

## The Weapons of Warfare

*"For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. 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, and we are ready to punish all disobedience, whenever your obedience is complete" (2 Corinthians 10:3-6)*

Every plan of God is for the good of His people; every plan of Satan is for their destruction. Satan knows that when he wounds one of God's people, he wounds the heart of God. The real war is between God and Satan. We are sons and daughters of the King and our commission is to liberate those who are behind the enemy's lines by breaking his strongholds with the weapons of our warfare.

Satan's goal is to see that the prayers of God's people do not reach heaven because God has chosen to partner with His people in fulfilling His plans on earth.

It is God's will for us to tear down strongholds and loose ourselves and people in areas where we have not been able to freely function. This is a primary purpose of the spiritual weapons God provides for us. As we war on earth, it stirs divine intervention from heaven.

The following diagram helps to illustrate the complete arsenal of spiritual weapons every believer has at his or her disposal.



© Copyright 1998 by Elizabeth Alves. All rights reserved. The pillars that support this arsenal are *faith* and *obedience*, and *prayer* and *intercession*; these are essential for the effective implementation of the seven primary weapons. God has provided all that is necessary for successful spiritual warfare; your part is to choose to use the weapons that His Word guarantees will destroy enemy strongholds.

*R Arthur Matthews* in his book *Born for Battle* says "In warfare there are four possible attitudes—offense, defence, detente and desertion...Satan can get along very well with Christians as long as they are on the defensive, seeking detente or deserting. Therefore, if we are determined to see him defeated in our own hearts and in our society, we must be only and always committed to the offensive."

## Faith and Obedience

*Faith* and *obedience* are so intertwined that one is incomplete without the other. These two go together to comprise one of the pillars that supports the believer's arsenal of spiritual weapons.

You must have *faith* that the weapons God provides for you will work and accomplish the desired purpose for His glory. Have *faith* in the name of Jesus. Have *faith* in the power of Jesus. Have *faith* that the same power dwells in you and empowers you to do even greater works than He did, because Jesus lives in you (see John 14:12). Listen to Jesus' words about faith:

*"Have faith in God. Truly I say to you, whoever says to this mountain 'Be taken up and cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says is going to happen, it shall be granted him. Therefore I say to you, all things for which you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and they shall be granted you" (Mark 11:22-24).*

Exercise your faith by speaking forth the Word and declaring aloud the victory Christ gives. When the Holy Spirit quickens a verse of Scripture for a given situation, speak it forth as a word of faith, casting down every imagination that is contrary to the Word of God (see 2 Cor. 10:5).

What quenches all fear, doubt and unbelief?

### **FAITH, FAITH, and FAITH. BELIEVING, BELIEVING and BELIEVING.**

The importance of *obedience*, which includes commitment, cannot be overemphasized.

Your commitment and determination to withstand the enemy and aggressively oppose him will strengthen your warfare. The enemy recognizes this quality in you. Someone has aptly said that all hell trembles to see a saint on his knees. For this very reason, the enemy will try to keep you from prayer. Your *obedience* and commitment will foil his plan!

As a Christian you are set apart and consecrated to God for His sacred purpose. As you entrust your *life* to Him more and more every day, the world will notice a difference:

*And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even to death (Rev. 12:11, italics added).*

*Your life is now "hidden with Christ in God" (Col. 3:3). Since He laid down His life for you, you should lay down your life for the brethren (see 1John 3:16).*

*"It is a trustworthy statement: For if we died with Him, we shall also live with Him; if we endure, we shall also reign with Him; if we deny Him, He also will deny us; if we are faithless, He remains faithful; for He cannot deny Himself" (2 Tim. 2:11-13).*

## Prayer and Intercession

We have already looked at communication with God and the difference between prayer and intercession. Prayer and intercession comprise the other pillar that supports the arsenal of spiritual weapons.

Here I will discuss the matter of praying in the Spirit. The term "praying in the Spirit" can mean different things to different people or denominations.

To some it means following the leading of the Holy Spirit and praying as He directs in your understanding or in song. As you pray earnestly, you follow the prompting of the Spirit deep within your spirit. These prayers may be prayed from the heart or from written prayers. To others praying in the Spirit may mean praying in an unknown tongue as described in 1 Corinthians 14:1-25. Private "praying in tongues" is different than the use of tongues and interpretation of tongues in public worship (see 1 Cor. 14:26-28).

The following Scriptures show how praying in the Spirit is an effective weapon.

**1. Praying in the Spirit is your spirit communicating directly with God.** It is primarily for use in your devotional prayer life for intercession, praise and worship:

*Let him speak to himself and to God (1 Cor. 14:28b). For one who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men, but to God; for no one understands, but in his spirit he speaks mysteries (1 Cor. 14:2).*

**2. Praying in the Spirit is a perfect prayer.** Since you do not always know how or what to pray in a given situation, you can bring the need before the Lord by praying in the Spirit. The Holy Spirit, your Helper, enables you to pray as you ought—thereby praying in the Lord's will.

Praying in the Spirit is a means by which the Holy Spirit intercedes through your spirit in prayer. This is where we get the term "prayer language," an unlearned language in which you can pray. When you pray with your understanding, you are easily influenced by your feelings, thoughts, desires, experiences, distractions, understanding and will. Even your vocabulary can limit your prayers. God gives you a prayer language that bypasses your mind, will and emotions and allows you to continue in prayer without interruption:

*"And in the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groaning's too deep for words; and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose" (Rom. 8:26-28).*

**3. Praying in the Spirit has definite meaning.** Although you do not understand what you are praying, God does:

*There are, perhaps, a great many kinds of languages in the world, and no kind is without meaning (1 Cor. 14:10).*

**4. Praying in the Spirit edifies the person praying.** When you are built up, strengthened and encouraged, you can continue with the spiritual warfare you are called to do:

*One who speaks in a tongue edifies himself (1 Cor. 14:4a).*

*But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith; praying in the Holy Spirit (Jude 20).*

**5. Praying in the Spirit has the authority of heaven behind it.**

There is no way you could know when Satan and his demonic forces will launch an attack. The Holy Spirit will prompt you at the strategic, opportune time:

*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 (Eph. 6:18).*

Praying is an act of your will, whether you are praying in the Spirit or with your understanding. You must respond to the Holy Spirit's prompting with faith and obedience. Speaking is not the miracle; the fact that you speak in a language you don't understand is. The Holy Spirit will give you the utterance. As with any language, the more you use it, the more comfortable you will feel using it.

If you pray in tongues, it is important that you do not criticize, condemn or exclude those who don't. On the other hand, it is just as important to remember that if you do not pray in tongues, you refrain from the same attitudes or judgments of those who do. The issue is not how you pray, but that you are faithful to the call of prayer and led by the Spirit.

The apostle Paul wrote, *"Now I wish that you all spoke in tongues....I thank God, I speak in tongues more than you all....Do not forbid to speak in tongues" (1 Cor. 14:5,18,39).*

Communication with the Lord through prayer and intercession is a pillar on which our life in Christ depends. It is a strong pillar of support in the Christian's arsenal of spiritual weapons against the enemy. Praying and singing in the Spirit is the power that moves mountains and draws you into fellowship with the Lord:

*What is the outcome then? I shall pray with the spirit and I shall pray with the mind also; I shall sing with the spirit and I shall sing with the mind also (1 Cor. 14:15).*

## The Name of Jesus

As you pray in the Spirit, you will need to take your authority in Christ. The name of *Jesus* has power on earth, and in heaven and hell. Since you are a temple of His Spirit and the same Holy Spirit dwells in you, you can use His name just as though He Himself were here. "I have given you authority...overall the power of the enemy" (Luke 10:19), Jesus promised.

Jesus gave His followers power and authority over demons and He gave them the right to ask the Father for things in *His name*:

*And whatever you ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it (John 14:13, 14).*

*Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth (Phil. 2:9,10).*

Everything has to bow at the name of Jesus. So use the name of JESUS during warfare. God recognizes it. And so does the devil and his host of fallen angels. Make the enemy flee in terror. Say the name of our Lord Jesus.

The power of the Holy Spirit in you gives you authority to use the name of Jesus to defeat the enemy. It can be likened to a policeman who can halt a huge truck just by standing in the middle of the highway and holding up his hand to signal "Stop!" The policeman, wearing his badge, has authority behind him to stop traffic and forbid the truck to proceed when a law has been violated. Intercessors, too, must use their delegated authority to stop demonic forces from wreaking havoc with God's people.

*But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him (1Cor. 6:17).*

A key to your authority in using the name of Jesus is your personal relationship with Him. That relationship, nurtured by your time of fellowship with the Lord, ensures that you will use this authority *only* in ways that will glorify Him. Notice the example of Peter and John speaking to the lame man at the temple gate in Acts 3:1-8. On the other hand, note what happened to those who tried to use the name of Jesus without proper authority in Acts 19:11-17. If you are walking in proper relationship to Jesus Christ, the enemy must submit to your authority when you use the name of Jesus:

*And these signs will accompany those who have believed: in my name they will cast out demons, they will speak with new tongues; they will pick up serpents, and if they drink any deadly poison, it shall not hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover (Mark 16:17,18).*



The name of Jesus is your power of attorney and the blood of Jesus is the official seal that secures your right to use it.

## The Blood of Jesus

When God released the plague of death against Egypt, forcing Pharaoh to free the Jews. God instructed the Jewish people to put the blood of an unblemished lamb over the doorposts of their homes. The angel of death then passed over every house that was covered with the blood of the lamb.(Read Exodus 12.) Today Jesus, the perfect Lamb of God, offers the same kind of protection through the power of His innocent blood shed on Calvary for all those who believe.

"Pleading the blood of Jesus" is a tactic for intercession that has been used by prayer warriors for many, many years. Because of abuse, however, it has become somewhat controversial. To "plead the blood of Jesus" over a person for his or her protection is simply to remind the enemy of his boundaries. (See Exod. 12:22,23.)

## Blood-Bought Benefits

### The blood of Jesus:

Makes **ATONEMENT** for us, blotting out sins (see Lev. 17:11; Rom.3:25).

**REDEEMS** us. Our life is paid for in full, bought back from the power of sin and death (see Eph. 1:7; Heb. 9:12-14; Rev. 5:9).

**JUSTIFIES** us. Acquits us of sin and guilt (see Acts 13:38, 39; Rom.5:9).

Makes us **RIGHTEOUS**. Puts us back into right standing with God (see Rom. 3:22, 23, 25; 1 John 1:9).

Gives **SANCTIFICATION**. Sets us apart unto God at the time of salvation as well as each day thereafter through the blood of Jesus (see 1 Cor. 1:30; Heb. 10:10,14).

**RECONCILES** us. Accepting God's provision, we can now fellowship with Him in love (see Rom. 5:10; Col. 1:20).

Gives **OVERCOMING POWER** as we receive and use what has been delegated to us (see Luke 10:19; Rev. 12:11).

Provides **DELIVERANCE**. Releases us from powers of darkness and sets us free (see Col. 1:13).

Releases **FORGIVENESS**. Pardons sins (see Col. 1:14; 1 John 1:9).

Establishes a **NEW COVENANT**. Replaces old covenant of sacrifices; perfect sacrifice now has been made through Jesus Christ (see Heb.7:22; 8:13; 9:15; 10:9; 12:24).

**CLEANSSES** us from all sin (see 1 John 1:7).

## Agreement

We *agree* with the Holy Spirit on that which He has called us to accomplish through spiritual warfare. "Agreement" means "to harmonize, to live in accord, without contention." We are all called to be consistent with our prayers by the Word and by the Spirit. And to be consistent, we must keep our hearts free from division so we remain unified within the Body of believers.

Agreement, or unity, can be both an offensive and a defensive weapon. Agreement begins with a God focus and a heart that is close to Him. When your heart is joined to the Lord, He then will join you together with another to accomplish more than you could ever accomplish alone. This is the "threefold cord" that Solomon wrote about in Ecclesiastes 4:12. "Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labour. For if either of them falls, the one will lift up his companion. But woe to the one who falls when there is not another to lift him up. And if one can overpower him who is alone, two can resist him" (vv. 9, 10, 12).

Before you can pray in agreement, you must learn to be in one accord with another. (see Acts 2:1). Partnerships strengthen and protect your position in the army of God.

*Jesus said:*

*"Again I say to you, that if two of you agree on earth about anything that they may ask, it shall be done for them by My Father who is in heaven. For where two or three have gathered together in My name, there I am in their midst" (Matt. 18:19, 20).*

Learning to pray in agreement is learning to pray in God's will. As your mind is transformed, you will discover the perfect will of God and be in agreement with Him through His Word (See Rom. 12:1)

## Praise & Worship

Praise is another important discipline that is key for successful spiritual warfare. It is one of the most powerful weapons available to the believer. Jesus modelled praise by teaching His disciples to start and end their prayers with it. Don't wait to win the victories before you start praising; use it to lay the groundwork for the victories the Holy Spirit desires. You actually do battle from a position of victory (see Eph. 1:20-22; 2: 6). Look at the example of Paul and Silas:

*And when they had inflicted many blows upon them, they threw them into prison, commanding the jailer to guard them securely; and he, having received such a command, threw them into the inner prison, and fastened their feet in the stocks. But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns of praise to God, and the prisoners were listening to them;*

*and suddenly there came a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison house were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's chains were unfastened (Acts 16:23-26).*

### **What does praise and worship do?**

- It blesses the Lord (see Ps. 66:8; Luke 24:52, 53).
- It brings you into His presence and draws you closer to Him (see Ps.100:4).
- It opens doors and makes rough places smooth (see Isa. 60:18; Acts16:25, 26).
- It defeats the devil (see 2 Kings 11:13, 14; Ps. 149:5-9).
- It brings revival (see 2 Chron. 31:2; 34:12; Ps. 107:32).
- It keeps you happy and gives you joy (see Isa. 61:1-3; Acts 2:45-47).

Praise is an act of body worship. When you worship God, you express a variety of emotions with your body. The following are examples of body worship through praise:

- When you clap your hands and stomp your feet, you portray your excitement (see 2 Kings 11:12; Ps. 98:8; Isa. 55:12; Lam. 2:15; Ezek.6:11).
- When you stand up, march or walk, you portray readiness to serve or to go (see Gen. 13:17; Deut. 11:22-25; Josh. 1:1-5; Ps. 68:7,8).
- When you lift up your hands, you are worshiping and surrendering to God (see Exod. 17:8-16; 1 Kings 8:22-24; Pss. 28:2; 63:3,4; 134:2;141:2; Luke 24:50,51; 1 Tim. 28; Heb. 12:12).
- When you dance, you express great joy (see 1 Sam. 18:6,7; Pss.30:11; 149:3; Jer. 31:13; Luke 15:11-24).
- When you sing, you express gladness of heart (see Ps. 68:25; 100:2;108:1; Prov. 29:6; Isa. 26:19; 65:13,14; Jer. 31:7; Zech. 2:10; 1 Cor.14:15; Jas. 5:13; Rev. 15:3).
- When you play skilfully on an instrument, you show forth adoration (see 1 Sam. 16:23; 18:6,7; 1 Chron. 15:28; 16:42; 25:1,3,6; 2 Chron.5:13,14; 34:12; Ps. 33:3).
- When you fall prostrate (to fall down flat in homage to royalty or God), you portray deep emotion and total surrender to God (see Ps.72:11; Isa. 45:14).
- When you kneel, you are portraying humility and dependence upon God (see 2 Chron. 6:13; Matt. 17:14; Mark 1:40). Kneeling is asking for mercy (see Luke 22:41; Acts 9:40; 21:5).



- When you sit down or keep silent, you show forth rest and trust in God (see Exod. 14:14; Josh. 6:10; Job 213; Prov. 13:3; 17:27; Amos 5:13; Matt. 8:4; 12:16; 27:14; Luke 23:9; John 8:6).

## The Word of God and Our Testimony

This weapon is mentioned last, because it is the foundation upon which the entire arsenal rests. Everything you do in spiritual warfare must be based upon the Word of God.

The following verses vividly illustrate the fact that the Word of God is a military tool provided for Christian soldiers entering the spiritual battlefield:

*And take...the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God (Eph. 6:17).*

*For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart (Heb. 4:12).*

Words can either work for you or work against you. Learn to use them as Jesus did. It is His Word abiding in you that causes faith to be present in your words (see John 15:7, 8). You can learn to use God's Word against the devil just as Jesus did when tempted by him. Jesus replied, "It is written...it is written...it is written." Each time He quoted God's Word, and He was the victor (see Matt. 4:4, 7, 10; 10:32).

When you confess God's Word aloud before others as your affirmation, Jesus confesses you before the Father (see Matt 10:32). The more you know and confess the Word, the more effective the victory will be.