

Lesson 2

Scouting Out the Promised Land

Joshua 2

In preparation for possessing the Promised Land, Joshua sent two spies across the Jordan, much like Moses had done forty years earlier (Numbers 13). If they were going to fight strategic battles, they needed to know who they were up against and what the battles would entail. The enemy was real, and the enemy was entrenched in the Promised Land.

As believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, we also have a real enemy who is at war against us. We cannot be naïve about his strength or his strategies. It is vital that we know who our enemy is. Satan is the enemy of our soul. God wants us to be informed about the enemy's existence and strategies.

Read Joshua 2.

Know Thy Enemy

As we approach the subject of the enemy, I realize that there are two ditches into which we could easily fall. One is the ditch of denial, refusing to believe that we have an enemy. The other is the ditch of obsession, attributing everything bad that happens to us as the work of the devil. The Lord wants us to properly assess our enemy. C.S. Lewis stated this balance well:

There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about the devils. One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe, and to feel an unhealthy interest in them. They themselves are equally pleased by both errors and hail a materialist or a magician with the same delight.^v

1. Ezekiel 28:12-17 is a prophecy about the king of Tyre, but it seems to go beyond the earthly king to give us insight into the original state of Satan. Read this passage and discuss what you learn, particularly noting the reason for his fall.

“...so that no advantage would be taken of us by Satan, for we are not ignorant of his schemes.”

2 Corinthians 2:11



“For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.”

Ephesians 6:12

2. Isaiah 14:12-15 also seems to be about Satan. What is the intent of his heart?

3. What do we learn about Satan in the following verses about him? (Pay particular attention to the names that he is given, as these describe his character.)

❖ John 8:44: _____

❖ John 10:10: _____

❖ 2 Corinthians 11:14: _____

❖ 1 Peter 5:8: _____

❖ James 4:7: _____

❖ Revelation 12:7-10: _____

4. Read about the temptations of Christ in Matthew 4:1-11 and Luke 4:1-13. What do you learn about the ultimate goal of Satan from these temptations? What do you learn from Jesus’ actions about countering Satan’s temptations?

Satan is the head of a vast hierarchy of unseen spiritual forces. Apparently, they are organized much like an army in terms of rank and structure. Ephesians 6:12 gives us some insight: “rulers, powers, world forces of darkness and spiritual forces of wickedness in heaven places” seem to refer to different ranks in the enemy’s organization. Our enemy is organized, and he has certain strategies and schemes that he uses to lead both believers and nonbelievers away from the Lord and His abundant blessings.

Our Enemy Is Defeated

As far back as Genesis 3, just after the fall of man, God leveled a curse at the serpent (Satan) in a veiled prophecy about the seed of the woman who would bruise the serpent on the head while the serpent would bruise him on the heel (Genesis 3:14-15). This prophecy was fulfilled through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Romans 5:12-19). When Christ was crucified on the cross, Satan bruised Jesus’ heel. The Lord was victorious over Satan when He was resurrected from the grave – “the seed of woman [God in human form] bruised the serpent on the head.” Though defeated, Satan has not yet surrendered. He will continue to

wage war against believers until the day when he is thrown into the lake of fire for all eternity (Revelation 20:10).

- 5. What was the final report that the two spies gave to Joshua? See Joshua 2:24.

The spies reassured Joshua and all the Israelites that the enemy was real, but they also reminded them that the Lord would give the land into their hands, just as He had promised. We have this very same promise.

- 6. From Ephesians 1:19-23, where is Christ now?



As believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, we are united with Him in this heavenly position (Ephesians 2:4-6). Through His victory on the cross, the Lord has cancelled the debt that we owed Satan because of our sin (Colossians 2:13-15). We are exalted with Christ over the enemy. Our earthly job is to live it out.

- 7. What do you learn about Satan’s power in Job 1:6-12 and Luke 22:31?

- 8. What attitude must we have as we approach battles with our enemy according to 2 Timothy 1:7?

- 9. Read the promise of 1 John 4:4. This truth is key to living in the Land of Milk and Honey. Write the verse under the key in the margin.

1 John 4:4

The Strategies of the Enemy

The enemy of old has employed several strategies since the Garden of Eden to cause us to doubt God and to turn and go our own way. These strategies can keep us out of the Land of Milk and Honey. Since his strategies work so well, he keeps using them! We need to understand his schemes and learn how to recognize and counter them.

- 10. Consider the exchange between Eve and the serpent in Genesis 3:1-6. What do we learn about the schemes of the enemy from this passage?



“Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.”

1 Peter 5:8

From the very beginning, Satan has caused us to question the goodness of God. He suggests to us that God is withholding something from us that we need in order to be happy. He causes us to doubt that God’s will is the best plan for our lives. We begin to think that we need to take matters into our own hands and live independently of God in order to find fulfillment.

Other strategies that the enemy employs is bringing discouragement, causing division and instigating misunderstandings. He brings criticism and disappointment so that we just want to give up. He uses shame to make us feel disqualified.

11. From Ephesians 4:26-27, what is another way we give the enemy an opportunity?

12. When do we give Satan the chance to take advantage of us according to 2 Corinthians 2:10-11?

In chapter two of the book of Joshua, we observe a scene that would send many of us into overdrive as self-appointed judges, giving the enemy another opportunity to catch us up in his schemes.

13. Look back over Joshua 2. Where did the spies find shelter in Jericho?

We are so quick to judge others, but we can't see their hearts. God saw Rahab's heart for Him. He was looking for someone willing to stand against her culture and risk her own life for His will. Rahab knew there was nothing she could do to stop God’s plan, so she begged the spies to have mercy on her and her family and to spare them from the coming slaughter. Rahab trusted the omnipotence of the God of Israel. Her actions reveal a deep faith in spite of her questionable lifestyle.

Hundreds of years later, Matthew will tell us in his gospel that Rahab went on to marry Simon and become the mother of Boaz whose direct descendent was King David. That means that Jesus the Messiah is in the bloodline of Rahab! The Lord didn't just save her. He wrapped this former prostitute up in His purpose and honored her in an incredible way.

14. When we accuse other believers based on their behavior, whose job are we really doing according to Revelation 12:9-10? What are other ways do we misuse our judgment of others?



“Do not judge so that you will not be judged. For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you.”

Matthew 7:1-2

Not only are we joining Satan in his mission when we accuse others, but we are also setting ourselves up to be judged in this same area. Matthew 7:1-2 says, “Do not judge so that you will not be judged. For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you.” We need to ask the Lord to search out our hearts and see if we are holding others in judgment. If so, confess and repent of this and begin to bless and pray for the one you have been accusing.

Involvement In the Occult

The Lord wants us to be aware of the strategies of the enemy. We also need to be careful to close any openings that we may have given the enemy. He will take a tiny foothold and burrow in from there. We must not give him any opportunity. The very first step that needs to be taken is to address any occult activity that may have occurred in our lives. In the coming chapters, we are going to take other practical steps to avoid the traps and strategies of the enemy and to reclaim the ground that we have lost to him.

15. What does Deuteronomy 18:10-14 set forth as behavior that is detestable to the Lord?

The Lord is very clear that we must forsake all occult practices.

I do not want to bring condemnation here. Sometimes we open spiritual doors to the occult out of ignorance; we don’t realize what we are doing. I played a game with a ouija board at a slumber party with friends when I was nine years old. I had no idea that I was opening a door to the occult. Whether I was innocently playing a game or knowingly tapping into the occult, my actions had the same result. Years later, when the Lord reminded me of this, I still needed to repent - not make excuses for my behavior.

16. How did the new believers in Acts 19:18-20 respond when they came to the Lord?

If we are going to experience the abundant life that Christ offers, it is imperative that we renounce all occult involvement and ask the Lord's forgiveness. It is also necessary to destroy any objects associated with the occult involvement.

17. Consider this list of occult activities, which is compiled from various sources.^{vi} Circle any with which you have ever been involved:

Amulets	Horoscopes	Pendulum
Ankhs	Kabala	Planchettes
Astrology	Magic 8 Ball	Seances
Automatic Writing	Mediums	Talismans
Channeling	Mind Reading	Tarot Cards
Clairvoyance	Numerology	Tea Leaf Reading
Crystal Balls	Omens	Telepathy
Divining	Ouija Boards	Witchcraft
ESP	Pagan Rituals	Zodiac Charms
Handwriting Analysis	Palm Reading	

The list is incomplete and there are other occult activities not listed here. Ask the Holy Spirit to bring to your memory any other activity that needs to be dealt with.

"You shall have no other gods before Me," says the Lord in the first of the ten commandments (Exodus 20:3). This command is so simple and clear that we sometimes gloss over it. The commandment is repeated throughout the Scriptures. The Lord is consistent and unwavering about this. He has not changed. We need to repent of any participation in any religion or cult that does not acknowledge that Jesus is Lord and Savior or that His blood is the basis for the forgiveness of our sins. This includes Eastern religions, the new age philosophy, pagan religions, and cults such as Mormonism, Jehovah's Witnesses, Christian Science and Unity. It also includes "some lodges, societies and social agencies which use religion (scripture and even God) as a foundation, but omit the blood atonement of Jesus Christ."^{vii} This includes the Masons, an organization that is common to many of our families. If we have participated in any of these organizations we need to deal with it before the Lord. If you were in a fraternity or sorority, ask the Lord if you did anything to offend Him as part of the initiation or ritual. If you think of something, repent of it also. We want to be careful not to offend the Lord. Later,

we will deal with generational sins and will look at activities of our ancestors. For now, focus on the activities that you have participated in yourself.

18. *Take some time now to bring any occult practices you have participated in before the Lord in repentance and confession. Also renounce any involvement you may have had with groups that did not bow before Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.*

- ❖ *Tell Him you are sorry for participating in the activity even if you didn't know it was wrong at the time. Renounce the activity and turn from it (repent).*
- ❖ *Ask Him to forgive you.*
- ❖ *Ask Him to cleanse you and remove from you any lasting effects the activity may have left on your spirit.*
- ❖ *Thank God that by Jesus' blood, you can be cleansed and healed!*

Knowing the Lord

Way more important than knowing about the enemy is knowing the Lord. I am not talking about knowing *about* God. I am talking about really knowing Him! When we come into an intimate relationship with Him, we get to know what He is really like. We learn of His goodness. We begin to trust Him and to rely upon Him. We find protection from the enemy as we draw close to the Lord and submit to Him (James 4:7 and 1 Peter 5:8-9).

There is also protection from the enemy in the blood of Jesus Christ. His blood is the means through which the victory of the cross was won. His shed blood is the basis of our forgiveness and reconciliation to God. His blood is what defeated the enemy. When we plead the blood of Christ over a situation, we are placing it under the providence of God, and out of the territory of the enemy. During some of our prayer sessions with others, we have been sidetracked by many distractions. Either Anne or I will simply pray, pleading the blood of Jesus Christ over each one of us and over our time together. Almost without exception, the distractions will stop. Claiming the blood of Christ is a powerful weapon against the devil.

Finally, as we begin to move in awareness of the enemy, we will need to be careful about how we respond. It is important not to retaliate or seek revenge. The way we defeat the enemy is to "come in the opposite spirit". Let me give you an example from my own life that I have shared with many of you before. Years ago I learned that a man I knew had done something sneaky and disingenuous that really hurt my feelings. I was angry. What he did was wrong. My initial impulse was to tell others and expose and embarrass him. But first, I decided to pray about



*"This is eternal life,
that they may know
You, the only true God,
and Jesus Christ whom
You have sent."*

John 17:3

it and give the hurt to the Lord. As I was asking the Lord for direction, I felt like I heard a word from the Him: "Heap burning coals upon his head." The Lord spoke into my heart, and I thought, *Yeah, that sounds great, heap burning coals on his head! I like that. I don't really know what that means, but I sure do like the way it sounds.* I vaguely remembered this being in the Bible somewhere, but it was the next day before I had a chance to pull out my concordance and look it up. I was blown away when I read the context of this verse:



"Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

Romans 12:21

"Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men. If possible so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men. Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, 'Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,' says the Lord. But if your enemy is hungry, feed him, and if he is thirsty give him a drink, for in so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." (Romans 12:17-21)

Whoa! God's ways are so different than my ways! In this case since the man did not even realize that I knew what he had done, I did not need to involve him. Rather, after forgiving him from my heart, I looked for opportunities to "kill him with kindness." He was living out of pride and a mean-spirit. I determined to walk in the opposite spirit of humility and kindness. I don't think he ever knew that I knew what he had done. As I look back, I can now see that if I had gone for the bait, I would have really blown it for the Lord. I may have been "right" but I would have been a stumbling block in this man's journey to finding the Lord – a path that he is still on.

As Romans 12:21 says: "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." This is the strategy of the Lord for how we are to counter those who come against us on "assignment" from the enemy. (Remember people are never our enemy. They don't even know they are on assignment. As Ephesians 6:12 reminds us, "We wrestle not against flesh and blood but against the rulers, powers and world forces of this darkness.") We identify the attitude that is being manifested and we come in the opposite, godly spirit. This takes wisdom and care. Ephesians 5:15 tells us, "Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men, but as wise."

19. Is there a situation in your life where you have the opportunity to walk in the opposite spirit in a conflict? What is the opposite spirit? Then ask the Lord to fill you with His Spirit in order that you will be able to do that.

Clothed In the Lord

God knows the strategies of the enemy, so out of His great love for us, He has designed armor that perfectly protects us where we are vulnerable. He has even given us the sequence for putting on the armor. Our job is simply to get dressed!

20. Read Ephesians 6:10-19 and consider the following questions:

- ❖ What are the different pieces of the armor of God?

- ❖ What phrase is repeated throughout this passage?

- ❖ From verses 18 and 19 what are we to do once we have taken up the armor?



“Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.”

Ephesians 6:13

I think it is important that we regularly put on the full armor of God. I know a woman who prays through this passage as she puts her make-up on every morning. This is a great idea as long as we do not do it in a rote way. There is no magic in the words; it is the reality behind the words that brings our protection. We must understand what each piece of the armor represents and appropriate each piece in an intentional way.

When you carefully think through the pieces of this suit of armor, you see that each article represents an aspect of knowing the Lord. We are to clothe ourselves in the Lord Jesus Christ! He is our protection; He makes us strong. Once we are clothed in Him, then we are ready to stand firm and to pray, for it is through prayer that the real battle is won.

21. *Take some time now to suit yourself up in the armor of God so that you can pray about what is on your heart today:*

- ❖ *Lord, I put on the belt of truth. Show me any area of my life that is operating in deception. Bring Your truth and light. I stand firm in Your truth.*

- ❖ *Lord, I choose to put on the breastplate of the righteousness of Christ. I do not trust in my own goodness, but in Yours alone. And when the*

Armor of God

enemy comes to accuse me, I say, "So what? My past is under the blood of Jesus." I stand firm in Your righteousness.

- ❖ *Lord, I now slip my foot into Your perfect peace so that I will move in it wherever You lead me. And now I exchange _____ (my worry or fear) for the peace of Christ, which passes all understanding. I stand firm in this peace.*
- ❖ *Lord, I take up the shield of faith. I trust that You are and that You want to bless and reward those who diligently seek You. You are good. The shield extinguishes all the fiery darts of the enemy. I stand firm behind this shield.*
- ❖ *I place on my head (my mind) the helmet of salvation, the helmet of victory. I will say "no" to the thoughts of self-pity and discouragement. I am not defeated; You are victorious. I stand firm in Your victory.*
- ❖ *I take the two-edged sword of the Spirit – the Word of God. Lord make me strong in the Spirit and strong in the Word. I choose to yield to Your Spirit and to meditate on your Word, to think it through, to listen to Your Spirit speaking to me through your unfailing Word. I will declare and stand firm on Your Spirit-breathed Word.*
- ❖ *Thank You, Lord, that Your armor protects me and that I am strong in Your might. Standing firm in You. I now pray for...*

We do have an enemy, but we stand with the Lord – victorious and protected!

Prepare for Life

The spies of Joshua's generation had such a different attitude than the spies of Moses' day. Forty years earlier, the spies had come back from the Promised Land impressed by the awesome abundance and blessings of the land but totally intimidated by the enemy. They refused to believe God's word. They were crippled by fear and rebelled against God. They literally wanted to stone Joshua when he made the case for moving into the Promised Land (Numbers 14:10). In Joshua's day, the spies who scouted out the land recognized the strength of the enemy, but they also understood the strength of their God. They believed His promises, and they decided to take the land!

22. *Consider the following scriptures and meditate on them using the prayer exercise that was detailed on page 13.*

❖ Scriptures: **Romans 8:37-39**

❖ Word or Phrase:

❖ Insight:

❖ Invitation:

v C.S. Lewis, *The Screwtape Letters*, (New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers, 1961), preface.

^{vi} List Compiled From:

Neil Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker*, (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2000).

Mark Bubeck, *The Adversary: The Christian Versus Demon Activity*, (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1975).

Derek Prince, *Blessing or Curse: You Can Choose*, (Ada, MI: Chosen Books, 1990).

^{vii} Frank and Ida Mae Hammond, *Pigs In the Parlor*, (Kirkwood, MO: Impact Christian Books, Inc., 1973), 39.

Lecture Notes: