Competition: the Spirit of War

During the decadent 1980s, a popular slogan seen on t-shirts and bumper stickers proclaimed: “Whoever dies with the most toys, wins!” A back-lash to such blatant consumerism in the 1990s rebutted with: “Whoever dies with the most toys, still dies.” In the final summation, only one thing truly counts. Not your job, your schooling, your athletic ability, your house or car or “toys” – not even your reputation. The only thing that counts is the character, the thoughts and feelings you have developed throughout your time on earth.

Your character is the one and only thing you take to Heaven. Probationary time has graciously been granted everyone on earth to form characters that are in harmony with the divine law. Those who have surrendered their wills to Yahuwah and allowed Him to form their thoughts and feelings will have characters that will be welcomed into Heaven. They will be at home in Heaven because they have Heaven formed in their hearts.

On the other hand, those who have rebelliously clung to selfish thoughts and harbored feelings of bitterness or self-superiority will find their lot is with Satan in the Lake of Fire. By refusing to surrender their thoughts and feelings to Yahuwah’s control, they have chosen, by default, to let Satan mold their character.

Satan knows that the true battle is over the mind, the very soul of every individual on earth. He attacks the bodies of multitudes, through alcohol, nicotine, unhealthful diet and any number of addictive behaviors knowing that such additions cloud the mind and weaken the will. Many who profess to be Christians look with contempt upon the drunkard or the druggie, never realizing they can be just as much a plaything of Satan in less obvious areas.

Satan reserves his most subtle temptations for those who know better than to engage in the more obvious sins. One area Satan has very successfully used to ensnare many unawares is sports. Most people would indignantly deny that sports could be a snare of the devil. After all, to be any good at sports, it takes commitment, dedication and healthful living – all of which are very good and desirable things. Parents often get their children involved with sports in an attempt to teach “good sportsmanship” or, in other words, learning how to be a good loser and a gracious winner.

The very fact that sports require one to learn “good sportsmanship” reveals the hook hiding within the tempting lure. A sport necessitates that if there is a winner, there is also a loser. Parents and coaches will sometimes tell children that it does not matter if they win or lose: the whole point is to have fun. However, since there can be only one winner, it is obvious that in any competitive sport, there is a struggle for supremacy regardless of how it is worded in politically correct terms.

This struggle to be the best, to be #1, to be the winner, is the spirit of competition and the spirit of competition is the spirit of war. Competition is defined as:

The act of seeking, or endeavoring to gain, what another is endeavoring to gain, at the same time; rivalry; mutual strife for the same object; also, strife for superiority . . . . (Noah Webster, American Dictionary of the English Language, 1828.)

Competition originated in the heart of Lucifer himself when he coveted Yahushua’s position in the heavenly courts. Scripture records Lucifer’s boastful, competitive aspirations in the very warning that predicts his ultimate downfall:

How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations! For you have said in your heart: “I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of [El]; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.” (Isaiah 14:12-14, NKJV)

Such grasping for supremacy is, at heart, selfish. It does not care that another’s
A heart focused on supremacy does not care that another’s hopes and dreams are dashed if only self can be the victor. In this, the spirit of competition, first cherished in the heart of Lucifer, is the spirit of war.

In times of war, as at myriad sports events, the prayer ascends from countless lips, “Grant us the victory, O Lord!” Such a prayer is music in the ears of lord Lucifer but grotesque in the eyes of the All-Seeing, All-Loving One. Summed up in that one short prayer is a plea for the results of that victory as well. Such a prayer entreats: “O Lord our Father, our young patriots, idols of our hearts, go forth to battle -- be Thou near them! With them -- in spirit -- we also go forth from the sweet peace of our beloved firesides to smite the foe. O Lord our God, help us to tear their soldiers to bloody shreds with our shells; help us to cover their smiling fields with the pale forms of their patriot dead; help us to drown the thunder of the guns with the shrieks of their wounded, writhing in pain; help us to lay waste their humble homes with a hurricane of fire; help us to wring the hearts of their unoffending widows with unavailing grief; help us to turn them out roofless with little children to wander unfriended the wastes of their desolated land in rags and hunger and thirst, sports of the sun flames of summer and the icy winds of winter, broken in spirit, worn with travail, imploring Thee for the refuge of the grave and denied it -- for our sakes who adore Thee, Lord, blast their hopes, blight their lives, protract their bitter pilgrimage, make heavy their steps, water their way with their tears, stain the white snow with the blood of their wounded feet! We ask it, in the spirit of love, of Him Who is the Source of Love, and Who is the ever-faithful refuge and friend of all that are sore beset and seek His aid with humble and contrite hearts.” (Mark Twain, *The War Prayer.*)

The act of killing in war, the struggle for supremacy in economics, one person or government dominating another, is reenacted on countless sports fields, playing courts and ice arenas. Even if one refrains from “praying” for victory, the participation in, or even observation of, any activity that brings out the competitive spirit is a serious attack on the mind of all who would gain eternal life. Competition skews and warps the character into one that wants to dominate over others. The emotions are wrought up to a fevered pitch and the only goal is to win, win, WIN! Regardless of what it costs another.

Scripture admonishes “Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall. Better it is to be of a humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud.” (Proverbs 16:18 and 19, KJV) Competition in any of its many forms should be avoided at all costs because it arouses emotions that diminish the value of others in the mind. The thrill of domination and victory can become as addictive as nicotine to the smoker or alcohol to the drunk.

The most serious impact to the character, the thoughts and feelings, is the development of a selfish disregard for the emotions, hopes and desires of another person. If self is #1, there is no room to care about the disappointments of others. After all, it is all in good fun, just playing the game, is it not?

This does not mean that a person cannot enjoy swimming, skiing, skating, riding or anything else that provides exercise and encourages increasing skill. Exercise is necessary to be healthy. Good health should be sought by all who want clear minds to hear the Spirit’s voice. Consequently, the only competition that is acceptable is against a person’ own record or own time, never against others. Participation in or observation of others’ competition has no place in the lives of those who would make Heaven their eternal home.

Professional sports heroes are another area where Satan distracts minds and encourages selfishness. The “stars” of these events are virtual idols to multitudes of fans who worship at their shrines. “Worship” can be simply nothing more than adoration. An “idol” can be anyone that is not the Creator. Therefore, the time, the money and the thought that is consumed in following the short-lived careers of star athletes is worship given to another god. In a world where poverty and famine are facts of existence for millions of people, it seems obscene and morally wrong to use literally billions of dollars for sporting events and sports players’ salaries. Desire for dominance, for winning games, is a very highly priced way to develop thoughts and feelings like Satan.

Olympic athletes are recognized as the best of the best. Athletes from many different nations congregate to compete in “friendly” games. In
reality, the Olympics are nothing but organized sports popularizing pure paganism. Many athletes devote their entire lives, all their time and energy, to becoming the best in a specific field to compete every four years. Having originated in pagan Greece, the modern Olympics are awash in occult symbolism, from pyramids, to the all-seeing eye, to numerology and much more. The only “god” honored at such an event is the god of force: Satan.

The excuses given for participating in competitive sports and watching professional games are as many and varied as the sports themselves. The fact remains, however, that such participation encourages and develops a spirit that is not fit for companionship among the angels of light.

The highway of the upright is to depart from evil: he that keepeth his way preserveth his soul. (Proverbs 16:17, KJV)

The goal of life must be to develop a character, thoughts and feelings, like Yahushua. If you find yourself lacking love and respect for others, wanting to prove you are better than others, pray for the mind of Yahushua to be gifted to you. The gracious promise is that He will remove our stony heart of unbelief and selfishness and write His law of love in our minds.

I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them. (Ezekiel 36:26, 27, NKJV)

It is not possible to grind out of ourselves love enough, righteousness enough, to somehow deserve Heaven. Eternal life and purity of mind are a gift, undeserved and unearned.

For [Yah] so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For [Yah] did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. (John 3:16, 17, NKJV)

Accept the gift and be transformed into Yahuwah’s image today.