

The Weakness Of God's Elect

Zac Poonen:

In 2 Chronicles 20, we see a picture of how we can wage this warfare against Satan. There we read of a great multitude that came against King Jehoshapat. But Jehoshapat did the right thing, when confronted by so many enemies. He got the whole nation of Judah to seek God in fasting and prayer. Then he prayed to God acknowledging their weakness, their foolishness and their faith. He said, "O our God, wilt Thou not judge them? For we are powerless before this great multitude who are coming against us; nor do we know what to do, but our eyes are on Thee" (v.12). This is the secret of all effective prayer - to recognise our weakness and our foolishness, and to trust God utterly to fight the battle for us.

Jesus pictured "the elect"(the church) as a poor, helpless, old widow who has to fight against a strong enemy, with no human help or resources (Lk.18:1-7). It is only when we recognise our weakness like that, that we can depend on the Lord. Only then can we exercise faith. God curses those who lean on human resources, with barrenness. He has said, "Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind and makes flesh his strength, for he will be like a barren bush in the desert" (Jer.17:5). Many are constantly defeated by sin, and overcome by Satan, only because they are strong in themselves. They have strong opinions about everyone and everything, they speak stinging words, and they are quick to judge others. God leaves such believers alone, and they never ever become overcomers. Those who argue and dispute are certainly not weak and powerless. They are strong, and are therefore easy targets for Satan - for he always wins the battle with those who argue. That is how he won the battle with Eve in Eden. Don't ever get into an argument therefore with your husband or your wife or with anyone else - for you will never win. It is always the Devil who will win in such cases.

Those who take revenge on others also prove thereby that they are strong people capable of handling their problems themselves. The weak widow needs to plead with the judge (Lk.18:2), but strong people don't!! They fight themselves! Others are strong because their bank-accounts are large, or because their employers can be trusted to pay them faithfully on the first of every month. Their trust is not in God, but in man. And so they are barren. It is only when we come to the end of our resources that God works to help us. Jesus waited until Lazarus had died - when he had lost all his strength - before He came to help him. He waits on high even today, for us to come to the same zero-point.

Jehoshapat confessed that he did not know what to do - and that is a good confession to make, for God has promised to give wisdom to all those who acknowledge their lack of it. But we have to ask for it in faith (Jas.1:5,6). And that was what Jehoshapat did. He did not merely acknowledge his impotence and his lack of wisdom, He concluded his prayer with an expression of absolute trust in God. He said, "But our eyes are on Thee". In other words, he was telling God, "We are expecting you to work on our behalf". AND GOD DID!!