

Be Strong in the Lord

by Erlo Stegen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of being strong in the Lord to overcome spiritual battles and reject the devil's influence.

Duration: 1:02:49

Scripture: 1 Samuel 30:1

Topics: "Spiritual Battle"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher explains the concept of Jesus making a public spectacle of the devil. He compares it to how the Romans would publicly shame and display defeated rebels. Jesus, through his crucifixion and resurrection, overcame the devil and paid the price for our sins. The preacher emphasizes the importance of not just knowing about salvation, but also keeping and living out the teachings of Jesus. He also highlights the spiritual battle believers face against demonic forces and encourages them to be strong in the Lord's power.

Transcript

Let us pray. Our Heavenly Father, we pray in the name of our Lord Jesus, that you please be in our midst. Touch our hearts through your word.

Work something amazing, something wonderful in our lives and in our hearts. Amen. We'll read from Ephesians, chapter 6. And verse 10.

Ephesians 6, verse 10. Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. And be mindful of the things you may have done which will happen to you.

Put on the whole armour of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 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. Therefore take up the whole armour of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

I would like to speak about the kingdom of Satan and the kingdom of God. And the angels from heaven of God, and then the angels of darkness. The Bible says we do not fight against flesh and blood.

Don't be confused, in the world people are fighting against flesh and blood. And even around race. One nation against another nation, yet the Bible says we do not fight against flesh and blood.

But rather we fight against principalities, and powers, and rulers of darkness of this age. I would like to speak about this, that we will understand it. I'll start with what I wanted to end with.

Finally. To all of you, and especially to the students that will be leaving us, the final word to Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. God's power, the power of the Lord Jesus is great.

However, the demons have power too, a lot of power. And I'd like to just touch on that. But God's power is the greatest.

Jesus has been given authority in heaven and on earth, and He says, therefore, go into all the world and preach the gospel. Teaching people to keep all that I have commanded you. Not just to know it.

Not just having the knowledge, but to keep it. You don't get salvation through education. Education without Christ just produces clever devils.

And Jesus said to them, go and teach them, not just to know it, but to keep it. So God's word says, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. That you strengthen yourself.

One day David went with his army to face the enemy, the Amalekites. That you, if you can remember, 1 Samuel chapter 26, where you find it. So David faced the enemy, and fought the enemy, and overcame them.

And they returned. And they got home. They found the place deserted.

The wives and the children had been taken into exile. And the whole place had been burned with fire. You can imagine how traumatic that must have been, to experience something like that.

And of course the men were unhappy, and they started even complaining against David himself. It's amazing, it's like it is even today. If you just do something to someone's child, then you'll be in trouble with the parent.

The parent will turn against you just because of the child. Or side with the child in its evil. Some people say that some people's faith only goes as far as their wallet.

However, with others, their faith only goes as far as their children. Don't touch their children. If you say anything against their children, you're in trouble.

So when David's army returned, and they found everything destroyed, and the children had been taken away, they were upset. Upset even with David. But even David was going through the same experience, because his wife and children had been taken too.

Of course, they didn't know what the enemy was going to do with them. But then it says that while they were in this desperate plight, weak, totally despondent, then David went and he strengthened himself in the Lord. Never forget that.

He strengthened himself in the Lord. And after that, he said to his men, let's go pursue the enemy. And they pursued the enemy, and they overcame it, and they found their wives, their children, everything they could recover.

David didn't lose strength. He was a real hero. And so in this word, it says, finally be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might.

So let us learn from David in that. We're in a battle. Being a Christian is a fight.

It's a battle, because when you meet with the Lord Jesus, you'll be at loggerheads with the devil, and he'll fight with you. But if you're friends with the devil, he'll give you some peace, because he'll leave you alone. He'll fight with the others that are believers.

But I can't understand it, why you want to be friends with the devil, because hell was not created for humans. It was created for the devil and his angels. The devil has some power.

And I'll come back to that just now. Jesus sent out his disciples, his 70 disciples. So even among the disciples, there were different groups.

There were the three that he often met together with. And then there were the 70. It's like some people who say everything and everyone must be exactly equal.

Even the communists say that. But what would you think if I would, if you look at my hand and I chop off my fingers, that they were all exactly the same size or length? Wouldn't it look strange to you? And even gifts were given in different ways. Remember, the one was given five talents, the other one two, the other one.

So we can't all say that we must be exactly the same. We're the same in the sense that we're all humans and that the Lord has died for all of us. But we are given gifts in different ways.

So Jesus sent out the 70. And he says, he who hears you hears me. He who rejects you rejects me.

Then the 70 returned with great joy. Saying, Lord, even the demons are subject to us. And he said to them, I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.

When Satan's kingdom is attacked and destroyed, the devil won't just sit back and look on. He comes down like lightning from heaven. But Jesus said to his disciples, He said, behold, I give you authority to trample on serpents and scorpions.

Even scorpions. And over all the power of the enemy, nothing shall by any means hurt you. But he said, nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven.

Before God created man, he created the angels. And all the angels were good, wonderful. But even among the angels, they had different positions.

One angel is known as Michael. There was an archangel, one with a high position. The meaning of Michael meant and means like God.

Then there was Gabriel. His name meaning God is powerful. And then there was Lucifer.

A beautiful, a wonderful angel. And his name means he who brings light. That's why it even says that the devil comes as an angel of light.

That's what his name also means. Means light bearer. Most probably he was the highest of all angels.

He was amazing. But he wasn't satisfied, even though he had such an exalted position and the beauty he had. And Lucifer became the devil, Satan.

And he is known by different names, Diabolus. So Satan exalted himself. He wanted to be equal to God.

Remember, there was no one that was as beautiful as he was. The Bible says he walked among the stones of fire. In Isaiah 14, from 12 to 14.

And Ezekiel 28, from 12 to 18. It describes him as someone extraordinary. He was close to God.

But then pride came in. Be wary of pride. Pride is something terrible.

If you uplift yourself, become proud, you will surely fall. And learn that. That if you become proud, you'll fall like Lucifer and great will be that fall.

And so it's, it's, it's right. It's written about his fall, how great it was. He who wanted to be equal to God, sitting on his throne, saying and thinking no one was as good as he was.

If you read in those portions that I've given you, you can read there and say and see all this. What glory was around him and those diamonds that he had on him. When he fell because of his sin, he became the dragon.

And there was this great battle in heaven. Where Satan turned against God. God had the power to command Satan to go with one word.

Just giving a command. But then he gave the command that Michael should take up the battle with Satan. When Lucifer, Satan turned against God and turned his back on him, a third of the angels went with him.

Out of three, one out of the three went with Satan. And then there were multitudes that joined him and that followed him. As it is even to this day, you get Satanists even today furthering the devil's cause.

And so Satan and a third of the host of angels, they were overcome and they were expelled from heaven. And Lucifer became Satan. Satan meaning adversary.

And the devil who is the accuser of the brethren before God. That's what devil means. He tempts a person.

And if he tempts you and you fall into that temptation, you sin, he will run to God and accuse you and say, do you see what he's done? You see he's stolen. Do you see this sin that he's committed? Don't make the devil your friend. Because he who tempts you will accuse you before God.

He makes you sin. He'll make you fall into immorality. And once you've done it, he is the first one to go and accuse you before God and say, to tell God what you've gotten up to.

Remember even the old serpent, the devil himself, how he came to tempt Adam and Eve, for he was cast out of heaven. He found no place, but then he wanted to become prince and God and Lord of this earth. Remember how God had created paradise and then he created man and woman, Adam and Eve.

Some people say, why did God tempt Adam and Eve by placing these two trees in the center of the garden? Those trees had been there already before Adam and Eve came. So when Adam and Eve were created, God warned them and said, there are these two trees. The one is the tree of life.

The other one, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Beware. He warned them of that.

Now the heartbreaking thing is this. They had no interest in the tree of life. People aren't interested in living the right life.

They just want wisdom. So Satan, Lucifer entered into the serpent that was so clever above all other animals. We want cleverness.

We want to be clever, but we don't want to live a holy life. And that's why he was cursed and he lost his position in the garden of Eden. So Satan got it right first to get into Eve, through Eve and then through, and then that way he also got to Adam.

He came in the spirit of the day and Adam had fallen. In that spirit, God came and faced them. Not just that it was the evening because there was a cool breeze.

No, in Hebrew, he came in the spirit of the day of that hour. And what did Adam and Eve do? They hid. Before that, they loved God.

They loved being in his presence. But when sin had come in, they no longer loved being in his presence. They hid before him.

God said, Adam, where are you? Well, Adam, like you, when you hide, and even where he was hiding, he was visible to God. God knew where he was and he knows where you are, even when you're hiding. But God wanted to hear it from him where he was.

God wanted to hear from Adam where he was. He wanted Adam to acknowledge and to confess it because he was no longer in that place where God wanted him to be. Adam, by disobeying God, the Satan came in, that old serpent.

And Adam failed to confess and acknowledge his sin. It's difficult to confess your sin. You try and hide it.

It's so difficult for a person to say, I've sinned, I'm sorry, forgive me. Look at Adam. God said to Adam, did you eat of the fruit of that tree that I commanded you not to eat of? And he said it was Eve.

Eve gave me. He fails just to confess his sin and say, I have sinned. He blames Eve.

God asked Eve, did you eat of that fruit? And she said, oh, it was the serpent. When he confronted the serpent, did you make them eat of that fruit? The serpent, the devil had more sense than Adam and Eve. All Adam could do is blame the next person.

You won't get anywhere if you point to somebody else, even if it's your wife. You shouldn't listen to her. She's got to listen to you.

But the problem with man is he is weak. It's difficult to confess your sin and acknowledge it. You always blame the next person.

But we men are weak, very weak. And our weakness is that when we shouldn't listen to our wives, we listen to them. When Eve came to Adam, Adam listened to her.

He shouldn't have listened to her. He would rather have reprimanded her and said, how can you eat of this fruit? God has told us not to eat of. Pilate and his wife.

His wife wrote to Melete, be careful. She wrote to Pilate saying, I had a dream last night. Don't be guilty of the blood of this innocent man, referring to Jesus.

He should have listened to his wife, but he didn't. That's the weakness of us men. What a shame.

What a disgrace. When he should stand for something, he doesn't stand for it. But when he should bow and listen, like Pilate should have listened to what his wife said, then we don't listen.

Then we stubborn. So when Lucifer had fallen, he made war with God and God instructed Michael to wage war against him, drive him out. And there was a terrible battle.

But then by God's grace, Michael, with all the good angels, were able to drive Lucifer and his angels out and cast them upon the earth. God could have just spoken a word and it would have been the end of the devil. But in that situation, God was testing even Michael and the other good angels to see whether they would be faithful to him to the end.

And by God's grace, Michael could wage that war and overcome Lucifer and his angels, drive them out. If you're following the devil, how can you follow someone who's been overcome? You think he's a hero, but he's a defeated hero or foe. And now the devil, Satan makes himself out to be lord of this earth.

You allow him and give him room. You crown the devil as lord of your life, even though you'll get nothing for it. He's been overcome.

Even though the devil may go around here on earth as like a roaring lion. God said about Jesus that he would crush the head of the serpent. And that the serpent would bite him on his heel.

But right in the beginning already, God promised that the Lord Jesus would crush the serpent's head. Let me ask you, why are you then serving the devil? He has been defeated. He's been, all his armor has been taken away.

He's defeated. Why don't you rather serve the Lord Jesus, who is the real hero who has overcome? It says that God has taken away all the weapons of the devil. He stripped him of all his ammunition, all his power, all his might, and he overcame him and conquered him.

He overcame him. Stripped him of all his weapons and put him to open public shame. Some things are difficult for some people to understand in the Bible.

What does this mean that he made a public spectacle of him? During that time of the Romans, this concept was clearly understood by everyone. When the Romans ruled the earth, then from time to time, there'd be uprisings within the Roman Empire in different places, similar to what we see today. Then Caesar would send his army out to that place to crush that revolt or uprising.

That's what Caesar would do. He'd send one of his generals to get hold of that man. And so when that rebellion had been squashed and the leader of the rebellion was taken captive, he was disarmed.

He was changed to one of the wagons and they dragged him to Rome. So in that way, he was dragged behind the chariot back to Rome. After he had been defeated, after his defeat, two soldiers were dispatched on horseback to go as fast as they could back to Rome.

Each one had his incense, which he took along. So they would get to Rome ahead of the others and announce this victory over the rebellion. And everyone recognized and could smell that incense.

And it was announced that the enemy has been defeated and he's being dragged back to Rome. And when they got to Rome, they'd go to an open square. In the center, there was a pillar.

And the leader of the rebellion, the defeated leader was tied to this pillar. His hands and his feet. His whole body was bound to the pillar.

And there he was put on public display. Everyone could come and see him, this evil person. Even small children came to look at the spectacle and they could even throw rotten tomatoes at him and they'd mock him right into his face.

They could kick him. They could play the fool with him. They could anything, do anything.

He was bound. So Jesus as well on the cross, he overcame the devil. He overcame Satan.

He put him to public shame. And he then called out, it is finished. Because our whole account of our sin was written there on the cross.

All our sins. And the Lord Jesus on the cross paid the price for those sins. He descended into hell and then on the third day, he rose from the dead and he overcame the last enemy, death.

The devil is overcome. He's defeated. When Michael overcame Satan and his host, there was great rejoicing.

If you read in Revelation, where the dragon was conquered and overcome, there was great rejoicing. And it was called out that they overcome through the, they overcome through the blood of the lamb and the word of their testimony. And they didn't love their lives unto death.

That's how they conquered Satan. Jesus Christ is the real hero. And yet you men, you boys, and even you girls, you choose to rather give in to the lusts of the flesh and the lusts of the youth and you tell lies and you don't tell the truth.

You hang on to the devil. What will he give you? What you get for it is hell, that lake of fire, which was prepared for the devil and his angels. But you'll go there with him because you've chosen him.

What a fool is that person who clings and holds to the devil. You'll get your hell. The hell was made for him.

But because you cling to the devil, you'll end the same place. Now I need to close. Who wants to cling to the devil? Just get up that we can see you.

I'd like to see you. Would like to be a friend of the devil. And I'd like to say, what a fool you are.

You'll regret it for all eternity. And if you go with the satanists who murder people, black out their eyes and worshipping ancestral spirits, all the spirits called by different names, is called to you because you'll regret it for all eternity. Let's bow our heads and pray.

Lord, we love you. We worship you. You've done such great things for us.

But we hate satan. He's evil. Lord, send your Holy Spirit work in our midst and the one who's still married to the devil.

May he divorce him today. Take off that ring which he gave him. And accept your ring.

And that we'll be faithful to you, Lord, to the end. Amen. Amen.

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