

No Time to Go Wobbly

Text: II Samuel 21:15-22

It was August 1990 at the outset of Desert Storm when George Herbert Walker Bush, the 41st President of the United States received a phone call from England's Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher and was told, "Remember, George, this is no time to go wobbly."

King David is now in his last decade of his life, and he has learned, the hard way, that when the kings go out to war, he goes as well. He battles the Philistines and the Bible says, "...and David waxed faint" (II Samuel 21:15c). This is no longer the youthful monarch with an inexhaustible ability to continue fighting from dawn to dusk. If we may use our imaginations, I can see the king meeting with his young mighty men and saying something to this effect, "Men, we have them on the run; finish the battle and then at the end of the day, return to the palace and we'll plan strategy for another day. "Your Majesty," one of the mighties interrupts, "Allow me to form a small band of soldiers to escort you back home." "No," David replies, "I'll be fine, the battle is before you, where I'm going is no threat." David finds his trusty camel and takes a long drink of his favorite Bethlehem spring water when Ishbibenob, Goliath's angry son, stealthily appears and stands over David, threatening him with a brand new sword dedicated to kill David. As I see the aging king visited again by a giant in these last days of his life, I think you'll agree, "This is no time to go wobbly!"

We live in a very wobbly culture and in a very wobbly church. And I think most everyone will agree as Christians, this is no time to go wobbly. Why? Because:

1. SPIRITUAL WAR IS REAL

Just as real as the physical war was with Philistia, so also is the spiritual war that we as Christians are involved in. Ephesians 6:12: "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." In the same way that we have the ranking system in the armed forces, there is ranking system in the angel and fallen angel armies. As we mature in our faith, we discover for our new levels, there will be new devils. An example of one who had matured greatly was Daniel. He began praying with fasting in Daniel 10. In verses 12-13 it says, "Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia."

Do we have the kind of prayer life that would summon angels? Many Christians believe that spiritual warfare is consigned only to pastors, missionaries, and evangelists. Nothing could be further from the truth. We are all in the war. II Timothy 2:3-5: "Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully."

Have you ever been sharing with someone on how to know Jesus Christ as personal Savior and you were interrupted at the very moment that person was considering getting

saved? Have you ever been praying and been “bushwhacked,” by the most inappropriate thoughts? Those are fiery darts; we must claim Ephesians 6:16: “Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.”

2. SATAN NEVER GIVES UP

II Samuel 21:18a: “And it came to pass after this, that there was again a battle with the Philistines at Gob...” II Samuel 21:19a: “And there was again a battle in Gob with the Philistines...” II Samuel 21:20a: “And there was yet a battle in Gath...” Satan always returns! After Satan tempted our Lord in the wilderness, the Bible records in Luke 4:13, “And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season.” If the Devil doesn’t give up on Jesus, do you think he will give up on you and me?

3. SATAN IS NOT IMPRESSED WITH OUR PAST SPIRITUAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

David had accomplished victory after victory, even against what would seem like insurmountable odds and trials, but he still reigns. David knows that fresh oil is needed for each day. This why he prayed in Psalm 92:10, “But my horn shalt thou exalt like the horn of an unicorn: I shall be anointed with fresh oil.”

Far too often we rely on what God did for us yesterday, believing that we can coast along. Leviticus 6:13 says, “The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out.” What puts out yesterday’s fire? The answer is found in verse 11: “And he shall put off his garments, and put on other garments, and carry forth the ashes without the camp unto a clean place.” If the ashes from yesterday are not removed, they will smother the fire today! If we rely on what we used to do for God, our past (yes, even victories) can smother our fire for God today. It has been said, “Persecution has slain her thousands; prosperity her tens of thousands.”

4. SATAN IS NOT INTIMIDATED WITH OUR SPIRITUAL ROUTINE

How can we read Psalm 27, 23 or 121 and not see that David is devout in his devotional life. The Lord is his life and seeking Him is his regular goal. Psalm 27:4: “One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his temple.” God willing, you are faithful in your spiritual disciplines. But understand, you are the very ones whom the Devil puts a proverbial “bullseye” on. If you are not serving the Lord, you are no threat to Satan, but when you get serious about serving the Lord, Satan gets serious about fighting you. Not to worry; I John 4:4 tells us, “Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.”

5. SATAN HAS PLANNED YOUR AMBUSH

II Samuel 21:16b: “...he being girded with a new sword, thought to have slain David.” Lucifer will connive and improvise to bring you down. He always has a new sword, a new technique, or a new method to use against you. He also knows your weakness. II Corinthians 2:11: “Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.” James 4:7: “Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you.”

6. THIS IS NOW YOUR TIME TO SHINE

II Samuel 21:17a: "But Abishai the son of Zeruah succoured him, and smote the Philistine, and killed him...." David did not experience the supernatural intervention from God to provide him the strength or wherewithal to defeat this giant. It was time for David's nephew, Abishai to step up and win the day. Ecclesiastes 1:4a reminds us: "One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh...." Psalm 145:3-4: "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable. One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts."

How thankful I am for the faith once delivered from my parents to me and from my wife's parents to her. Jude, verse 3b: "...ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

Charles Plumb gives a great application of the importance of one person doing his job in such a conscientious way that personally saved his life.

-Pastor Pope-