Spiritual Warfare and Their Strongholds

8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. 1 Peter 5:8

10 The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy... John 10:10a

My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge... Hosea 4:6a

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. Ephesians 6:12

Principalities
These are Satan's General's They have Authority over large areas even entire Nations of the Earth.

Powers
These are very powerful Spirit that have been given their Authority by The Principalities. These spirits usually control areas within the control of the principalities, such as city's or states as an example.

Rulers of Darkness
This group is the foot soldiers if you will. Lowly privates of Satan's army less powerful spirits who carry out the commands given by the powers and principalities.

Hosts of Wickedness
These are Satan's Demons. The "Special ops" if you will assigned to a much smaller area. Usually to an individual person or family, or even against a church or ministry. In order to hinder disrupt even destroy them.
All believers are in a war - a war with their adversary, the Devil (1 Pet. 5:8), and his evil spiritual forces which he dispatches and assigns to perpetrate his wickedness throughout the world. We are well aware of the evil characteristics of Satan, that he "kills, steals, and destroys" (John 10:10). But beyond his routine harassment’s, temptations or hit-and-run attacks, the Devil's forces seek territory to establish long-term strongholds in which they may dominate and hold captive. Satanic forces search for people, cities, and nations in which they are not resisted and where they may flourish. "Strongholds" could be actual "demon possession," but can merely be a "strong" influence or grip, persistent oppression, obsessions, hindrances or harassment. Believers cannot be demon possessed, but many Christians are the victims of Satan's strongholds.

The devil's primary strategy is to disguise his activities so that it appears that someone or something else is to blame. He wants us to get our attention on his surrogates, his instruments, his hindrances and "wrestle" with them, so that our battle will be directed against the "symptoms" instead of the "real source."

We all know that a decongestant will help relieve a stuffy nose, but it will not cure a cold. Likewise, you can fight with the symptoms of the Devil, but you will not end the problems until you deal with the source and bind the "strong man."

Remember when Peter resisted Jesus' decision to return to Jerusalem, knowing that He would be crucified there? Jesus did not rebuke Peter, but turned to Peter and rebuked Satan. "Get behind me Satan" (Matt. 16:23). Peter wasn't demon possessed, and probably didn't intend to be an offense. However, the Devil inspired Peter's statement, and Jesus went after the real source.

Paul said that our battle is not with "flesh and blood" but with spiritual adversaries (Eph. 6:12). How important it is that we understand what the real root of the problem is -- "who" our real enemy is. It is Satan, not flesh and blood, not our brethren, not our family, not our children, not husbands and wives, not employers, nor our government! The Devil is the enemy!

One time, after Jesus had cast out a devil and healed a deaf and mute boy, Jesus explained that in order to overturn the works and activity of the Devil, we must bind him first. "Or else how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house" (Matt. 12:29). In order to neutralize the Devil's works, we must go and deal directly with the source and bind up the devil so that his hands are tied. Then we'll be able to take back what he's stolen and bring a halt to his actions.
Binding and loosing

Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Matthew 18:18

"I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven." Matthew 16:19

We are given delegated Spiritual Authority By God to Bind the Devil and all his Demons. Christ has given us every weapon, every tool, and the full backing of Heaven to take on The enemy and stand our ground in this spiritual battle being fought here on Earth in the invisible realm. The Devil has been defeated by Jesus Christ on Calvary, we are simply to enforce that victory over him.

And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross. Colossians 2:15 NIV

And in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority; Colossians 2:10

And raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, Ephesians 2:6

We have been raised with Christ and seated with Him at the right hand of God in a position of all power and authority. Christ is the Head we are His Body. We have every right and ability to destroy the works of the Devil and his minions in the name of Jesus Christ.
How to Break Strongholds and keep them Broke!

1. AUTHORITY -- Every believer has the right to use the authority of Jesus' name to bind and take authority over Satan's activities. "No one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man, and then he will plunder his house" (Mark 3:27). Issue a spoken command to the devil that he is bound and he must leave the stronghold! Exercising authority in the name of Jesus will expel the Devil's influence. "And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues..." (Mark 16:17).

2. INTERCESSION -- Come together with other believers to pray and intercede against strongholds until you get results. There is intensified power in the gathering of more believers. Prayer with fasting intensifies faith, and faith will break strongholds. "Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast him out? However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting" (Matthew 17:19,21).

3. DISPLACEMENT -- Establish the presence of God. Where Satan has been commanded to leave, fill it up with God's presence. Where the presence of the Lord is, the Devil isn't! Satan doesn't want to hang around where people are lifting up Jesus in worship, in singing and prayer. The presence of the Lord displaces the Devil. "For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?" (2 Corinthians 6:14).

4. RESISTANCE -- Submit yourselves and draw close to God. The Bible says this is how we resist Satan and he will flee. The Devil runs from submitted, yielded Christians. He runs from your life, and will run away from where you go. "Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you" (James 4:7).
5. OCCUPATION -- Give no place or vacancy to the Devil. With Satan departed, fill the void with God. Let righteousness be the standard rule and behavior. Provide no pocket of rebellion, corruption or immorality in which Satan can find refuge to rebuild his influence or strength. The scripture says to not "give place to the devil" (Eph. 4:27).

6. FORTIFICATION -- Clothe yourself with God's armor. Take upon you daily, the full array of God's spiritual equipment that you may maintain battle-ready status. With the shield of faith, the sword of the Spirit (God's Word) and the other links of armor (Eph. 6:13-17), you will be ready to resist any satanic assault, and will be ready to engage the strongholds in others. "Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" (Ephesians 6:11).

The Whole Armor of God

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 firm. 14 Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, 15 and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. 16 In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; 17 and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, Ephesians 6:13-17

The Belt of Truth

This is the Truth or Knowledge of the truth that we have. When we know who we are and what we are capable of in Christ, We wear the belt of truth.

Breastplate of Righteousness

Righteousness is not earned. It has been given to us through the Blood of Christ. Righteousness is not achieved by being Good righteousness is a position we sit in because of salvation through Christ.
Shoes of Peace

The peace of God will sustain us in all things. Wherever we go in life if we are grounded in God's Love we will have peace. Perfect love casts out all fear (1 John 4:18) when we walk in love we have peace.

Shield of Faith

Faith works by Love (Galatians 5:6). Again we see the power of Love as Faith is fueled by Love and when we Love according to God's word our Faith will be strong and can withstand any attack of the Devil.

Helmet of Salvation

Notice our Salvation covers our head. When we know who we are and whom we belong to there is knowledge of our spiritual position in Christ. As we renew our minds in God's word we become even stronger.

Sword of the Spirit

The Sword is God's Word. When we speak God's word, God's promises, against the Devil, against our circumstances, it penetrates and conquers our enemy. The word of God is the most Powerful force in all the Universe.

EXAMPLE of Spiritual Warfare

10 In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a word was revealed to Daniel, who was named Belteshazzar. And the word was true, and it was a great conflict. And he understood the word and had understanding of the vision.

2 In those days I, Daniel, was mourning for three weeks. 3 I ate no delicacies, no meat or wine entered my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, for the full three weeks. 4 On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was standing on the bank of the great river (that is, the Tigris) 5 I lifted up my eyes and looked, and behold, a man clothed in linen, with a belt of finegold from Uphaz around his waist. 6 His body was like beryl, his face like the appearance of lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and the sound of his words like the sound of a multitude. 7 And I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, for the men who were with me did not see the vision, but a great trembling fell upon them, and they fled to hide themselves.
So I was left alone and saw this great vision, and no strength was left in me. My radiant appearance was fearfully changed, and I retained no strength. Then I heard the sound of his words, and as I heard the sound of his words, I fell on my face in deep sleep with my face to the ground.

And behold, a hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees. And he said to me, “O Daniel, man greatly loved, understand the words that I speak to you, and stand upright, for now I have been sent to you.” And when he had spoken this word to me, I stood up trembling. Then he said to me, “Fear not, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand and humbled yourself before your God, your words have been heard, and I have come because of your words. The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days, but Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I was left there with the kings of Persia, and came to make you understand what is to happen to your people in the latter days. For the vision is for days yet to come.”

When he had spoken to me according to these words, I turned my face toward the ground and was mute. And behold, one in the likeness of the children of man touched my lips. Then I opened my mouth and spoke. I said to him who stood before me, “O my lord, by reason of the vision pains have come upon me, and I retain no strength. How can my lord's servant talk with my lord? For now no strength remains in me, and no breath is left in me.”

Again one having the appearance of a man touched me and strengthened me. And he said, “O man greatly loved, fear not, peace be with you; be strong and of good courage.” And as he spoke to me, I was strengthened and said, “Let my lord speak, for you have strengthened me.” Then he said, “Do you know why I have come to you? But now I will return to fight against the prince of Persia; and when I go out, behold, the prince of Greece will come. But I will tell you what is inscribed in the book of truth: there is none who contends by my side against these except Michael, your prince. Daniel 10

This is a clear view of Spiritual Warfare. Daniel was praying and fasting for 21 days. And it appeared nothing was happening. But after 21 days an angel appeared to Daniel. This angel would tell Daniel truths and events concerning the last days. Which Daniel would write down and those writings became the biblical book of Daniel.

The angel tells Daniel I was sent on day one, the moment you began to speak and to fast. But the Principality of Persia was sent to hinder me and stop me from getting to you. So Michael the Arch Angel was sent to assist me and we overcame that Principality and here I am 21 days later.