

JFN Empower – Module 4 P4
Lesson 4: The art of Spiritual Warfare

Summary of last week and short questions and answers discussion:

The art of Spiritual Warfare

Eph. 6:10-12. *'10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 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.'* NKJV

The art of spiritual warfare involves **standing firmly** in the Lord's authority and **resisting the enemy** until the victory of the cross of Jesus is fully **manifest**. In this way, the devil has no choice but to flee. God has equipped us with **spiritual weapons** that empower us to remain steadfast and resist the enemy with strength. The devil despises believers who stand in God's power and refuse to yield, as it is at that moment he understands he cannot claim any ground.

It is essential to understand these *seven foundational principles* of spiritual warfare:

- **A wrestling conflict:** Christians are engaged in a real struggle. The Greek word for “wrestle” in Ephesians 6:12 is *palé*, meaning a wrestling bout—one that is close, personal, ongoing, and intense. This is not a battle we can withdraw from; it requires active resistance and full engagement. If we fail to stand and contend, we give ground to the enemy. In other words, if you don't show up, the enemy succeeds. Sadly, today, many Christians have stopped showing up!
- **A battle already won!** As we keep showing up, standing firm, and resisting the devil, he has no power over us. The devil cannot harm God's children (Luke 10:19, Psalm 91, Prov. 18:10, Isa. 54:17). Our victory over the devil was secured more than 2000 years ago when Jesus shed His blood and died on the cross for us! His victory was further confirmed when He was raised from the dead by the power of the Holy Spirit! Resurrection Power! In other words, it is not a war we can lose; the victory has already been secured.
- **A call to stand and resist.** Our spiritual warfare (wrestle – *palé*) requires us to **stand firm** in God's power and authority, **resisting** the devil's schemes by using spiritual weapons. Remember, it is a war you cannot lose and has already been won by Jesus Christ. When we stand in God's power and resist the devil, the victory of Jesus on the cross forces him to flee! The battle has been won!

- **Not a pursuit of demons.** Spiritual warfare is not about entering our prayer room to confront demons or chase after evil forces, but about standing firm and resisting the enemy's schemes by using the spiritual weapons God has given us, until the victory of Jesus (on the cross) manifests!
- **An enemy with deliberate strategies.** It is a fact that the devil employs certain strategies against God's children and that we must **not ignore them**. The term "wiles" in the NKJV refers to clever tricks or strategies used to manipulate or deceive individuals. This word is derived from the Greek term "methodeias," which means *"predictable methods used in organised evil-doing."*
According to the Topical Lexicon (<https://biblehub.com/greek/3180.htm>),
'Strong's Greek 3180 (methodeia) relates to the deliberate, systematic tactics by which Satan and his agents try to deceive, mislead, and ultimately destroy souls. The term refers not to random temptation but to a calculated plan aimed at neutralising faith, distorting doctrine, and undermining obedience.'
- **A structured kingdom of darkness.** Ephesians 6:10–12 shows us that the devil does not operate alone. He oversees a structured hierarchy of principalities, powers, rulers of darkness, and spiritual hosts of wickedness. These forces are strategically organised with one purpose in mind: to kill, steal, and destroy (John 10:10).

Know your enemy!

1. Who is the devil (diabolos)?

Lucifer, whose name means light bearer or morning star, fell when pride filled his heart and he said, *"I will ascend...I will make myself like the Most High"* (Isa 14:12–15; Ezek 28:17). He was an anointed high-ranking cherub and widely accepted that he was connected to worship! He held a position of great authority and honour! Because of this rebellion he was cast out of heaven, and Jesus testified to this moment when He said, *"I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven"* (Luke 10:18). After his fall he is no longer called Lucifer but Satan, the devil, the serpent, and the dragon. Scripture calls him *"the god of this world"* who blinds the minds of unbelievers so they cannot see the light of the Gospel (2 Cor 4:4).

He does not work alone—Paul describes a structured kingdom of darkness made up of principalities, powers, rulers of darkness, and spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places (Eph 6:12).

- **"Principalities"** These are high-ranking spiritual beings that hold authority over regions, cultures, or systems. The Greek word *archai* refers to *"first rulers"* or *"chief powers."* They influence the direction of societies and nations (cf. Dan 10:13).

- “Powers” These are delegated spiritual authorities operating under principalities. The Greek *exousiai* means “authorities” or “jurisdictions.” They enforce the enemy’s agenda through deception, oppression, and influence (Col 1:16).
- “Rulers of the darkness of this age” These are spiritual forces that spread moral and spiritual darkness. The Greek term *kosmokratores* refers to “world-rulers,” meaning they shape the values, beliefs, and behaviours of a fallen world (cf. 2 Cor 4:4). Rulers of the darkness resist the Truth of God.
- “Spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places” This refers to vast numbers of evil spirits operating in the unseen realm. The phrase describes the collective army of demonic beings that promote wickedness, temptation, and spiritual corruption (cf. Eph 2:2). They resist God’s purposes.

Principalities, powers, the rulers of the darkness of this age, and the spiritual hosts of wickedness are all categories of demonic forces. They are all demonic beings, but they operate at different levels of authority and influence.

The exact origin of demons is not explicitly stated in Scripture. It is widely held that demons are fallen angels, as suggested in Revelation 12:9 and Matthew 25:41—beings who once served God but rebelled with Satan and now stand in opposition to Him. However, Scripture also speaks of certain fallen angels who are bound in chains and held in darkness awaiting judgment (see 2 Peter 2:4 and Jude 6). This has led some to suggest that demons may not be identical to those imprisoned angels.

Another view proposes that demons are the disembodied spirits of the Nephilim (Giants that lived on earth)—wicked beings associated with the time before the flood in Genesis 6. However, this perspective is not explicitly confirmed in Scripture.

What remains clear is that Satan and his forces are active, deceptive, and destructive—yet ultimately defeated through Christ and powerless against believers who stand in their God-given authority.

Questions to Ponder:

1. Name and briefly describe seven foundational principles for understanding spiritual warfare.
2. Paul teaches that we must withstand the wiles (*methodeias*)—the organized strategies—of the devil. Can you identify any patterns of organized evil influence in your own life, and what steps are you taking to address them?

3. Ephesians 6:12 refers to what appears to be a structured hierarchy of demonic authority. Describe this hierarchy by naming four ranks and briefly explaining what each one is and how it operates.
4. Write a short paragraph explaining who the devil is and where he comes from.
5. Where do demons come from?