

Sunday February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2006

**Spiritual Warfare Series part 2**

‘Do Not Be Deceived...’

1). There are five things for us to carry over from last week as we begin our message today.

a). Eph 6:12 *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.*

i/ Our warfare is against powerful spirit beings, the original rulers over this earth – Satan and his fallen angels.

b). The warfare that rages is territorial. It has to do with the heavenly realm of God’s Kingdom and who will occupy it, thereby exercising rulership over the earth in the age to come.

c). The battle rages, not between Satan and his angels and Christians in a general sense, but between Satan and his angels and those Christians who have accepted the offer of a position with Christ as His coheir in the Kingdom to come.

d). Being a Christian, even one who has accepted Christ’s offer, does not of itself give us safety against our enemy.

e). We have to avail ourselves of that provided by God for our protection and our offensive action - Eph 6:13 *Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.*

2). This week we will look at the nature of our enemy’s warfare against us.

3). Let’s begin at the beginning - Ge 3:1 ¶ *Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?"*

a). God’s own commentary on this incident - 1Ti 2:14 *And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.*

4). Now let’s remember Satan is positioned at the tree of the knowledge of good and evil for a specific purpose – being the incumbent ruler over this province in God’s Kingdom and knowing that the only way he can retain

that position is to bring about the disqualification of the one created to replace him.

a). God had already said, Ge 2:18 ¶ *And the LORD God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him."*

b). Ge 2:23 *And Adam said: "This is now bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man." 24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. 25 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.*

c). The man was not complete apart from the woman and neither would be able to fulfill God's purpose for them apart from each other. In deceiving the woman and bringing about her disqualification he effectively disqualified both.

d). Those who were naked and not ashamed, who at the outset had the pristine covering of glory, being in God's image and likeness – the glory being the undergarment necessary to receive the regal robes of rulership were now - Ge 3:10 *So he said, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself."*

e). The Hebrew word for naked here is different from the word used in 2:25. This word means what we would today more readily understand naked to mean.

f). The point is this – it establishes a first mention principle showing that the primary weapon used by the enemy against those who would rule is deception. Has God indeed said – Always an attack on or corruption off the word of God.

5). We can of course note Satan's attempt to prevent the Seed of the woman from coming through the corruption of the human race by the cohabitation of fallen angels with the daughters of men in the days of Noah.

a). And after the flood when this cohabitation happened again we see the offspring of this perversion, the Nephilim and Rephaim, placed in the land to which Abraham was taken – remember Sodom and Gomorrah – and also remaining in the same land as the first generation of Israel came to take possession of it.

b). Again we will remember the witness of the unfaithful spies at Kadesh Barnea  
Nu 13:32 *And they gave the children of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying, "The land through which we have gone as spies is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people whom we saw in it*

*are men of great stature. 33 "There we saw the giants (Lit. Nephilim) (the descendants of Anak came from the giants); and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight."*

6). And although as we look back on this incident, it may not at first sight appear like the use of deception. It really is. Deception after all is simply believing something contrary to that which God has already said.

‘Has God indeed said...’

a). Here is what God had said concerning this first generation –  
Ex 6:6 *"Therefore say to the children of Israel: 'I am the LORD; I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, I will rescue you from their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. 7 'I will take you as My people, and I will be your God. Then you shall know that I am the LORD your God who brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. 8 'And I will bring you into the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and I will give it to you as a heritage: I am the LORD.'"*

b). Instead of believing what God had said, like Caleb and Joshua  
Nu 13:30 *Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said, "Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it."*

c). They were deceived into thinking that God could not do what He had said - Nu 13:31 *But the men who had gone up with him said, "We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we."*

7). Now the land of our calling, the heavenly realm of the Kingdom is not occupied with Nephilim and Rephaim but with the fallen angels themselves.

a). And as we said last week and again this – they are powerful spirit beings who would make us appear like grasshoppers, who are in every way much stronger than we are.

b). The question is will we believe what God has said?  
Ge 22:17 *"blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies.*

c). And what does the scripture say?  
Ga 3:29 *And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*

d). To be like Caleb and Joshua we would have this mindset –  
2Co 5:7 *For we walk by faith, not by sight.*

e). Again what does the scripture say?

Ro 4:13 *For the promise that he would be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.*

8). There is yet another incident concerning Israel and a somewhat more subtle deception - Nu 31:16 *"Look, these women caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to trespass against the LORD in the incident of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the LORD.*

a). Balaam, unable to curse the nation of Israel, sought to corrupt the nation through assimilation with the surrounding nations. The deception being that they came to believe that they could serve God and be just like everybody else, because it really didn't matter. After all they were God's chosen people.

b). This incident is referenced for us in Revelation as the Lord pronounces judgment upon His Church at the Judgment Seat. This particular statement is addressed to the church at Pergamos, but contextually it is said to the entire church - Re 2:14 *"But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality.*

c). In essence we find a condemnation of the church because it has allowed itself to be seduced into assimilation with the world and its systems. The very world system that remains today under the control of the god of this world.

d). As a result we find the majority of the church, in bed so to speak with the enemy instead of remaining separate from this world. And this deception has happened as a result of the outworking of the leaven placed in the three measures of meal at the start of this dispensation, as see in matthew 13.

e). The deception is, in order to win the world we must become like the world.

i/ The world is not going to be won - 1Jo 2:17 *And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.*

ii/ Those who inhabit the world during this present age, since the cross, must first be released from its bondage by hearing and responding positively to the gospel of grace.

iii/ Those who respond positively must then be taught the reason for their redemption by hearing the gospel of the glory of Christ – the message of the Kingdom.

f). I may be too simplistic in my thinking, but when I go back to the type of our redemption, Israel removed from Egypt, God required them to be completely removed from Egypt, causing them to pass through the place of death, the Red Sea Passage to stand in newness of life on the eastern shore.

g). The fact that so many Christians still struggle with wanting to be involved in the affairs of this world is a measure of how successful the deception has been.

9). Ever since the days of Constantine the Great, when the foundation was laid for church and state merged into one Christians have been deceived into believing that they can touch that which is in control of our enemy with impunity.

a). Remember the words of Christ to the church at Pergamos – ‘I have this a few things against you...’

b). Remember the words of Christ to Pilate on the day of His crucifixion - Joh 18:36 *Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here."*

c). I don't see how it could be any plainer than this. Christ's Kingdom is not of this world/age, but the world/age to come. He says that if it were of this world His servants would fight for it now, but they were not to do so. And yet it seems that this is exactly what most of Christendom is determined to do.

d). For the nation of Israel their assimilation into the things of this world was so complete that the religious leaders made this extraordinary statement - Joh 19:15b... *"We have no king but Caesar!"*

e). And I fear that this might also be a reality within the church.

10). Within the New Testament Epistles there are no fewer than 14 separate warnings to Christians not to be deceived.

a). Just as at the beginning in Genesis 3:1 the enemy of our soul continues to say, ‘Has God indeed said...’ and his purpose has not changed. It is to disqualify those who through redemption would fulfill God's purpose for them. This attack continues to be against that which God has said concerning the 7<sup>th</sup> Day, the coming Kingdom. The attack over the centuries has been so complete that this word is almost totally corrupted, just as the parable of the leaven said it would be.

b). And just as at the beginning it is the woman, those who would be the Bride of Christ, whom he wants to deceive. For it remains as it did at the beginning – ‘It is not good for the man to be alone...’ Without His bride Christ is incomplete, from God’s perspective, and would be unable to rule.

c). Eph 5:30 *For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. 31 "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." 32 This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.*

10). The good news is, we may have victory over our enemy by availing ourselves of God’s provision to overcome this deception.

a). But let us note something - 1Sa 17:47 *"Then all this assembly shall know that the LORD does not save with sword and spear; for the battle is the LORD'S, and He will give you into our hands."*

b). The battle is the Lord’s, but it needed David to throw the stone.

11). We have already noted the promises God made to Israel in respect of their entrance into the land, yet note the instructions given to the second generation of Israel at Jericho - Jos 6:2 *And the LORD said to Joshua: "See! I have given Jericho into your hand, its king, and the mighty men of valor. 3 "You shall march around the city, all you men of war; you shall go all around the city once. This you shall do six days. 4 "And seven priests shall bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark. But the seventh day you shall march around the city seven times, and the priests shall blow the trumpets. 5 "It shall come to pass, when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when you hear the sound of the trumpet, that all the people shall shout with a great shout; then the wall of the city will fall down flat. And the people shall go up every man straight before him."*

a). In the application of military tactics the Lord’s instructions make no sense in the taking of a city.

b). However, even though - *I have given Jericho into your hand, its king, and the mighty men of valor.* There still needs to be a faithful following of God’s instructions in order for what He has said to become a reality for those involved.

c). The battle is the Lord’s, but He requires our faithful obedience to His instructions to bring this about. 2Co 10:4 *For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds,*

12). Therefore when we see the instructions God has given us with regards to our warfare - Eph 6:13 *Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. 14 Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, 15 and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; 16 above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. 17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; 18 praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints—*

- a). We must not be deceived into thinking that God fights this fight apart from us.
- b). Although He obviously does not need us, He requires our faithful obedience to His word before He fights for us.
- c). We must, in faith, actively and deliberately put on the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, have the preparation of the gospel of peace on our feet, take up the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit.
- d). ‘Therefore take up...’ is a command, not a suggestion.
- e). Neither is it figurative
  - i/ The story of putting it on by saying it every morning.
- f). No, it is a spiritual armor that is literally put on by faith, each piece requiring a specific action on our part.
- g). Without it we will inevitably be deceived – please don’t think otherwise – if we didn’t need the armor of God to stand against the wiles of the devil, God would not have provided it.
- h). And with deception will inevitably come defeat

13). However, if we will put on this armor and continue to wear it, we will like the Apostle Paul be able to make this confession –  
2Ti 4:7 *I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.*  
8 *Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.*

14). Putting on the whole armor of God is the only way that we will be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. Only through the appropriation of this

armor and taking up the sword of the Spirit can we have any hope of overcoming the enemy.

a). It is the whole armor of God – when we have it on we have God's protection and there can be nothing greater than that.

15). Let me encourage you this morning with Joshua's words to Israel at Kadesh Barnea - Nu 14:8 *"If the LORD delights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us, 'a land which flows with milk and honey.'*

9 *"Only do not rebel against the LORD, nor fear the people of the land, for they are our bread; their protection has departed from them, and the LORD is with us. Do not fear them."*