

The Big Cost of Little Cracks in the Armor of God

A lady just wrote that she began teaching the Prayers That Heal the Heart course, and came under assault of demons. Her relationship with her sister fell apart. She slipped on the ice and got a concussion. She wanted help! I asked her if she had her armor on.

As we explored, we discovered she had unresolved anger and bitterness, so no, her heart was not covered with the breastplate of love. Parts of her armor were off, so she had a chink in her armor or a break in her hedge of protection, and the serpent was able to strike (see Eccl. 10:8). She went to work praying through her anger and bitterness so her protective armor would be complete.

Many Christians ignore demons entirely and have never cast out a demon. Other Christians go to the opposite extreme, attributing every pressure in their lives to Satan harassing them. What is the biblical balance?

May I suggest that if I don't give the devil an opportunity (Eph. 4:27) he has no power to touch me; but if I give in to his schemes, I can come under his destructive influence. Another way of saying this is this: If there is no chink in my armor, or no broken-down areas in my hedge of protection, Satan has no ability to touch me for I live protected by God's grace.

If demons are allowed access they bring disease (Luke 13:11,12), destruction (Mark 5:1-20) and death (John 10:10), so I sure don't want demonic interference in my life. I want to walk in the victory Jesus has promised to me. I want to live in my promised land.

Job had a hedge protecting him from Satan's attack, but he had

one broken-down area of the hedge

“Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land” (Job 1:10).

Satan was not able to touch Job unless he first got permission from God.

Job did have a chink in his armor, or a broken-down area in this hedge that had protected him. It was fear. “For the thing which I greatly feared has happened to me, and that which I dreaded has come to me” (Job 3:25). Therefore, Satan was allowed to strike.

In the case of Job: “The Lord restored the fortunes of Job when he prayed for his friends, and also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before” (Job 42:10). Restoration came after Job forgave his counselors who had come against him and offered wrong counsel. Wow! Apparently forgiving is crucial to experiencing God’s protection (Mark 11:24-25).

I Can Live Sheltered and Hidden From the Enemy

“Keep me as the apple of your eye; hide me under the shadow of your wings” (Ps. 17:8).

If I live close to God, walking in obedience to His Word and His Spirit, I am actually hidden under His wings. Satan and his demons can’t even find me, much less harass me. What a nice place to live—hidden from the forces of evil and blessed by the blessings of Calvary. I don’t need to fear Satan’s attack, because Satan can’t even find me!

Satan’s first line of attack is lies in my mind.

So, since we are still involved in a warfare (2 Cor. 10:4), and Satan’s attack begins in my mind, I choose to take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ (2 Cor. 10:5), so

Satan and his demons have no inroads to bring devastation into my life!

Satan's Lies Are Rooted in Accusation, Division, Fear and Hate

1. Challenging God: "Has God say you shall not eat of any tree ...?" (Gen. 3:1).
2. Challenging truth: "You surely will not die!" (Gen. 3:4).
3. Challenging love: "He knows that on the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God" (Gen. 3:5b).
4. Creating fear: "For the thing which I greatly feared has happened to me, and that which I dreaded has come to me" (Job 3:25).
5. Challenging identity: "If you are the Son of God..." (Matt. 4:3b).
6. Challenging you to live recklessly: "Throw Yourself down" (Matt. 4:6b)
7. Challenging you to worship other gods: "'All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me" (Matt. 4:9b).

If My Hedge Is Broken Down, Then Demons Can Strike

"Whoever breaks through a wall will be bitten by a serpent" (Eccl. 10:8b). If we embrace Satan's lies, and move into sin, then Satan gains destructive access to our lives.

What if my wall of protection is weakened and broken through listening to Satan's lies, stepping into sin and disobedience? If I allow that to happen, demons can intrude. I have given place to the devil through unrepented sin. Word curses and generational curses also open doors for demons to anchor to. Now evil spirits have a legal right to operate in my life!

- Do not give the devil an opportunity (see Eph. 4:27).

Evil spirits are legalists who skillfully take advantage of every area in our lives where we have “given place to the devil!”

- A curse without cause does not alight (see Prov. 26:2).
- Forgive everything ... so that no advantage would be taken of us by Satan, for we are not ignorant of his schemes (see 2 Cor. 2:10-11). Again we see that walking in love and forgiveness is connected with keeping demons at a distance.

Stand Firm Against the Schemes of the Devil

“Finally, my brothers, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For our fight is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, and against spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places” (Eph. 6:10-12).

If we fail to “stand against the wiles of the devil” and instead yield to his pressure, demons take all the territory allowed them. As we see from Job’s story, when the hedge is removed, Satan can destroy our health, our family, our finances and essentially every area of our lives. When Adam and Eve sinned, pain, destruction and death followed. The New Testament tells us that demons can cause deafness (Mark 9:25); blindness, muteness (Matt. 12:22); infirmity (Lk. 13:11,12); madness, anti-social behavior (Mark 5:1-20) and epilepsy (Matt. 17:14-18). Jesus healed many sick by casting out demons (Mark 1:34).

Love and Forgiveness Keep Me Free From Satan’s Snare

- Put on the breastplate of faith and love (see 1 Thess. 5:8).
- “Confirm your love toward him ... lest Satan should take advantage of us. For we are not ignorant of his devices”

(2 Cor. 2:8b, 11).

- “Forgive us our sins, for we ourselves also forgive everyone who is indebted to us” (Luke 11:4a).
- “And when you stand praying, forgive if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father who is in heaven may also forgive you your sins. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father who is in heaven forgive your sins” (Mark 11:25-26).
- “His master was angry and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him. So my heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses” (Matt. 18:34-35, NKJV).

Wow! These are heavy verses. “Delivered to the torturers” means delivered over to demons who harass us and bring into our lives the things Job experienced when his hedge was down. At the very minimum, if we do not forgive, we have mental and emotional dis-ease, which produces disease in our body. A joyful heart is good medicine, but a broken spirit dries up the bones (see Prov. 17:22).

Walking in love, forgiveness and obedience to God is a must, if we want God’s hedge of protection and freedom from demonic influence in our life.

Honoring All People Helps Me Express Love and Forgiveness

“Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king” (1 Pet. 2:17).

The Lord lifted this verse off the pages of Scripture and spoke it directly into my heart. He said, “Mark, you are to honor all people.” We dialogued for some time in my journaling about what this meant. That morning’s devotions were a life-changing encounter, as He showed me that “all” actually meant *all*, even those who disagree with me politically and

spiritually. This honor extends to non-Christians, and those in other religions. Wow!

If I extend honor, I cool my tendency to judge. If I extend love, that also cools my tendency to judge. I find it impossible to honor and love a person while at the same time criticizing or hating them. You might want to ask God to speak to you about this verse too.

I Stand Firm Against the Devil by Being Filled With the Spirit and Putting on God's Armor

Jesus' counsel is that demons can come back: "When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, it goes through dry places seeking rest. Finding none, it says, 'I will return to my house, from which I came.' When it comes, it finds it swept and furnished. Then it goes and brings seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they enter and dwell there. And the last state of that man is worse than the first" (Luke 11:24-26). We are to live and walk by the Spirit, and not leave our house empty (see Gal. 5:25).

"Finally, my brothers, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For our fight is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, and against spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having done all, to stand" (Eph. 6:10-13; see 1 Thess. 5:8,9).

1. Gird your loins with truth.
2. Put on the breastplate of righteousness
3. Shoe your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace.
4. Take up the shield of faith to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one

5. Put on the helmet of the hope of salvation.
6. Take up the sword of the Spirit, the word (*rhema*/spoken word) of God
7. Pray at all times in the Spirit

Andrea Rebuilds a Wall of Protection; Fear Loses Its Grip

I grew up in a family that had deep roots in witchcraft. On my mother's side of the family, my great-grandparents (and I'm sure even more relatives I'm not aware of), to include my mom, participated in witchcraft. Growing up in my house was very interesting. We would have manifestations of demonic activity on a regular basis and assumed everyone's household was just like ours. I remember as a child being extremely fearful, nervous and anxious (for obvious reasons).

My mom did put us in church and participated in church herself because she knew inside that Jesus was what we needed, but because she was raised in the environment she was, she always went back to what she knew. You can imagine how that was for us as kids. Church on Sunday, then come home and see everything going on such as Mom using her items for spells, Ouija board and so on. .

When I got married and moved out, I started my journey toward a relationship with Jesus. It was a challenge! It wasn't until my 30s that God put people in my life with whom I could share my family history. I was then able to confess, repent and forgive the generational sin of witchcraft within my family line. I was also able to repent and receive forgiveness for my sinful responses for being in the environment. I went through a season of healing for God to remove the wrong beliefs and lies about Him, who I was and about life in general. Jesus had given me the Scripture: "He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty" (Ps. 91:1).

In other words, God was restoring my hedge of protection. You

see, my husband is retired U.S. Army, and whenever I would go home and visit my mom, even though I was saved, I would walk in her house and stand in judgment of her and her actions. Then staying in the house, my fears from childhood would rise up within me when all the manifestations would occur, and I would have anxiety and literally be frozen in terror. I would whip out my Bible and say all the "right" Scriptures, to no avail. The enemy had me every time. I was wondering: *Should I keep away from them until they got their act together, or never visit home again?*

Then finally one day I asked God, *What in the world is going on here? Your Word says greater is He who is in me and that is not working at the moment.* God clearly spoke to me that through my fear, beliefs, being in agreement with the lies of the enemy, unforgiveness, and judgement, demons had access to me. If I would handle these things, the access would be closed. Then He said to pray so I could see my mom and siblings the way He (Jesus) sees them, because when He looks at them, He doesn't see all the stuff I do. He only looks at them through the eyes of love.

I needed to truly honor my mother and I was not. The Word says to "Honor your father and mother, that your days may be long in the land the Lord your God is giving you" (Ex. 20:12) and "Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king" (1 Pet. 2:17).

Jesus gave me His eyes and His heart, and now I go home and visit and nothing happens to me. I have peace, rest and comfort. As a matter of fact, the past few years I have been going home, there have been no manifestations at all while I have been in the house. I have even gone through and anointed my mom's home.

I am able to spend time with my mom loving her as my mom and just be her daughter. Some of my siblings have participated in witchcraft, but they see my love and response toward them, and

they ask me about Jesus, and my mom has even asked me to pray for her. God is restoring my family, and it's amazing. I just go home and be a daughter and sister and ask Jesus to teach me how to love them the best way I can. Because of this heart-posture, I have seen the salvation of the Lord in great and mighty ways within my family. {eoa}

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