

# THE DAY OF BATTLE

## 1 SAMUEL 13

Text: 1 Samuel 13:22

"So it came to pass in the day of battle, that there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people that were with Saul and Jonathan: but with Saul and with Jonathan his son was there found." 1 Sam. 13:22

Introduction:

When the sun rose over Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, it seemed like the most unlikely place to start a war. The weather was perfect. Light winds. Cool temperatures. Blue skies dotted with puffy clouds.

Families had begun to get ready for morning church services. Sailors had prepared for what they believed would be another day of routine tasks.

At 7:55 a.m., 190 attacking Japanese warplanes shattered the morning calm. Using the art of surprise to perfection, six aircraft carriers had moved within striking distance of America's South Pacific fleet. In a superbly coordinated attack, wave after wave of Japanese planes bombed the harbor and airfield. Supporting them were a number of two-man subs that

had silently entered the harbor.

When the attack was completed, 2,330 American servicemen lay dead or dying. Another 1,145 had been wounded. Five battleships lay on the bottom of the harbor. Two destroyers had been gutted. A third was badly crippled. Many other warships were severely damaged and the airfield was virtually destroyed.

We hate to admit it, but the Japanese had found a people unprepared for battle. By the time the American forces realized that they were under attack, their defenses had been crippled. As the last Japanese plane disappeared over the horizon, they left behind a fleet that had been effectively destroyed.

As Christians, we have an enemy that is no less ruthless or cunning. Every day, he executes carefully crafted plans aimed at our destruction. Throughout the centuries, he has launched countless Pearl Harbor style attacks aimed at crippling the churches of Christ.

2 Corinthians 2:11 states,

"Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices."

I believe there are at least four strategies that Satan employs in his attack against Christianity. He will try to:

- Disarm us – to strip us of our power.

We must be concerned any time those in power want to disarm its people. (Sound familiar)

- Distract us – to lead us from our purpose.
- Disable us – to impair our productivity.
- Destroy us – to completely neutralize our potential.

The first is illustrated by our text.

As we pick up the story, Saul is in his second year as king over Israel. Things could not be going much worse. The Philistines were camped just four miles from Saul's capital in Gibeah. According to verse 5, their army included 30,000 chariots, 6000 mounted cavalry, and a large host of infantry. Saul had only been able to gather together 3000 men, and when they began counting tents in the Philistine camp, over two-thirds of Saul's force deserted. Saul was vastly outnumbered.

To make matters worse, Saul's army was also absurdly outgunned. In the entire Israeli Army there were only two swords – one each for Saul and Jonathon. The remainder of the army was armed with clubs and farming tools. The reason for this, we are told, is that the Philistines had disarmed the people of God. They

had stripped the land of Israel of her weapons and denied her an effective fighting force.

I am convinced that Satan has used the same strategy against the church. In 2 Corinthians 10:4, Paul mentions the weapons of our warfare.

(2 Cor 10:4) "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;"

When Jesus Christ organized His church, he equipped her for battle. He did not leave us powerless. He armed us for conflict. But many today have allowed the devil to strip them of their weapons, leaving them to fight their spiritual battles with inferior arms.

## **1. TO DISARM US – TO STRIP US OF OUR POWER**

A. He has nullified the message of the Gospel.  
Rom. 1:16

(Rom 1:16) "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."

The Bible is amazingly consistent in its presentation of what is required to be saved.

Believing has always been the one requirement of salvation.

See Romans 4:3

(Rom 4:3) "For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness."

See Galatians 3:6-9

(Gal 3:6-9) "Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. {7} Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. {8} And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. {9} So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham."

B. Today, there is widespread confusion over what saves.

## **2. TO DISTRACT US – TO LEAD US FROM OUR PURPOSE**

A. He has neutralized the church. Ephesians 4:11-16

(Eph 4:11-16) "And he gave some, apostles; and some,

prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; {12} For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: {13} Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: {14} That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; {15} But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: {16} From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

The purpose of church ministry is: (Verse 12)

- To mature the saints
- Mobilize them in service
- So that the we can multiply our outreach

B. Today there is widespread confusion over the purpose of ministry.

### **3. TO DISABLE US – TO IMPAIR OUR PRODUCTIVITY**

## A. He has nullified our outreach.

Today, we are very familiar with the subject of disabilities. We understand that different things, such as blindness and crippling diseases, may cause a person to be disabled.

Often we have no control over these things. They may be inherited or the result of an accident. But our enemy Satan deliberately puts things into our paths that are meant to cripple us in our Christian walk.

- Sins of neglect – a failure to pray or study the Bible.
- Sinful habits – produce guilt, bring discipline, and discredit our witness
- Sinful attitudes – a love of money, bitterness towards other people, prejudices, etc.

B. Today there is widespread confusion over what it means to behave as a Christian.

One of the most serious disabilities afflicted upon the church today is that the lost can look at our churches and our homes and see little difference between their lifestyle and the Christian lifestyle. In other words, our beliefs make very little difference in our behavior.

- The Christian watches R rated movies and the non-Christian watches R rated movies. No difference.
- Mainstream Christian music can be targeted at "spiritual" or "secular" audiences. No difference.
- Christian homes break up just about as often as non-Christian homes. No difference.
- Conflict between Christians occurs just as often as conflict between non-Christians. No difference.

Instead of converting the world, the church has been crippled by the values, philosophies, and practices of the world.

#### **4. TO DESTROY US – TO NEUTRALIZE OUR POTENTIAL**

This is the ultimate desire of Satan for every church and Christian. Like the Philistines in our text, he amasses his forces for the purpose of complete destruction. He is not content to disarm, distract or disable us. He wants only to destroy us. We can prevent that by maintaining our defenses –

- Not letting him strip us of our power, especially in terms of our message.

- Not allowing him to lead us from our purpose.
- Being careful that we are not disabled as individuals or as a church.

Close:

We are able to stand against the schemes of the Devil, but only by being always prepared for the battle – mentally, spiritually, continually. We must be sober and vigilant because our adversary walks about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour.

Let us not be a people unprepared for battle.