

# Overcoming the Wearing Down Assignment of Satan

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Sermon Summary: All of us are in a life-and-death battle with the devil and his demons. It is our hope that these sermon notes on spiritual warfare will help you learn how to fight victoriously against the powers of darkness.

Daniel 7:25 - He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, Shall persecute the saints of the Most High, And shall intend to change times and law. Then the saints shall be given into his hand For a time and times and half a time.

- Persecute – literally to “wear out”

Revelation 12:9-12 The great dragon was hurled down ... to the earth, and his angels with him... Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has gone down to you! He is filled with fury, because he knows that his time is short.

- Does that fury sound like something you are experiencing?
- Are we in this time of great Satanic fury or not? I can't say with certainty, but we do know that this fury characterizes the devil and that in all times the following verses are true.

John 8:44 ... your father, the devil ... He was a murderer from the beginning ... there is no truth in him ... he is a liar and the father of lies.

1 Peter 5:8 Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

- Satan — a murderer, a liar, an enemy, a roaring lion, a devourer.
- I've never seen such open spiritual warfare as these days in which we live. Let's look at God's provisions for us in this battle.

Ephesians 6:10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.

- We need to make up our minds (1) to be strong and (2) to find that strength in the Lord.
- I know a Christian lady who some years ago was very ill and was vomiting frequently. As she was racing for the bathroom to vomit again, the Lord spoke to her and said: “Put your foot down!” She did so, reasserting her faith in the Lord's delivering power. And her illness soon departed.
- Such strength is found “in the Lord”, not in man's best-intentioned solutions. How easy it is, even for Christians, to fall into the trap of trying to figure everything out and work it all out by ourselves.

Ephesians 6:11 Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.

- God has armament for us; our job is to put it on!
  - A friend of mine who fought in the war in Vietnam stepped out of a helicopter safely, but the man behind him took a sniper's bullet through the forehead. A sturdy helmet might have saved him.
  - Put on all of God's armor to survive and win the spiritual warfare you face every day of your life.
  - The battle is active; the passive soldier loses.
- The devil has schemes, a strategy. You are his target. So you must put on God's weaponry and armor.

Ephesians 6:12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

- Men and women (“flesh and blood”) are not the opposing army. Satan is!
- How often we lose battles because we want to fight a person, when the devil is the actual combatant in our ongoing spiritual warfare.

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•• In witnessing to a lost person, you are in a spiritual hand-to-hand combat with the devil for that person's soul. As a friend of mine has said well, when seeking the salvation of souls from the devil's grasp, we are never in the DMZ (the "demilitarized zone"). We are always on enemy-held territory, that enemy, of course, being Satan.

Ephesians 6:13 Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.

•• The devil is no small opponent; put on God's full armor.  
•• And with the armor on, you must stand your ground. You must be willing to do everything necessary and continue to stand your ground. It took the mighty U.S. military and its allies nearly four years to prevail in World War II. Our adversary, the devil, is not easily convinced to fly the white flag of surrender. Remember, you are not in a ten-minute skirmish, but in a lifelong spiritual warfare.

Ephesians 6:14 Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place...

•• The "belt of truth". You are on the Lord's side. His ways and His word are truth. Cling to them without compromise. Don't back down on the truth you hold.

•• The "breastplate of righteousness". (1) Imputed and (2) practical righteousness.

• When we express saving faith in the Lord, He "imputes [or] credits [or] reckons" righteousness to us (Romans 4:3,5; Galatians 3:6-9). The theologians call this "imputed righteousness". And it provides for us a "breastplate" of protection.

• But in addition to having God's righteousness imputed to us, for us to walk in victory in our ongoing spiritual warfare, we need also to live and walk righteously (Psalm 106:3; 1 John 2:29, 3:7). This is often called "practical righteousness", and it too offers us a "breastplate" of God's protection against the devil's strategies and schemes.

Ephesians 6:15 and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.

•• For example, "ready always to give an answer..." concerning the Gospel (1 Peter 3:15).

•• Ready to "contend for the faith" of the Gospel (Jude 3).

•• The Gospel of Jesus Christ on our lips is a strong weapon against the devil and is a source for us of peace and spiritual readiness.

Ephesians 6:16 In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

•• The "shield of faith". Because Satan's arrows are flying!

•• Sickness? No! I believe Jesus "took my infirmities" (Matthew 8:17).

•• Defeat? No! I believe that I'm "more than a conqueror" (Romans 8:37).

•• Ineffectiveness? No! I believe that I shall be "a vessel unto honour ... [fit] for the Master's use" (2 Timothy 2:21).

•• The devil whispers, "The world is winning; the church is losing." No! I believe Jesus' promise that the gates of hell shall not prevail against the Church (Matthew 16:18).

Ephesians 6:17 Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

•• The "helmet of salvation". Are you in distress? Remember: If you are a born-again believer, you are saved. You belong to God and are partakers of His "great salvation" (Hebrews 2:3). You will live forever with Him. No man or devil "can separate you from the love of Christ" (Romans 8:35-39).

•• Is the devil condemning you for past sin? Don't listen! You are saved! "Your sins and iniquities [He] will remember no more" (Hebrews 10:17).

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- The sword of the Spirit — the word of God! An awesomely powerful weapon.
  - Jesus resisted Satan three times during the wilderness temptations with: “It is written!” (Matthew 4:3-10)
  - Peter replied to the mockers at Pentecost: “This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel” (Acts 2:16ff). And the power of that sermon based upon God's word, the bible, led 3,000 souls to be saved and baptized! (Acts 2:41)

Ephesians 6:18 And pray in the spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.

- “And pray”! Without this weapon, we lose the battle.
- A church elder friend of mine used to tell me that hardships always drove him to his knees.

• In closing this sermon on waging spiritual warfare, let me quote briefly from the Lord's Prayer: “Our Father in heaven ... deliver us from the evil one.” (Matthew 6:13, NIV). This is a prayer, and it is in my opinion one of the most powerful weapons in our spiritual warfare arsenal. That is, calling on God Almighty to deliver us from the evil one, from the devil and his demons. Think of it — the Lord's Prayer is very short. Yet Jesus chose to include in it this very effective spiritual warfare strategy — once again, “Our Father in heaven ... deliver us from the evil one.” Pray this prayer, often and fervently. God will answer!

Daniel 7:21-22 - 21 “I was watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them, 22 until the Ancient of Days came, and a judgment was made in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom.

- God has judged us! Its with favor!!!