



REVISED AND UPDATED EDITION

A *Woman's Guide* to
**SPIRITUAL
WARFARE**

HOW TO PROTECT YOUR HOME, FAMILY AND
FRIENDS FROM SPIRITUAL DARKNESS

QUIN SHERRER AND
RUTHANNE GARLOCK



Chosen

a division of Baker Publishing Group
Minneapolis, Minnesota

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Published by Chosen Books
11400 Hampshire Avenue South
Bloomington, Minnesota 55438
www.chosenbooks.com

Chosen Books is a division of
Baker Publishing Group, Grand Rapids, Michigan

Previously published by Servant Publications and Regal Books

Printed in the United States of America

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Sherrer, Quin, author. | Garlock, Ruthanne, author.

Title: A woman's guide to spiritual warfare : how to protect your home, family and friends from spiritual darkness / Quin Sherrer and Ruthanne Garlock.

Description: Revised and Updated Edition. | Minneapolis, Minnesota : Chosen, 2017. |

Includes bibliographical references.

Identifiers: LCCN 2016034861 | ISBN 9780800797997 (trade paper : alk. paper)

Subjects: LCSH: Women—Religious life. | Spiritual warfare.

Classification: LCC BV4527 .S43 2017 | DDC 248.8/43—dc23

LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2016034861>

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Cover design by Rob Williams, InsideOutCreativeArts

17 18 19 20 21 22 23 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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Contents

Acknowledgments	7
Introduction	9
1. But I Never Wanted to Be in a Battle!	13
2. Who Is the Enemy, and What Does He Want from Me?	25
3. What Our Spiritual Wardrobe Should Look Like	37
4. How Strong Can a Woman Be?	51
5. The Disciplines of the Spirit-Empowered Woman	67
6. Our Weapons and Strategy	81
7. An Open Door to the Enemy	99
8. Breaking Bondages	115
9. Fight for Your Children	135
10. Fight for Your Marriage	151
11. Healing and Spiritual Warfare	167
12. Are You under Attack?	179
13. Lessons from the Field	189

Contents

Epilogue 205
Appendix 1: Arsenal Scriptures for Spiritual Warfare 211
Appendix 2: Prayers and Declarations Based on Scripture 215
Notes 227
Recommended Reading 233
About the Authors 237

Acknowledgments

Thanks to all those who prayed for us while this project and its revision were under way.

Thanks also to the women who allowed us to share their stories—defeats as well as victories. Your transparency enriches this book and will encourage our readers.

Also we wish to acknowledge and thank three special women for their editorial support for this book's publishing success: Ann Spangler, who cast the vision for the original edition; and Kim Bangs and Jane Campbell, who have guided the work for the revised editions.

Special love and gratitude to the Lord Jesus Christ, our commander in chief, who calls us, equips us and leads us into battle. And to the Holy Spirit, our teacher and faithful guide.

Introduction

Soon after the first edition of this title was released in 1991, it hit the top-selling list for Christian books in the spiritual warfare category. In fact, it kept that rating for six years, and both men and women were reading it as a classic on the topic. I (Quin) admit it was not a subject I was eager to write about when Servant senior editor Ann Spangler first proposed the idea, but we agreed to take on the project.

Ruthanne and I interviewed dozens of women who had successfully found victory, and they readily shared their scriptural strategies and insights. It was a great learning experience for us, plus we also gained great appreciation for our many prayer partners who faithfully prayed during the process.

Once, I (Quin) was on a flight from Orlando to Atlanta and introduced myself to the woman sitting beside me. As soon as I mentioned my name, she cried out, “You wrote that book that helped save my marriage and my children—*A Woman’s Guide to Spiritual Warfare!* I copied the prayers in it and asked my husband to pray them aloud with me every day. Our daughter was falling into bad company, but we used those prayers and

examples to give us hope. Today we are a family following the Lord and active in a church.”

A while back, a friend called me from Virginia. “Just wanted you to know I minister in a prison here,” she said. “A woman I was talking to about the Lord was reading your book—behind bars yet!—and said it was really helping her.”

I (Ruthanne) have had countless similar encounters with women who have told me that reading the book and praying the prayers in it saved their marriages, healed broken relationships with prodigal children or helped them break free from bondage. A woman in Lima, Peru, read the Spanish edition and wrote, “*A Woman’s Guide to Spiritual Warfare* is helping me to keep going after my mother’s death. I have been attacked by the enemy, until I read your book and started to rebuke him.”

One friend used to come to my resource table every summer at an annual ministry gathering and buy several copies to give to the military wives she was mentoring. Some have told me they keep the book on their bedside table so they can refer to it often. Readers tell us they not only keep their own copy handy, but also buy additional ones to give away. Several times women have come to my table to buy the book, saying, “I had my own copy but loaned it out and never got it back. I have to have another one!”

Although we do not claim to be experts on the subject, we have gained a lot of knowledge about spiritual warfare through our research and study, and especially through our own times “in the trenches.” This revision is an accumulation of our combined experience, plus many testimonies from women just like you who are learning to be skilled warriors.

Today’s women face unique difficulties that need to be addressed in the context of spiritual warfare: single parenting, troubled marriages, demanding careers, the “supermom” syndrome, media influence, abortion, coping with addicted children and spouses, financial pressures—the list goes on and on.

Through this practical handbook, we aim to help women understand the *why* and the *how* of spiritual warfare based on biblical examples and contemporary experiences. In these pages, we will address such questions as:

- What is spiritual warfare?
- Who is the enemy, and who started the war?
- Is every mishap from Satan?
- What weapons are we to use?
- If Jesus won the victory, why do we have to fight?
- What about the battle in the mind?
- How can we distinguish between God's voice and the enemy's voice?
- How do we become vulnerable to Satan's work?
- How can we feel secure against spiritual attacks?
- How do we avoid becoming battle weary?

As we address these and other questions, providing experiences to illustrate them, you will gain insight and confidence about fighting your own spiritual battles. You will also be equipped to encourage and strengthen others who may be under attack. Of course, Jesus has done everything necessary to ensure our victory over Satan. But as we are faithful to the call to spiritual combat, we reenforce what Christ did at Calvary.

Whether you are a seasoned intercessor or a new volunteer, this book is for you. It will bring encouragement, hope and equipping, and it will give you new Scripture ammunition for your prayer arsenal (see Appendix 1 for even more).

We invite you to turn the page and embark upon your new prayer journey!

Quin Sherrer and Ruthanne Garlock



1

But I Never Wanted to Be in a Battle!

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

Ephesians 6:12

“I resist you in the name of Jesus and command you to go!” Claudia said with a quivering voice. To her amazement, the hideous black leopard turned and ran. Startled, she awoke from the bad dream and sat up in bed.

“I realized the Lord was teaching me in my dream to do spiritual warfare—that the name of Jesus really has power,” shared this trim brunette. “I had accepted Jesus as my Savior and Lord and had received the Holy Spirit. But then my mind was bombarded with fear and condemnation. I loved God more than anything, yet the enemy made me think I had blasphemed the Holy Spirit and would never be able to please God.”

Claudia had never received any teaching on how to deal with fear. She had heard some comments about spiritual warfare but had no clue what that meant. She thought she simply had to endure this struggle in exchange for her salvation. Then came her dream.

“In the dream, I was constantly being pursued by a huge black leopard,” she said. “I pushed it out the door and it came in the window. Everywhere I went, it followed me. I was terrified. Then I sensed the Lord say to me, *Claudia, resist the leopard in the name of Jesus*. In my dream I stopped running, turned and faced the leopard, and commanded it to leave in Jesus’ name. I was happily surprised to see it flee!”

Claudia’s friend Jean took her to a woman who ministers in deliverance because there was witchcraft in Claudia’s family background and because she had used drugs in college. The Lord broke these and many related bondages.

Jean became Claudia’s prayer partner and began training her in scriptural truths. “Now,” Claudia said, “I know a Christian can truly be victorious over the spiritual forces of evil that Paul talks about in Ephesians.”

Is the Devil Real?

My (Quin’s) subject was prayer. My audience: three dozen pastors’ wives. I had been asked to teach a weekend workshop at a rustic lodge hidden away in the Georgia pines. But after the first session, during which I had briefly discussed spiritual warfare, the leader who had invited me knocked on my door.

“Quin, you’ve offended some of our women here,” she said apologetically. “Several of them have Ph.D.s, and they don’t believe Christians need to fight the devil in our day and age. Please tone down your message.”

I had shared some basic guidelines on intercession and how to pray the Word of God as a means of opposing the enemy. Then I had explained that Satan—not another person—is our enemy and that we need to be on guard against his tactics. I was stunned to think a group of pastors' wives would find such teaching offensive. But I agreed to adapt my material.

The apostle Paul's many references to spiritual warfare clearly indicate that he considered battling against the powers of darkness to be normal activity for Christians. But my experience at the retreat offers a graphic example of a common attitude among many Christians today.

"Spiritual warfare? Those two words don't go together!" one friend exclaimed upon hearing of plans for this book.

We might ask these people, "Don't you even believe the devil exists?" Well, yes, they do—theologically speaking. But the tendency is to think of Satan not as a personality or a being who affects us directly but as simply a pervasive influence of evil in the world.

In fact, a Barna Group survey states that four out of ten Christians (40 percent) strongly agreed that Satan "is not a living being but is a symbol of evil," while only about 30 percent of Christians indicated they believe Satan is real. Some were honest enough to say they were not sure what they believe about the existence of Satan. Regarding the survey, George Barna said:

Most Americans, even those who say they are Christian, have doubts about the intrusion of the supernatural into the natural world. Hollywood has made evil accessible and tame, making Satan and demons less worrisome than the Bible suggests they really are. It's hard for achievement-driven, self-reliant, independent people to believe that their lives can be impacted by unseen forces.¹

C. S. Lewis wisely wrote, "There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about the devils. One is to

disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe, and to feel an excessive and unhealthy interest in them.”²

Some of the pastors' wives at that retreat had apparently fallen into the first error. Either they did not believe in Satan's existence, or they mistakenly felt there was nothing they should be doing about it.

“Maybe the next time one of these women faces a direct attack from the enemy in her life, she'll think about what I said,” I told my prayer partner who had accompanied me to the retreat. “Well, you gave them the Word of God,” my friend assured me. “And His Word never returns void.”

The next afternoon, as we were packing my car to leave, a young pastor's wife ran up to me. “I just want you to know that your first lesson really opened my eyes,” she said with exuberance. “I'm going home to apply some of those spiritual warfare methods, and I know things are going to change! I now realize my rebellious teenage son is not the enemy. I intend to use Scripture as a weapon to fight the devil, just as you showed us.”

How Does He Attack Us?

The biblical Deborah, a prophetess and judge in Israel whose story is told in the fourth chapter of Judges, challenges us to lay aside some of our own worthy interests and activities to deal with the spiritual battles at hand. Deborah held court under a palm tree between Bethel and Ramah at a time when Israel was suffering bitter oppression under Jabin, a Canaanite king who had defeated Israel and occupied its land.

The name Jabin means “cunning,” and the Canaanite word comes from a root word meaning “to humiliate or bring under subjection.” Deborah must have heard daily reports of Jabin's cruel treatment. His army general, Sisera, terrorized the people

with his nine hundred chariots of iron, while Israel's army had almost no weapons for its defense. No doubt Deborah became increasingly incensed over the situation and joined the people of Israel in crying out to the Lord for deliverance.

We modern Deborahs need to feel that same indignation about Satan's work. By engaging in prayer and spiritual warfare, we can take a stand against the enemy's oppression in our own world.

The enemy works in many ways today—some more subtle than others. It seems his iron chariots come in all sizes! Perhaps you recognize yourself in one or more of these everyday attacks (which a friend of ours calls *household sins*):

- Strife and disharmony disrupting family relationships
- A defensive response to a loved one being unjustly treated by another Christian, resulting in increasing bitterness and cynicism
- Anger erupting at the slightest provocation
- Guilt over one's seeming lack of success as a Christian
- Envy when comparing one's own circumstances with friends' seemingly carefree lives
- Frequent insecurity and anxiety about the future
- An inconsistent prayer life and prayers that seem to bounce back in one's face

A friend once said to me, "Quin, I never wanted to have to fight the devil. I just wanted to remain a normal Christian, go to church, mind my own business and not cause trouble." But when her son got into drugs, she learned spiritual warfare out of necessity.

Thousands of women feel they have just been tending to business as usual, trying their best to live a good Christian life. Suddenly an iron chariot comes roaring through their household,

church, business or community, thrusting them into confrontation with the enemy—and they cry out, “Help!”

You may be facing one of these battles, too, which many other women have shared with us:

- Your pregnant, unwed daughter is convinced that getting an abortion is the answer to her dilemma.
- You learn your child is on drugs, and the dealer has been attending the church youth group.
- You discover a cache of pornographic literature in your husband's closet.
- A teenage acquaintance confides that she was sexually abused by her father, who is a deacon in the church.
- An adult porn shop opens in your neighborhood, and local authorities seem indifferent to the situation.
- Your teenager goes into rebellion, gets caught up in rock music and runs away from home to join a satanist group.
- A widow whom you and your husband befriended convinces him it is God's will for him to divorce you and marry her.

Such situations confront many Christian women today—women whose eyes are opening to the spiritual battle already happening around them, even though they feel unprepared to fight. No longer do they need to be persuaded that a war is on. They are looking for guidance as to how to engage the battle.

What Can Deborah Teach Us?

We can learn much from Deborah about how to deal with spiritual enemies. After suffering twenty long years under Jabin's oppression, the people of Israel began to beseech God for deliv-

erance. He responded by instructing Deborah to say to Barak, the general of Israel's army:

“The LORD, the God of Israel, commands you: ‘Go, take with you ten thousand men of Naphtali and Zebulun and lead the way to Mount Tabor. I will lead Sisera, the commander of Jabin’s army, with his chariots and his troops to the Kishon River and give him into your hands.’”

Judges 4:6–7

Barak, who had faced this formidable enemy before, was fearful—and with good cause. A weak volunteer army with no chariots and few weapons was no match for Sisera’s well-trained army of a hundred thousand men!³ But Barak was assessing the situation strictly from a logistics point of view. Facts and truth are not always the same. The truth was that God had promised victory in spite of the odds if Israel would obey Him. Deborah—who was called “a mother in Israel” (Judges 5:7)—was willing to stake the nation’s future on that promise. What courage it took to give such bold instructions to Israel’s army general! But she acted on God’s truth, not on the circumstantial fact that the Israelites were outnumbered by their enemy.

Barak agreed to go, but only if Deborah went with him. After all, she was the one with the word from God. So in order to see her people liberated, Deborah assumed the role of a military commander to accompany Barak in leading the troops to battle (see Judges 4:8–10). It was a necessary but unpleasant task.

Deborah received specific orders from God about where Israel’s troops were to be placed: Mount Tabor. As they approached the Kishon River, Sisera received intelligence reports as to Israel’s movements. He gathered his army and went out against Israel, unaware that he was cooperating with God’s plan.

This was the greatest display of Sisera’s military might Barak and Deborah had ever seen. He had mobilized all his soldiers,

weapons and chariots to annihilate Israel's weak army. Barak, surveying the situation from his vantage point on the mountain, may have had second thoughts about going into battle against Sisera. But Deborah was not deterred by this show of strength. She knew it was Sisera's *last* show!

As Sisera's army came close to the Kishon River, Scripture suggests that God caused a freak rainstorm, which blinded the soldiers and caused the river to flood, sweeping the iron chariots downstream (see Judges 5:4, 20–22). The name Kishon is from a root word meaning “to ensnare.” Scripture records the outcome:

Then Deborah said to Barak, “Go! This is the day the LORD has given Sisera into your hands. Has not the LORD gone ahead of you?” So Barak went down Mount Tabor, with ten thousand men following him. At Barak's advance, the LORD routed Sisera and all his chariots and army by the sword, and Sisera got down from his chariot and fled on foot.

. . . All Sisera's troops fell by the sword; not a man was left.

Judges 4:14–16

One version of the text says, “Then the Lord threw the enemy into a panic. . . . Not one man was left alive” (verses 15–16 TLB).

Sisera took refuge in the tent of Jael, a Canaanite woman whom he thought he could trust. But Jael, choosing to align herself with the people of God, was not content to be a passive bystander in this war. Using household tools at hand—a mallet and a tent stake—she killed the enemy commander. End of Sisera. End of those dreaded iron chariots.

Amazing, isn't it? Two women were the key players in this drama in which God enabled a weak army, outnumbered ten to one, to win a resounding victory. Seven penetrating words end the story: “Then the land had peace forty years” (Judges 5:31).

Deborah and Barak were assured of victory because they battled according to God's instructions. God would not do

it for them without their effort, nor did He reveal the entire strategy in advance. They had to obey God without knowing all the reasons why. God determined the place of the battle and told them how many soldiers to take.

When Deborah and Barak obeyed, doing what was possible for them to do, God responded by doing the impossible, which only He could do. Deborah applied seven keys to ensure victory in the assault against the enemy's iron chariots:

1. She recognized that it was a *spiritual* battle and that God was going ahead of her small army.
2. She obeyed God's instructions, trusting His strategy.
3. She did not focus on the seeming strength of the enemy.
4. She did not waver in her confidence in God's Word.
5. She refused to be deterred by her colleague's lack of spiritual vision.
6. She never compromised with the enemy.
7. She gave praise and glory to God for the victory.

These same principles apply in the spiritual battles we face. We, too, can use these seven keys to see our enemy defeated. Final success is assured, but we have to seek God's direction and put forth some effort in obedience.

Do You Believe in This?

I (Quin) remember back in 1972 when an iron chariot rolled through the church my mom was attending in Destin, Florida.⁴ While visiting her there, I reluctantly agreed to attend one of the church's small home prayer meetings on a Friday night. I soon learned the group had gathered to pray for Bill, a 31-year-old Air Force officer who attended their church. He was dying of acute leukemia at a hospital in Mississippi.

The prayer leader told me the doctors had diagnosed Bill with the worst form of leukemia, with his bone marrow mass-producing cancerous blood cells too rapidly for chemotherapy to be effective. The medical experts believed Bill had reached the end of his fight, and they did not expect him to live through the weekend.

The group began crying out for God to intervene, but such intense prayer was completely foreign to me in those days. Not knowing how to participate, I told the Lord to count me out. I did not know whether He still healed or not, but if He did, I asked Him to hear the prayers of those gathered in the home, as they were praying with great faith and boldness.

One man shocked me when he began shouting, "Satan, we give you notice that you and your demonic forces cannot have Bill Lance. He is God's property, and we are standing in the gap for his complete healing. Spirits of infirmity, leave him, in Jesus' name." It was my first exposure to spiritual warfare.

These people really believe that Bill is going to be healed, I thought to myself. They told me that a few weeks earlier, the church had held a special healing service for him. As Bill knelt at the altar, Pastor Forrest Mobley and a group of elders had laid hands on him and had prayed that he would be healed. Here I was, a Christian at a home prayer meeting, unsure about the whole concept of healing for today, just looking on as this group battled for a man's life.

Later that same night, in the military hospital where he was being treated, Bill and his wife, Sharon, repeated the Lord's Prayer together in his room, as they always did each night. Suddenly Bill began to sob. He later reported that he felt fire, like a charge of light, shooting through his body. Somehow he knew the presence of Jesus had filled the room.

The next morning, when doctors examined a bone marrow sample from his chest, there were no signs of cancerous cells. In fact, the sample was normal. Bill believed the hot light he

had felt penetrating his body the night before had been God's healing touch flooding through him. You can imagine the joy those intercessors felt when they received the good report.

I have kept in touch with Bill over the years since then and am glad to report he is still well and very active. He told me on the phone a while back, "My career allows me to follow my passion and live a blessed life, as Sharon and I participate in church activities and our children and grandchildren live nearby."

As for me, I no longer doubt that Jesus is our healer. In fact, a year after Bill's healing, I wrote down his testimony and won a prestigious writing award, which launched me on my writing career and my understanding of spiritual warfare.

Do you believe this war is really happening? And do you believe women have a part to play? Our answer is an unequivocal yes—a woman's place is in this war! We believe women have a special interest in this battle. After all, our involvement in the war began with the woman and the serpent in the Garden of Eden. And it is the seed of the woman—Jesus—who has bruised the head of the serpent and secured the enemy's defeat.

We recognize, as Deborah did, that God has gone ahead of us to defeat the enemy, but He wants us involved in the battle. And as Claudia learned from experience, we have authority in the name of Jesus.

Now let's take a closer look at our enemy.

Prayer

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Thank You, Lord, for showing me that Satan is an enemy who seeks to steal, kill and destroy Your purposes in my life. Help me to learn from Deborah's example that as I put my trust in You, I will receive strength and wisdom to fight my battles. I praise You in advance for victories that will bring honor and glory to Your name. Amen.