



But I Never Wanted to be in a Battle!

"Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. 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 6:11-13

Is the Devil Real?

The apostle Paul's many references to spiritual warfare clearly indicate that he considered battling against the powers of darkness to be **normal activity** for Christians, but too many people think the term "spiritual warfare" must be an oxymoron.

Do **YOU** believe the devil really exists?

Some have the tendency to think of Satan not as a personality or being who affects us directly but as simply a pervasive influence of evil in the world. One statistic (Barna Group survey) shows:

40% of all Christians believe that Satan "is not a living being but is a symbol of evil."

30% believe that Satan is real.

30% don't know what they believe.

"Most Americans, even those who say they are Christian, have doubts about the intrusion of the supernatural into the natural world. Hollywood has made evil accessible and tame, making Satan and demons less worrisome than the Bible suggests they really are. It's hard for achievement-driven, self-reliant, independent people to believe that their lives can be impacted by unseen forces." [Barna]

There are two equal and opposite errors into which the human race can fall about devils:

1. to **disbelieve** in their existence
2. to believe, and to feel an **excessive** and **unhealthy** interest in them, such as at Halloween.

How Does He Attack Us?

Deborah of Judges 4 challenges us to lay aside some of our own worthy interests and activities to deal with the spiritual battles at hand. Deborah held court under a palm tree between Bethel and Ramah. She became increasingly incensed over the oppression of Israel and cried out to God for their deliverance. **We modern Deborahs need to feel the same indignation. It can be done by engaging in prayer and spiritual warfare.**

The enemy works in many ways today:

- Strife and disharmony that disrupt family relationships
- Defensive responses which result in bitterness and cynicism
- Anger when slightly provoked
- Guilt over past and present circumstances
- Envy and covetousness from comparing ourselves with others
- Frequent insecurity and anxiety about the future
- An inconsistent prayer life and prayers that seem to bounce back on our face

You may be thinking, “I never wanted to have to fight the devil. I just wanted to remain a normal Christian, go to church, mind my own business, and not cause trouble.”

What Can Deborah Teach Us?

We can learn much from Deborah about how to deal with spiritual enemies.

The reason Barak wouldn't go to war against Jabin is that he had a weak volunteer army, and Sisera had a trained army of 100,000 men! But Barak was assessing the situation strictly from a logistics point of view. Facts and truth are not always the same. *There's a lesson here for us.* Barak said he would go to battle if Deborah would go with him. She did, armed only with the voice of God in her ear and a belief in His word.

See Judges 4:14-16.

Deborah and Barak were assured of victory because they battled according to God's instructions.

See Judges 5:31 for what happens when you do things God's way. When they did what was possible for them to do, God responded by doing the impossible, which only He could do.

Deborah applied **7** keys to ensure victory in the assault against the enemy:

1. She recognized that it was a spiritual battle.
2. She obeyed God's instructions, trusting His strategy.
3. She did not focus on the strength of the enemy [outnumbered 10 to 1].
4. She did not waver in her confidence in God's Word.
5. She refused to be deterred by her colleague's lack of spiritual vision.
6. She never compromised with the enemy.
7. She gave praise and glory to God for the victory.

You can have success in your battles—but only if you seek God's direction and put forth some effort in obedience. God wants us involved in the battle. Things is: You're in the battle whether you signed up for it, or not.