

Introduction:

“Son of man, I have appointed you as a watchman for Israel. Whenever you receive a message from me, warn people immediately.” (Ezekiel 3:17, NLT)

I. Appointed as Watchman

A. What does it mean to watch?

1. Heb. “*šāpâ* conveys the idea of being fully aware of a situation in order to gain some advantage or keep from being surprised by an enemy.” Hartley, J. E. (1999). R. L. Harris, G. L. Archer Jr., & B. K. Waltke (Eds.), *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (electronic ed., p. 773). Chicago: Moody Press.
2. To be fully aware, so as to not be caught off guard or but to gain some type of advantage.
3. A watchman therefore becomes a person stationed on the wall to warn of impending danger or to receive good news.
4. The failure of watchman led to the downfall of Israel and Judah. In some cases it was the failure of kings to heed the words of the watchman.

B. To appoint comes from a Hebrew word meaning to – “put or to set.” Ezekiel was put or set into place in Israel as a watchman. He watched for both God and the workings of the enemy.

C. Scriptures in NT encouraging us to watch.

1. *“Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. **Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere.**” (Ephesians 6:18, NLT)*
2. *“**Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour.**” (1 Peter 5:8, NLT)*
3. *“so that Satan **will not outsmart us.** For we are familiar with his evil schemes.” (2 Corinthians 2:11, NLT)*
4. The disciple is not automatically exempted from attacks or blessings just because their name is written in the Lamb's book of life.
 - a) We must partner with God in this Christian walk.
 - b) To partner requires faith. We must respond in faith.

D. What can we learn from these three verses?

1. Protection from enemy attacks are not automatic given to us as believers.
2. God's desires to warn us or alert us to enemy attacks and tactics. We are not to be unaware of Satan's devices.
3. We must stay watchful in our spiritual lives or we will miss God's efforts to warn us of Satan's attacks and schemes.
4. If we are not watching and not up to date on Satan's schemes, we will lose territory in our lives to our enemy.

5. We are to pray at every point of strategic opportunity. An interesting word in this verse is time. Time is from the greek word, kairos. Pray at all strategic times. *"Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere."* (Ephesians 6:18, NLT) These kairos times are the times we see or hear in the Spirit.

II. Watchman Look Ahead

- A. As a watchman looks he is peering into the future, he is anticipating things coming into sight.
 1. *"The Lord God placed the man in the Garden of Eden to tend and **watch over it**."* (Genesis 2:15, NLT) Heb. samar – to watch over, to keep, to guard. Adam and Eve were to guard the Garden. From what? Serpent.
 2. When Adam left the garden, angles we set to watch over it. *"After sending them out, the Lord God stationed mighty cherubim to the east of the Garden of Eden. And he placed a flaming sword that flashed back and forth **to guard** the way to the tree of life."* (Genesis 3:24, NLT)
 3. We can guard. We can keep. Our families, church, communities, pastors with intercession.
- B. Bodyguards in the Spirit
 1. Peter Wagner in his book *Prayer Shield* gives five reasons pastor and ministers need watchman interceding for them. IE. Young CA pastor who was married, had three young children, and committed suicide. The need is great.
 - a) Pastor have more responsibility and accountability. James 3:1 will be judged stricter.
 - b) Pastors are more subject to temptation. The higher you go the more obvious the target you will be.
 - c) Pastors are targeted in spiritual warfare. Cults, witches, spiritists, etc all target to take out pastors in spiritual warfare. Strike the shepherd you will scatter the sheep. Mt 26:31. IE. 1,200 pastors a month quit the ministry.
 - d) Pastors have more influence on others by the nature of their ministry.
 - e) Pastors have more visibility. Because they are up front they are subject to more gossip and criticism.
 2. Wagner writes: *"To the degree the intercessors pray, the leaders gain protection against the fiery darts of the wicked one, over and above the whole armor of God they are responsible for using."*
- C. Gatekeepers
 1. They create boundaries in the spirit. They watch over what comes in and what goes out.

2. They invite the work of the Holy Spirit in and reject works of darkness.
3. They agree with the Word of God in prayer and open doors for heaven to move.
4. God raises up these intercessors for each congregation. We all should jump into this place of prayer to facilitate the movement of God in a church, city, region, family.

III. Seige Agents

- A. Being watchmen is not just a defensive prayer position it is also an attack position.
 1. Our prayers make a difference.
 2. It is hell that is afraid of praying church.
- B. The word we have been looking at translated watch in many place is also translated beside in others.
 1. 2 Sam 11:16; Is 1:8; Jer 4:16, 17; Jer 51:12; Judges 1:24.
 2. A siege is not a skirmish. A siege is *"any prolonged or persistent effort to overcome resistance."* The gates of hell will not prevail against His church!