

“Know Your Enemy” Ephesians 6:10-13

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*. 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. Ephesians 6:11–13 (NKJV)

“Keep your friends close but your enemies closer.”
Machiavelli from his Book “The Prince”

I’d say this is not good advice about Satan.

If we are going to be successful in spiritual warfare, we need to understand our enemy and his wiles
(μεθοδείας) methods:

1. We need to know about the Devil (Satan) who brings the wiles -

1. He is compared to a roaring lion –

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

“He is a roaring lion, hungry, fierce, strong, and cruel, the fierce and greedy pursuer of souls” – Matthew Henry

Roaring is one of his methods, a lion roars to get its prey running, right into the claws and jaws of other lions.

2. He is called a serpent but later a great dragon –

A. As a serpent he was small and subtle, crafty, and dangerous – 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'?" (Genesis 3:1-2 NKJV)

** As the serpent his great weapon was lies / falsehoods from a forked tongue*

** His mouth was full of deadly poison!*

B. The dragon in Revelation is a metaphorical picture of Satan as having dragonish abilities to hunt, and yet he not only hunts, he also RULES; he is in control of an ungodly world system, influencing governments, laws, societies, in this sense the Devil / Satan is a dragon –

So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. (Revelation 12:9 NKJV)

3. He is the head of a wicked spiritual army – Ephesians 6:12; Daniel 10:13

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 NKJV)

¹³ **"But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia. (Daniel 10:10-13 NKJV)**

4. He has some power over animals and weather – Genesis 3:1; Luke 8:32-33; Job 1:16; :19

Now a herd of many swine was feeding there on the mountain. So they begged Him that He would permit them to enter them. And He permitted them. 33 Then the demons went out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd ran violently down the steep place into the lake and drowned. (Luke 8:32-33 NKJV)

While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants, and consumed them; and I alone have escaped to tell you!" (Job 1:16 NKJV)

While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "Your sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, "and suddenly a great wind came from across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell on the young people, and they are dead; and I alone have escaped to tell you!" (Job 1:18-19 NKJV)

5. He has some power within the minds of men – Job 1:17; 2 Corinthians 4:3-4

While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "The Chaldeans formed three bands, raided the camels and took them away, yes, and killed the servants with the edge of the sword; and I alone have escaped to tell you!" (Job 1:17 NKJV)

But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, 4 whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them. (2 Corinthians 4:3-4 NKJV)

6. He has power (at least sometimes) to hurt us physically –

A. Obviously indirectly – **Job 1:17** ↑ *Using human armies, the Chaldeans against Job's family* ↑

B. Sometimes directly – Job 2:4-7

So Satan answered the LORD and said, "Skin for skin! Yes, all that a man has he will give for his life. ⁵ "But stretch out Your hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will surely curse You to Your face!" ⁶ And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, he is in your hand, but spare his life." ⁷ So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD, and struck Job with painful boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. (Job 2:4-7 NKJV)

7. *His power is greater than what we could handle without God's help* – Ephesians 6:10-12

8. Yet, thankfully, all this power is limited –

⁶ **And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, he is in your hand, but spare his life." Job 2:6** *Satan could only go as far as God would allow.*

No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it. (1 Corinthians 10:13 NKJV)

II. We need to know about the wiles the Devil brings:

1. Wiles designed to blind – 2 Corinthians 4:4

whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them. (2 Corinthians 4:4 NKJV)

A. There is an ignorant, immoral blindness of the unconverted –

¹⁷ This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, ¹⁸ having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; ¹⁹ who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. Ephesians 4:17–19 (NKJV)

B. There is a blindness that is the judgment of God –

⁴⁰ “He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts, Lest they should see with their eyes, Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, So that I should heal them.” John 12:40 (NKJV)

C. There is a self-righteous, hypocritical blindness –

¹⁶ “Woe to you, blind guides, who say, ‘Whoever swears by the temple, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gold of the temple, he is obliged to perform it.’ ¹⁷ Fools and blind! For which is greater, the gold or the temple that sanctifies the gold? ¹⁸ And, ‘Whoever swears by the altar, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gift that is on it, he is obliged to perform it.’ ¹⁹ Fools and blind! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that sanctifies the gift? Matthew 23:16–19 (NKJV)

2. Wiles designed to stir hatred against God –

A. We have this in us already, a natural hatred for God –

Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. ⁸ So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. (Romans 8:7-8 NKJV)

B. We are by our sin nature, self-destructive; this Satan would gladly lead, guide and stir us to his own purposes –

There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death. (Proverbs 14:12 NKJ)

C. *There are certain fleshly PLEASURES connected to sin, one of the Devil’s wiles is to make out that God is a BAD guy for not allowing us our sinful pleasures -*

... the passing pleasures of sin Hebrews 11:25

3. Wiles designed to stir doubt about God and His word –

A. Note his questions to Eve –

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?'" ² And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; ³ "but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.'" ⁴ Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. (Genesis 3:1-4 NKJ)

B. Even the “ifs” he presents to Christ, the Son of God - **Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." (Matthew 4:3 NKJV)**

and said to Him, **"If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written: 'He shall give His angels charge over you,' and, 'In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.'"** (Matthew 4:6 NKJV)

3. Wiles designed to stir pride in self rather than dependence upon God –
Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. (1 Corinthians 10:12 NKJV)

4. Wiles that stir up a “spirit of fear” –

²⁴ Then Saul said to Samuel, "I have sinned, for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD and your words, because I feared the people and obeyed their voice. 1 Samuel 15:24 (NKJV)

Go to a pagan country and you will find it is a country of fears. The inhabitants are afraid of everything, afraid of the dark, afraid of spirits in the trees, in the woods, in the heavens.” Martyn Lloyd-Jones

We are becoming more and more “pagan” and now we “fear” things like global warming!

5. Wiles that promote false teaching –

²⁹ "For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. ³⁰ "Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. (Acts 20:29-30 NKJ)

6. Wiles that encourage right teaching even in a distorted or unbalanced manner –

Revelation 2:1-7 "To the angel of the church of Ephesus write, `These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands: 2 "I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars; 3 "and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name's sake and have not become weary. 4 "Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. 5 "Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place-- unless you repent. 6 "But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. 7 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God." (Revelation 2:1-7 NKJ)

7. Wiles that stir evil thoughts even blasphemy, Martyn Lloyd-Jones says these are “**the fiery darts of the wicked one**” referred to in **Ephesians 6:15**

III. Applications:

1. Note, these are just examples of Satan’s many temptations

2. Realize that only Christ has emerged sinless from all the temptations of Satan, depend on Him – Ephesians 6

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