

STRENGTHEN YOURSELF

“Then Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his place, and strengthened himself against Israel” And he placed troops in all the fortified cities of Judah, and set garrisons in the land of Judah and in the cities of Ephraim which Asa his father had taken.” 2 Chronicles 17:1,2

Israel had long departed from worshipping the Lord and was a very real threat to the safety of Judah. Jehoshaphat recognized the threat and strategically placed troops throughout the land.

One of the first and foremost things we must do as leaders is to understand our weak points and strengthen ourselves at those points. In strengthening himself Jehoshaphat was strengthening the unfortified borders - the places where the enemy was most likely to attack. We are not in a physical battle but a spiritual one in which the devil, that prowling lion, will attack us at our weakest place. It is not so much the strong and the healthy which a lion will attack in the wild, the young (ignorant) and weak (defenseless). Therefore, we must do all we can to identify and fortify weak areas in our lives. We must erect ‘garrisons’ in the spirit to protect ourselves against satanic attack.

There are three basic points of attack (borders) which satan will test in every man’s life: “...the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life...” (I John 4:16). Fortify yourselves against the lust of the flesh - that which drives you toward sexual immorality, or any kind of drug, or unhealthy physical craving. Fortify yourself against the lust of the eyes - namely covetousness, the deceitfulness of riches and the desires for other things (Jesus: Mark 4:19). Fortify yourselves against the pride of life - becoming unteachable, proud and boastful, self consumed, thinking only of yourself, easily offended allowing for a bitter root in your heart, becoming unforgiving and allowing for judgments toward others. Each of these temptations have the potential for creeping into our lives if we do not fortify our spirit against them.

Firstly, recognize your weakness - acknowledge them to yourself and to others. Jehoshaphat “placed troops” and “set garrisons”. So we must also have those who will pray for us all along our borders that we may stand strong where we are strong and become strong where we are weak. Guard your heart and your mind (your senses). Counter every spiritual attack with the truth of God’s word - the sword of the Spirit. Cry out to God for help and in doing so you effectively hold up the shield of faith.

Can you identify your weaknesses? How will you strengthen yourself?