

Job: How Losing is Winning

In warfare, a commander's strategy rarely changes. Weapons, tools, equipment vary but the battle plans of commanders are constant. Therefore, Satan's attack on Job is instructive. Minute details reveal the plan and purpose of Satan's assault. It is a prime example of how Satan wars against man.

Satan reconnoiters looking for a victim. Satan discovers Job who purports to be righteous. Satan tells the Lord that Job is righteous for selfish reasons and he will quickly break when poverty over takes him. "Does Job fear God for nothing?" Satan replied. "Have you not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has? You have blessed the work of his hands, so that his flocks and herds are spread throughout the land. But stretch out your hand and strike everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face." The Lord said to Satan, "Very well, then, everything he has is in your hands, but on the man himself do not lay a finger." (Job 1: 9-12).

Satan defines his goal and justifies his plan to the Lord. To prepare Job for his trial Satan destroys Job's material possession. Supplies are important in the outcome of any battle. Food, clothing, shelter, support and provide security to the combatants. So Satan creates havoc in Job's life by destroying the material things belonging to Job.

The outcome of this initial thrust proved to be inadequate. Therefore, the adversary follows up with an attack on Job's family. "While he was still speaking, yet another messenger came and said, "Your sons and daughters were feasting and drinking wine at the oldest brother's house, when suddenly a mighty wind swept in from the desert and struck the four corners of the house. It collapsed on them and they are dead, and I am the

only one who has escaped to tell you.” (Job 1:18-19). Material possession, family ties, everything is torn asunder and Job is left crying in the dust.

Still Job will not deny God. Therefore, the adversary requests that the Lord allow him a further test. The physical wellbeing of a warrior is crucial to the outcome of any battle. It affects morale and his ability to engage the enemy. Knowing this about humankind Satan applies the principle to Job’s circumstances. “Skin for skin!” Satan replied. “A man will give all he has for his own life. But stretch out your hand and strike his flesh and bones, and he will surely curse you to your face.” “So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord and afflicted Job with painful sores from the soles of his feet to the top of his head. Then Job took a piece of broken pottery and scraped himself with it as he sat among the ashes. .” (Job 2:4-8).

This also fails for Satan wants betrayal not self-denial. Satan, immediately, without the Lord’s permission, orchestrates the betrayal of Job’s wife. Again, the strike at Job’s morale falls short. Job reminds his wife of the blessings from the Lord’s hand. Satan’s final attack comes in an assault from Job’s friends. Likely, for a year they rankle and besmirch as Job’s misery deepens.

It is a masterful strategy. Through Job’s friends, Satan challenges Job’s moral integrity and intellectual ability. Job’s friends use impressive arguments that reflect biblical principles. Satan often induces Godly men to attack using scriptural principles, a standard tactic also seen with the story of the man born blind in John 9.

The first words Jesus’ disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?” Jesus used the circumstance to correct the idea that all

hardship is the result of sin “Neither this man nor his parents sinned,” said Jesus, “but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life. (John 9:1-3)

The arguments used by Job’s friends are based on valid principles but the arguments do not apply to Job. Job’s friends misjudge the cause of his suffering; therefore, the advice given is corrupt. Can we not say the same thing of ourselves? It is when we are least understood and friends falsely testify against us, and everything seems to be coming apart, that we feel the greatest failure?

My mother use to tell me that Satan does not waste his time with passive, neutral, indecisive people. They are not a threat to Satan so life is easy for them. Satan thinks, “Why bother with them?” The person who threatens Satan’s stronghold that is the enemy.

The tactic used by Satan is fear. Fear of loss, loss of face, loss of importance, loss of life.

The warrior must fear with all of his heart, mind, and spirit; he must fear God. There must not be any room left to fear anyone or anything. “And he said to man, ‘The fear of the Lord—that is wisdom, and to shun evil is understanding.’ “(Job 28:28).

Biblical military encounters provide the groundwork for understanding the tactics and strategies necessary for warfare in the 21st century. Usefulness of God inspired tactics are relevant to three types of engagements; military engagements involving armies, law enforcement activities, and conflict among parties. Lets investigate.