

Spiritual Warfare in the New Testament

Principalities, Powers, Darkness & Overcoming — KJV

THE ARMOR AND WEAPONS OF WARFARE

Ephesians 6:10-18 — *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. (v.12) — followed by the full armor of God.*

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 — *For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.*

PRINCIPALITIES, POWERS, AND RULERS OF DARKNESS

Colossians 1:16 — *All things created by Him, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers.*

Colossians 2:15 — *Christ spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.*

Colossians 1:13 — *Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.*

Ephesians 1:21 — *Christ set far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion.*

Ephesians 3:10 — *The church makes known God's wisdom unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places.*

Ephesians 2:2 — *The prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.*

Romans 8:38-39 — *Nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers... shall be able to separate us from the love of God.*

1 Corinthians 15:24 — *Christ shall have put down all rule and all authority and power, at the end.*

1 Peter 3:22 — *Angels, authorities, and powers being made subject unto him.*

BINDING, TEARING DOWN, AND OVERCOMING

Matthew 12:29 / Mark 3:27 — *How can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man?*

Luke 11:21-22 — *The strong man armed keepeth his palace, until a stronger comes and overcomes him.*

Luke 10:19 — *Power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy.*

Matthew 16:18 — *The gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*

1 John 3:8 — *For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.*

Hebrews 2:14 — *Christ took on flesh and blood that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.*

THE DEVIL AS ADVERSARY — RESISTING AND FLEEING

James 4:7 — *Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*

1 Peter 5:8-9 — *Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist stedfast in the faith.*

1 John 4:4 — *Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.*

Ephesians 4:27 — *Neither give place to the devil.*

Ephesians 5:11 — *Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.*

CHRIST'S AUTHORITY OVER THE PRINCE OF THIS WORLD

John 12:31 — *Now shall the prince of this world be cast out.*

John 14:30 — *The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.*

John 16:11 — *The prince of this world is judged.*

Acts 26:18 — *Paul's commission to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.*

WAR IN HEAVEN AND THE OVERCOMERS

Revelation 12:7-9 — *There was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels.*

Revelation 12:11 — *They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony.*

FIGHTING AS A SOLDIER / ATHLETE

1 Timothy 6:12 — *Fight the good fight of faith.*

2 Timothy 4:7 — *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course.*

2 Timothy 2:3-4 — *Endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.*

Note: Titus 3:1 and Romans 13:1 also use "principalities/powers" and "rulers," but refer to civil government authority, not spiritual forces.

TERRITORIAL PRINCIPALITIES

The idea that specific spiritual powers govern specific geographic regions is not spelled out explicitly in the New Testament — it draws primarily on an Old Testament narrative, extended by later teaching.

Old Testament Basis

Daniel 10:13, 20-21 — *The angel tells Daniel he was resisted by "the prince of the kingdom of Persia" for 21 days, until Michael came to help; he also mentions "the prince of Grecia" is coming — the clearest textual basis for spiritual beings tied to specific nations.*

Deuteronomy 32:8 — *In some manuscript traditions (Dead Sea Scrolls, Septuagint — differing from the Masoretic/KJV text), describes God dividing the nations "according to the number of the sons of God," sometimes read as spiritual beings allotted authority over nations at Babel.*

Deuteronomy 32:17 / Psalm 106:37 — *Describe Israel sacrificing to "devils" (Hebrew shedim) associated with pagan nations' gods — sometimes read as territorial spirits behind national idolatry.*

New Testament References

Ephesians 6:12 — *"Principalities... powers... rulers of the darkness of this world... spiritual wickedness in high places." Does not explicitly state these powers are assigned to geographic territories — that is an inference, not a stated claim.*

Revelation 2-3 — *The letters to the seven churches are addressed to distinct cities; Pergamos is described as the place "where Satan's seat is" (Rev. 2:13) — often cited as a specific spiritual stronghold over a specific city.*

John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11 — *Satan called "the prince of this world" — singular and global, not territorial in the sense of multiple regional princes.*

2 Corinthians 4:4 — *"The god of this world" — also global, not regional.*