different world to us.

B. Satan attacks people in this realm in order to affect Jesus in the spiritual realm.

1. This cosmic conflict becomes personal when Satan attacks your life here and now.
2. When Satan is oppressing you, he's actually attacking God.
 - a. You're just infrastructure.
 - b. For example : when an enemy fights to take or destroy a bridge, he is not actually fighting for or against that bridge; he seeks to prevent his enemy from using it.

C. The story of Job was the perfect illustration of this principle.

1. Job was a righteous man.
2. He neither understood nor deserved the afflictions that befell him. (*no earthly reason*)
3. Job's earthly life was destroyed because of an exchange in the Heavenly realm.

D. Satan inflicts many adverse things on our lives trying to get us to reject God.

1. Satan killed Job's children, but he used a strong wind to knock their house down.
2. Satan removed Job's wealth, but he used Sabeans and Chaldeans to carry off his oxen, donkeys, camel and servants as well as lightening to kill his sheep.
3. Job had no idea why these horrible things were happening to him, but it was all a result of conflict between spiritual being in heavenly places.

*. *Though each of us must fight spiritual battles in our fleshly bodies, just as with Job, God protects us from Satan's overwhelming force. (I Cor. 10: 13, I Pet. 1: 5)*

III. Satan has many "schemes" ("methods") for leading people away from God.

A. Eph. 6: 11 – Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.

1. Strong defines "**schemes**" [*methodeia*] as : cunning arts, deceit, craft, trickery.
2. It comes from a compound word : With [*meta*] + Travel [*hodeuo*]
3. **Thus** : Satan is able to deceive because he gets into one's life to seek out weakness.

B. A person is not lead away from God by one event in his life.

1. Atheistic college professor will not destroy the faith of a believer.
2. However, a corrupt roommate can make wrong things seem normal and acceptable.
3. Satan does not appear to the believer as some wicked creature like “*Darth Vaider*.”

C. The spiritual battle takes place in the course of one’s everyday life.

1. When negative things happen, Satan tempts us to blame God.
 - a. **James 1: 13** – **Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone**
 - b. Satan will make sure there is always someone there to reinforce the negative.
2. People we love, even in our own families will work against us as agents of Satan.
 - a. **Matt. 10: 35-37** **For I came to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; ³⁶ and a man’s enemies will be the members of his household. ³⁷ He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.**
 (*Remember Job’s wife*)
 - b. Those we love can be the most effective weapons for Satan to use against us.
 - c. Remember : ALL who have not accepted the Lordship of Jesus serve Satan.
- * *Few of Satan’s servants think they are his servants. They don’t have horns and ...*
3. We live in a world dominated by people who have not surrendered to Christ.
 - a. Each day we are called to battle for our Lord and Master Jesus the Christ.
 - b. No battle is won by defense alone ... we must be advocating for our Father.
 - c. A soldier who does not fight is a handicap to the army.
 A servant who does not serve is not a servant at all. (**Remember ... Luke 11:23**)

CONCLUSION :**A. The victory is determined by the number of souls gathered by each side.**

1. Ephesians 1 ... God is adopting people into His family.
2. Ephesians 2 ... God is forming a household to accommodate all in His family.
3. Ephesians 3 ... God is forming those He adopts into a community, the church.
4. Ephesians 4 ... God establishes a code of conduct for His people.
5. Ephesians 5 ... God tells His people how to interact with the world.
6. Ephesians 6 ... God instructs us to protect what He has established for us.

B. “Finally” indicated more than “this is the last point.”

1. Vs. **10** – **Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might.**
2. “Finally” [*loipoy*] is defined as : remaining, the rest.
3. This is what the book was building up to.
 - a. All that has gone before is to sustain this admonition.
 - b. God has done a lot for you, now this is what you must do for Him.

C. “be strong”

1. You have been adopted into the family of God, placed into His household and made a part of His church community.
2. You are not asked to be strong on your own, but to use his strength.
 - a. “**in the Lord and in the strength of His might.**”
 - b. Remember **3: 20**
“Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, ...”
3. Jesus will work more than we can imagine if we have the faith to let Him work through us

D. The future of all God has done depends upon you “Stand firm” ... defend it.

1. He repeats the admonition three times in this short section.
 - a. Vs. **11** – **Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. (*You have all you need ... now do it*)**
 - b. Vs. **13** – **Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.**
 - c. Vs. **14** – **Therefore, stand firm having ...**
2. Position yourself between the enemy and God and do not be moved.
 - a. No matter what Satan throws at you, NEVER retreat.
 - b. No matter how heated the battle, NEVER surrender.
 - c. You will never stand alone and you will never be defeated if you just stand firm.
3. You must use all that God has provide you and all the reinforcement He furnishes.
4. I challenge us to be God’s mighty men as Shammah was David’s mighty man :
II Sam. 23: 11–12 **Now after him was Shammah the son of Agee a Hararite. And the Philistines were gathered into a troop where there was a plot of ground full of lentils, and the people fled from the Philistines. **12** But he took his stand in the midst of the plot, defended it and struck the Philistines; and the LORD brought about a great victory.**

INVITATION :

Lesson Texts :**Eph. 6: 10-20**

10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. **11** Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. **12** For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.

13 Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.

14 Stand firm therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, **15** and having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE; **16** in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. **17** And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

18 With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints, **19** and pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, **20** for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in *proclaiming* it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

II Cor. 10: 3-6

3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, **4** for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. **5** We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ, **6** and we are ready to punish all disobedience, whenever your obedience is complete.