

# STRONGHOLDS

## The Fifth Stage of Decay

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### PART III

#### The Seven Spirits of the Antichrist Affecting Marriage

In writing on this subject, it became apparent there needed to be a distinction made between personal strongholds from within, i.e. individual sin, natural-type strongholds (Part I), and the type of strongholds affecting us from without (Part III). Both the three sin natures as well as those enumerated in Deut. 7 are classified as strongholds, but the distinguishing characteristics are their origins and concentrated spheres of influence.

By its very name a Stronghold portrays a type of barricade, a fortress, some sort of enclosure implying physical protection from some outside opponent. In the mental realm the word conveys all the supporting data in and around an argument or other mental concept, rendering it mentally impenetrable. In the Greek the word is *ochuroma*<sup>1</sup>, those things in which human confidence is imposed. Repeated acting to cover a given behavior instills confidence the root is hidden. The acting serves as a camouflage to cover our inner natures from being exposed. After a while, the mask becomes the face.

Very little is written of strongholds in either the O.T. or the N.T. Refuges, fortresses, etc, are mentioned in the O.T., and Paul mentions only once in 2 Cor. 10:3-6 the reduction of strongholds into arguments, proud obstacles, thence into taking every thought captive. Even commentaries are relatively mum.

Bill Gothard mentions strongholds<sup>2</sup>, calling some of them by name, and cosmetically describing some such as matriarchal spirits, lust, et al. But how strongholds begin, arise and develop are thinly addressed, if at all. Unger<sup>3</sup> merely defines David's physical fortresses, or the Lord God being a fortress and refuge.

When Paul deals with the subject by declaring, "we have Divine power to the pulling down of strongholds", the statement leaves me in the dust. What Divine power? How do you get it? Since 'it' is spiritual, how is it comprehended, or more succinctly, *apprehended*? I can 'get' how one takes captive every thought that raises itself up against Christ, but casting down spiritual strongholds?

So this quandary has left me knocking at the door for some time now. This morning seems to be the hour for trying to put something down that just might get one's foot in the door of the minds of hurting people. The catalyst was as usual, the rupturing within a dear friend's family. It is time.

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<sup>1</sup> II Cor. 10:4

<sup>2</sup> Gothard, Bill, *Institute in Basic Youth Conflicts*, Basic Seminar Textbook, ISBN 0-916888-05-3

<sup>3</sup> Unger, Merrill, 1957, *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary*, Moody Press, Chicago.

Before one can deal with a spiritual enemy, one must be able to identify him, or at least have a mental grasp of what he looks like. To that end, I can only pen what little I know. Any places where the reader feels he/she is 'being targeted', rest assured that such is not the case, the examples are mostly from my own bloodlines. These behaviors are common to mankind, not just the reader.



From a paper penned much earlier<sup>4</sup>, I am inserting a paragraph ;

“Deuteronomy 7:1-7 clearly details how the Israelites (and by spiritual extension, New Testament believers) were to treat the seven nations that were the inhabitants of the land of Canaan. God explained what He would do and what Israel's responsibility was to do or not do. He specifically forbade them to make any covenants with them, (contracts, partnerships, alliances, etc.) or to enter into any marriages with them. Why specifically marriages? Because entering into a marriage union involves all of our makeup, our mind-will-emotions, all sorts of relations with in-laws (and *their* family spirits!), our bodies, and our spirits.

Paul instructs us in Ephesians 5:21-32, specifically verse 32, that marriage is a mystery, and the union of a man and a woman refers to Christ and the *ekklesia* (incorrectly translated 'church'). In other words, the *ekklesia* is the Bride, and our relationship to Christ is supposed to be as in a marriage. So it is clear that the same enemies of marriage are the same enemies of the Bride. Marriage is our earthly training ground for our marriage to the Lamb, the Bridegroom.”

In that paper<sup>5</sup> there were seven nations, or peoples, that Israel would face under the leadership of Joshua. Each had a name, each name meant something not only in the mental realm, but had a spiritual root as well. That chart listed Fear at the very top, not by coincidence. It was the *very* hidden spiritual root behind the Hittites, listed first in Deut. 7. Following Fear were the other six, Pride, Abdication, Lust, Simple, Rebellion and Blasphemy, in that order. Their traits are discovered throughout scripture depicting how they behaved.

The breakthrough in the matter came via a conversation with my youngest son. I asked him what he thought was the root motivation of abdication. After a few seconds he answered, “Fear”. Ah, I thought; that is a '10' !! So as we waxed further, it became obvious fear was the over-arching principle and embryonic foundation peculiar to *all* strongholds !!

Such seems to be the case with the list of the seven spirits represented by the Seven Nations of Canaan, which I have dubbed the Seven Spirits of the Antichrist. Just as in the righteous realm one or two principles undergirds the whole, so one characteristic in the wicked realm is the substrate for the whole, namely Fear.

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<sup>4</sup> Ben-Issachar, *in* Second Realm, titled *Seven Nations*.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*.

The fulcrum determining the right or wrong type of fear is *how one views the Sovereignty of God*. Indeed, Proverbs declares, “The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom.” (and everything else)

Thus it follows that if fear undergirds the whole in the realm of the unrighteous, it must be the wrong kind of fear. Such is the case. As Solomon puts it in Proverbs, the *proper type* of fear encompasses the whole in the realm of the righteous, wisdom being the primary one. As we shall see from Is. 11, Jesus was the only one who had the right kind of ‘fear’. It goes without saying we are to appropriate His nature, or His correct form of fear.

One of the other principles I learned from my son comes from the Ten Commandments. In this list God says “You shall have no other Gods before me.” He made the observation that we would but keep the first commandment, the other nine would fall in line. The Ten are a pyramid as it were, having the crowning principle at the top, superseding those that followed.

English tort and most of civil law follow the same route, e.g., the entire system from the Magna Carta to the American Constitution is really based on two principles established during the Dark Ages. These were simply: one, that a man shall not encroach on another man’s property, his wife, nor anything that belongs to another man. Secondly, a man shall do what he says he will do. Basically, if a man does these two, everything else falls in line and really does not need to be mentioned.

Jesus distilled all the Law and the Prophets<sup>6</sup> by saying we only needed to do two things, love the LORD your God with all your heart, soul and mind, and love your neighbor as yourself. Simple.

So how do we get from Point A to Point B? The following flow diagram is how I view the principle. From here I will attempt to elaborate on various derivatives arising out of each.

**In looking at this flow chart I have placed across from each of the spirits of Canaan one of the Seven Spirits of Christ. This placing does not mean I intend for the one across to be the antidote for the evil one. I simply listed these as they are listed in Deut 7 and Isaiah 11:1-3. My intention is that you the reader would draw your own conclusions as to which is the antithesis or antidote to your own individual conflict.**

**This is done to encourage you to do your own studying and meditation, to listen to the still small voice of the Spirit.**

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<sup>6</sup> Mt. 22:36-40

# THE MOST HIGH

## HIS TOTAL ABSOLUTE SOVEREIGNTY

DENIED	ACCEPTED
<b>ABNORMAL FEAR</b>	<b>WHOLESOME FEAR OF GOD</b>
<b>HITTITES</b> FEAR, TERROR bullies, cruelty, no trust unfounded fear of ?	<b>SPIRIT of the LORD<sup>7</sup></b> (See lexicons <i>ruwach</i> )
<b>AMORITES</b> PRIDE perfectionism, superiority arrogance	<b>SPIRIT of WISDOM</b> meaning of life, positive experiences, prudence, skill, ethical wisdom
<b>GIRGASHITES</b> ABDICATION confusion of role, cowardice	<b>SPIRIT of UNDERSTANDING</b> insight, discernment, meanings, knowledge
<b>CANAANITES</b> LEWDNESS corruption, sensuality	<b>SPIRIT of COUNSEL</b> foundations of decisions, advice, purposes, prudence
<b>PERIZZITES</b> SIMPLE careless, unwary inattentive, stupor	<b>SPIRIT of MIGHT</b> strength, valor, force, mastery, power
<b>HIVITES</b> REBELLION disobedience, witchcraft (=manipulation)	<b>SPIRIT of KNOWLEDGE</b> cunning, 'know-how', awareness, perception
<b>JEBUSITES</b> BLASPHEMY trodden down, 'victim' poverty spirit	<b>SPIRIT OF FEAR of the LORD</b> reverence, terror, awe, respect, piety, dread

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<sup>7</sup> Is. 11:1-3

Through the course of my life one of many enigmas arises often. I have found in the Body that people do not care to discuss sensitive issues, particularly while things are going well; nor do they care to discuss sensitive issues when the phone rings and problems surface. Ergo, we abdicate from discussing these at all.

Just as the Israelites under Joshua (a type of Jesus) encountered these Seven Nations (Spirits) in the territory promised them, so equally we encounter these spiritual counterparts in our own territories. You will find them occupying 'territory' ranging from the individual to households, to communities, counties, regions, states, then nations.

Witchcraft will be active in a given family or area, arrogance in another, victimization and/or poverty in another region, set or subset of a people, race or culture. Indulgence and abdication are the spirits of choice nowadays, for reasons of abundance in nearly every corner. Arrogance, dominance, brutality, incest, violence, lust, abdication *ad nauseum*, find enclaves where the residents are comfortable with their presence; *read*, enhanced by their own sin nature/personal stronghold gone unchecked.

Where the influences of these reach a certain saturation, they become principalities (sin natures), powers (strongholds) in heavenly places and so forth<sup>8</sup>. They are uprooted the same way they were implanted-one person at a time, according to how God designed things.

Each of the Seven Spirits, once established, will perpetrate themselves until reversed by a Spirit-led choice of the few who will apply the Word. The perpetration of like kind in the spiritual realm is by the same process as the physical:-seeds (sperm/ova). They will come up after their kind. The drive to reproduce like kind applies to the spiritual realm as well. Males/females that were indulged as children, will to an excess indulge their own seed. The indulged even brag about the behavior of their excessively indulged child as if it were an attribute.

Arrogance begets arrogance, lust begets lust in one form or another, domination/control will beget domination/control or their mirror images, abdication and being unwary, being Simple. Fear begets fear in a multitude of expressions. All these and more of the Seven will beget like seed until stopped.

What is odd is that the parents of these soulish aberrations are delighted about their equally aberrant seed no less than they are delighted with their physical/mental attributes. On the other hand, a parent will point the finger at their seed as if they, the parents, had nothing to do with it. Funny how both are inherited/augmented from them.

The victim syndrome begets its kind, ignorance begets ignorance, insecurity begets insecurity. Sometime the seed skips a generation, or the seed comes up in a mirrored form. That way the Simple never get it; "My grandson's behavior is too far removed to be related to anything I have done", they say.

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<sup>8</sup> Eph 6:12-17

The spirit of sexual lust can beget gluttony, laziness, or crudeness as well as sexual sins. Domination and/or witchcraft (in reality the same underlying principle behind both) often begets abdication, which in turn often begets indecision and effeminacy at best, sodomy and pedophilia at the worst. And the list of destruction goes on and on.

As is often the case, an indulgent parent (or fill in the blank with any other of the Seven) does not “get it” when the child, now full grown, blows her abdicating husband’s head off with a .45. Others remain curiously silent as they lower the casket of their 28-year old son into the ground, dead with AIDS. Who, me?

The Comfortable and Perfect remain incredibly stupid, but upbeat, until the Bell tolls.

Why is it that the connection of the dots escapes detection? -simple; one rarely is aware of anything to which he/she has become accustomed. That ‘anything’ has acquired a *hold* on them, a *strong*-hold. One with a spirit of poverty likes to remain in poverty, it feels good. A victim likes to remain a victim. Obesity begets obesity until someone comes awake.

Now we are not discussing the realm of the heathen, we are discussing the realm of the ‘Saved’. We are discussing the ranks of His so-called people. We are discussing the very *ekklesia*, the *called out ones*, who somehow have become the underdeveloped, the un-repaired, un-changed, earthly, worldly members of His Body.

How do we think *He* feels about all this? –or do we *think* at all?

When are we going to wake up? –when our pain level surmounts our capacity to endure? -or will we wait until they slam the compound door behind us? Israel did, you know.

When are we going to accept responsibility for not only *our* actions, but for the actions of our seed? -will we hope we will die first?

When are we going to say “enough is enough!?” –or will we never ask to be as He was?

When are we going to say, “Father, make me into your image!”?

“Well, son/daughter, that is what I have been waiting to hear; let’s get after it.”

The subtitle of this paper is dubbed the Fifth Stage of Decay. Normally the number five stands for Grace in God’s economy and realm. I may be wrong, but it seems Levels Six (Seeds of Anguish) and Seven (Stupor) are levels of No Return. Once seeds are planted, they come up. Once Stupor sets in, the capacity to hear has vanished.

**From Stupor, The Seventh Level of Decay;** The **LORD GOD** reaches out to us directly or indirectly by His goodness.

1. There is either belief or unbelief. If *active* belief, then blessings. If unbelief,
2. Self-absorption sets in, to
3. Deception, leading to
4. Disobedience, then
5. Rebellion. As self-assertion increases, God increasingly warns, chastens, and disciplines in order to stop such.
6. Anger at being reproved, disciplined, exposed. Hand is forced w/final attempt.
7. **Stupor, sluggishness, inattentiveness.**
8. Torment, jerked about by dark spirits.
9. Separation. See Proverbs 1:22-33.
10. The person is given over, hears spirits' voices, demons active and present.

Therefore, the deliverance from Levels Six and/or Seven is highly improbable. If so then, Level 5, Strongholds, representative of Rebellion, would be the last viable level in which a saint, a member of the *ekklesia*, a member of the Body, would have a shot at reversal of the particular spirit plaguing him or her, or their family.

Grace has been aptly defined as the God-given necessary power for the abolishing and annihilation of any of these Seven Spirits. It is a *power that we ourselves do not possess*, but applicable to the issues at hand.

In large measure we can choose to handle the first four levels of conflict ourselves. It *does not appear* from Prov. 1:21-ff and other passages in the O.T., that Grace was openly operative in the O.T. days. Instead, Grace seems to be an offer from God *after* the Cross, and because of the Cross. From the stories of David's three sins of:

- 1, Pride of Life in the carrying of the Ark on a new cart , Uzzah died.
- 2, Lust of the Eyes in his numbering Israel, thousands of Israelites died.
- 3, Lust of the Flesh, adultery and resultant murder of Uriah and death of the boy.

Even though there was repentance, all three instances brought death; the Seeds of Anguish came up, as they will with us.

The fifth seems to be the Last Stagecoach out of Tombstone. The cost of the ticket is Repentance.

Few are willing to pay the price. The Hittites are coming over the hill...

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**Ben-Issachar**