



Overcoming The Dragon

Part One

Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.

II. Corinthians 2:11

In previous newsletters we sounded an alarm regarding the fact that some of those who are ministering to *The Remnant* have come under the influence of the Dragon, and as a result, have developed *an aversion* to God's iron. We warned that this aversion makes them emphasize the love of God to the exclusion of all else, and this in turn has produced in them an unbalanced view of what the "image" of Jesus really looks like.

Our point was not to condemn these brethren. Nor were we saying (or implying) that they are "false" teachers. We wrote what we did in order to show that this whole thing is a tactic (or device) of Satan. The enemy has deceived them in this one particular area. Our battle is not with them—it's with the one who deceived them. Our only desire is to help God's people stay out of deception by exposing some of the *tactics* the enemy is currently using to ensnare some of us.

This month we want to expose another device (or tactic) of the enemy. This one is the one that produces in us an attitude towards Satan which is both unscriptural and dangerous. It's the idea that we shouldn't pay too much attention to him. It's the attitude that since Jesus defeated him at Calvary—and we are in Jesus—we don't have to worry about him because he has no more power over us. It's the idea that we can overcome Satan *without* dealing with him directly or battling him.

The Lord's apostles certainly didn't have this kind of attitude regarding the power of the enemy. Paul said Satan has devices that he uses to get an advantage over us. Speaking to the believers of his day, he said: "...we are not ignorant of his devices". Since Paul said the believers of his day were not ignorant of Satan's devices, we must assume they were not ignorant of them.

This is not the case today. Contemporary believers are *very* ignorant of his devices. This is why so many of them are embracing every kind of false teaching and all kinds of counterfeit religious experiences. They *are* ignorant of his devices and as a result, they are being overcome.

Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Ephesians 6:11-12

Paul also said our adversary has "wiles". The term wiles means tricks or strategies. He told us to put on the whole armor of God so we can *stand against* these strategies. Please notice that he didn't say if we put that armor on we wouldn't have to even fight. He said we can expect to be attacked by the enemy; and if we don't have that armor on, or if we are not willing to stand against his attacks, then we *will be* defeated.

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

I. Peter 5:8-9

The apostle Peter said Satan is *our* adversary—that is, he is our *personal* enemy. As he walks about seeking whom he may devour, he has his eye on you. He's not seeking to devour the unsaved—they have *already* been devoured by him. He is seeking to devour God's people. He's seeking to devour me. He's seeking to devour *you*. Because this is the situation, Peter tells us to be sober and vigilant when it comes to Satan.

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

James 4:7

The apostle James told us to "resist" Satan and he will flee from us. He didn't say that if we *ignore him* he will flee.

What's the point of all these warnings if Satan can't really hurt us? Why are we told to resist him, stand against his wiles, and wrestle against his power, if we really don't have to? Why would Peter tell us to be "sober" and "vigilant" when it comes to the enemy if he has no power to hurt us?

Brethren, we need to realize that this is not some kind of religious game we are playing. We are in a *real* war with a *real* enemy who is both powerful and invisible. He hates us with a fierce hatred and he is determined to destroy us any way he can. He never sleeps; he never takes a break; he never stops watching us. His wiles are deceptive and his devices are dangerous. They have already been used to devour multitudes of God's people.

*This know also, that in the last days **perilous times** shall come.*

II. Timothy 3:1

Paul said that in the last days "perilous times" would come. The Greek term which is translated perilous in the King James is *chalepos* (khal-ep-os'). It's meaning is more akin to the idea of something being "fierce". We see this same Greek term used in the following passage:

*And when he was come to the other side into the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, **exceeding fierce**, so that no man might pass by that way.*

Matthew 8:28

In other words, the last days are going to be *fierce* days because *the opposition* against us will greatly increase. God is going to give Satan great power and authority at the close of this age. The result will be that his attacks against us will become more and more severe, and his deceptions will become harder and harder to discern.

*Because of rebellion, the host [of the saints] and the daily sacrifice **were given over to it**. It prospered in everything it did, and truth was thrown to the ground.*

Daniel 8:12 NIV

*And there went out another horse that was red: and **power was given to him** that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword...And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And **power was given unto them** over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.*

Revelation 6:4 & 8

*And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and **unto them was given power**, as the scorpions of the earth have power.*

Revelation 9:3

*And **there was given unto him** [the beast from the sea] a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and **power was given unto him** to continue forty and two months...And **it was given unto him** to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and **power was given him** over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.*

Revelation 13:4 & 7

God is sovereign in all this. He is the one who is granting all this power to Satan and He is doing it for a specific purpose. However, just because God is in control of what's happening, that doesn't mean we will automatically be protected from that power. We still have to do the things the apostles told us to do—be sober, be vigilant, stand, resist, and wrestle.

Satan's power has already been increased a hundred-fold. It doesn't take a college degree to figure out that when the power of your enemy dramatically increases, your power to resist him better increase as well, or you will be defeated. Most of God's people are so busy with their own lives they have no idea what's happening. This is why we see churches which in the past have been solid, Bible-based fellowships, suddenly going into apostasy. We are not automatically protected from the deceiving power of the enemy just because we are God's children.

*Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to **seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils**; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;*

I. Timothy 4:1-2

If we have ears to hear, this will be a frightening warning because Paul is not talking in this passage about fake Christians or cultural Christians. He's talking about *real* believers. He's talking about people who once belonged to God. He's talking about people who were given the Holy Spirit and once had a relationship with Jesus. Not only do these once-saved people fall completely away from the faith, they end up with a "seared" conscience. Paul refers to this same horrible reality in another place, using slightly different language:

*Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day [the Day of the Lord] shall not come, except **there come a falling away first**, and **that man of sin be revealed**, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that **he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.***

II. Thessalonians 2:3-4

Here again is a frightful warning for those who have ears to hear. It's scary because Paul is *not* talking about a man sitting in a building over in Jerusalem. He is talking about an *invisible* spirit taking its seat in the lives of God's people. He is warning that this spirit will be able to *counterfeit* the work, power, and presence of the Holy Spirit. He's telling us that it will gain a foot hold in the lives of many believers and will "show himself that he is god". He will demonstrate that he is the Holy Spirit.

*And then shall **that Wicked** be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness **in them that perish**; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.*

II Thessalonians 2:8-10

Speaking of the same thing later in the same chapter, Paul says "that Wicked"—which is the Antichrist—will come with all deceivableness of unrighteousness *in them* that perish. The only thing that can come "in" a person is an invisible spirit. Thus, Paul is letting us know that Antichrist is *a spirit* that will come forth *in* people. The result of this is that they will be spiritually destroyed.

The prophet Daniel and the apostle John both saw in vision the very thing Paul warns us about.

*And it [the little horn] waxed great, even to the host of heaven; and **it cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them.***

Daniel 8:10

*And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a **great red dragon**, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. **And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth**: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born...*

Revelation 12:3-4

Stars represent God's people in Scripture. They represent believers who are dwelling in heaven—that is, those who are walking in heavenly places with Jesus. Yet both John and Daniel saw many of these stars brought down by the power of the enemy. John saw the Dragon pull many of them down with his tail.

Daniel saw the little horn do the same thing. But in addition, he also watched the little horn stomp on them after they had been brought down. This is a perfect picture

of the intense *hatred* Satan has for you and I. He isn't satisfied with just causing our fall. He wants to mercilessly grind our faces into the dust.

And just in case we didn't get the message, Daniel goes on to make it crystal clear that some of God's people who live in the last days will be overcome. That means that some of *us* will be overcome.

*And of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows. I beheld, and **the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them...***

*And he [the little horn] shall speak great words against the most High, and **shall wear out the saints of the most High**, and think to change times and laws: and **they** [some of the saints] **shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.***

Daniel 7:20-21 & 25

Again, for those who have ears to hear, these are sobering words. God has been faithful to warn us about the danger we face in these days. The question is: how many of us are *really* listening to these warning? How many are *really* taking them seriously?

Notice that *the source* of all this destruction is invisible spirits. In First Timothy, Paul says it will be the doctrines of *demons* and *seducing spirits* that will draw believers away from the truth, cause them to fall, and in the end sear their conscience. In Second Thessalonians, he warns about *a spirit* coming forth in people.

*Beloved, believe not **every spirit**, but try **the spirits** whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.*

I John 4:1

The apostle John told us not to believe every "spirit", but that we should "try the spirits" to see whether or not they be of God. Now why do you suppose John told us to try *the spirits*? Why didn't he tell us to compare what the false prophets are saying with what the Scripture says?

*Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And **every spirit** that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is **that spirit** of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.*

I John 4:2-3

When talking about the Antichrist, John said every *spirit* that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is *that spirit* of Antichrist. Again, why did John even bother talking about the "spirit" of Antichrist? Why didn't he just warn us to reject *the men* who were denying that Jesus had come in the flesh?

For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.

II. Corinthians 11:4

Notice that when Paul warned the Corinthians about false apostles, he mentioned the fact that they were imparting "another spirit" to God's people as a result of preaching a false gospel. There is a reason the apostles mentioned spirits in their warnings. It's because behind every false prophet or false teacher, behind every false doctrine or revelation, behind all the self delusion people are prone to walk in, there is an invisible demon spirit.

When you deal with a person who is walking in deception regarding their own spiritual condition, or a person who is preaching or teaching false doctrine, you are not dealing with that person alone. You are *also* dealing with the *spirit* that has seduced them.

The apostles walked in a reality that few Christians walk in today. They knew by experience that demon spirits are *the source* of most of what goes on in the realm of deception. They knew by experience that false doctrines are not just the doctrines of men. They are actually the doctrines *of demons*. They knew by experience that those who were preaching and teaching error had been seduced by invisible religious spirits.

This whole realm of understanding does not come simply by knowing the Scripture. The apostles didn't even have the New Testament. What they had was an incredible level of *spiritual discernment*—and apparently they assumed this was the norm for all the believers of that day. That's why they talked about "spirits" so much.

*And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying: The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, **These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation.** And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to **the spirit**, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour.*

Acts 16:16-18

There is no verse of Scripture in either the Old or the New Testament that could have revealed to Paul that it was *a spirit* talking through that woman. What she said was absolutely true. Only the discernment of the Holy Spirit could have revealed the truth of that situation to him.

Since the majority of today's Christians have no spiritual discernment at all, they would have been completely fooled by that woman. Even those who pride themselves on their knowledge of the Written Word would have been fooled because there is *nothing in the Word* that could have revealed the truth of that situation to them.

What verse of Scripture could they have used to judge *the source* of that woman's words? What teaching of Jesus could they have used to judge it? Once again, she was speaking the *absolute truth*.

If we know the Written Word, it's really not that hard to spot a false teacher or a false teaching. When a person starts mis-quoting the Scripture, or quoting it out of context, or putting some kind of spin on it that changes its intended meaning, the one who has a thorough knowledge of God's Word will detect it fairly quickly.

But when someone who is walking under a wrong spirit starts speaking or teaching the truth, when everything they are saying is Scriptural and doctrinally sound, how many of us would be able to recognize—as Paul did—that the source of those words or teachings are not God?



Update On The Virtual Fellowship Hall

The Virtual Fellowship Hall is going well. We are having a lot of good fellowship. The sessions have been around 3 hours long so far.

There are two things I forgot to mention in my last newsletter: (1) Paltalk is a Windows only program. It will not work on Mac machines or other operating systems. (2) The password (**Perfection**) is case sensitive. You must use a capital "P" when typing it in or else it won't let you enter the room.

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