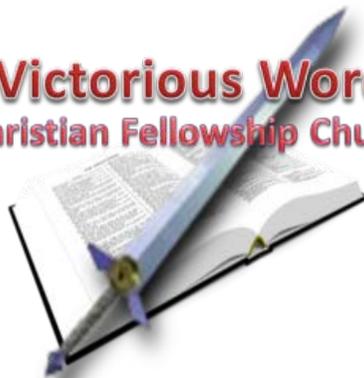


God's Word: Devil Destruction Power

Our weapons have power from God. These weapons can DESTROY the enemy's strong places. (2 Corinthians 10:4; New Century Version)

By Troy J. Edwards

Victorious Word
Christian Fellowship Church



Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are taken from the *King James Version* (KJV) of the Bible.

God's Word: Devil Destruction Power

by Troy J. Edwards

Copyright (c) 1997, 2014 by Troy J. Edwards

Published by **Victorious Word Christian Publishing**

The author gives permission to have any portion of this book copied if it will assist other believers in receiving all that God has for them and/or if it will lead someone to Christ. The material here is for the edification of the body of Christ. However, it is a violation of Christian ethics to use the author's material for personal profit gain. Remember that we must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ to give an account for the deeds that are done in the body (1 Cor. 3:8-15). Therefore, please comply within the limits of this permission statement.

Contents

Introduction	7
1. The Source of All of Our Problems	11
2. Satan's First Defeat by God's Word	29
3. Failing to Use the Word Against Satan Defeated Adam	43
4. Jesus' Legal Defeat of Satan	53
5. Our Victorious Position in Christ	67
6. Appropriating the Victory through Faith	81
7. Why Satan MUST Yield to God's Word	97
8. Verbal Confrontation with Satan	113
9. Using God's Word to Destroy Satanic Attacks (Part 1)	129
10. Using God's Word to Destroy Satanic Attacks (Part 2)	145
Appendix A: What Scriptures to Use When Satan Attacks	161
Appendix B: Why Job Was Unable To Do Anything About The Devil	171
Appendix C: Paul's Victory over a Thorny Issue	177
Notes	183
Invitation and prayer for salvation	193
Invitation to receive the baptism with the Holy Spirit	194
Books By Pastor Troy J. Edwards	195

To Stephen and Mary Gaye.

Working together with our Lord Jesus Christ
we have caused much devil destruction in the
kingdom of darkness.

Introduction

Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him (Matt. 4:10-11)

A number of years ago some friends and I were doing street evangelism in a red light district in Okinawa, Japan. Numerous military personnel spent their weekends (and money) in this place. This particular evening, I came across two young marines and began sharing Christ with them. After I presented the gospel message, one of them told me that he felt that he couldn't be saved because, "I've got a very bad temper and I just get mad all the time."

"God can take that temper away from you." I replied.

The expression on his face changed. He angrily asked, "You mean to tell me that you NEVER get MAD?!!"

"Jesus took my temper from me," I told him.

"Well what if I was to punch you right now, you tell me you won't get mad?"

I was faced with a choice. I could either allow this situation to frighten me, I could attempt to engage in a physical confrontation which I would have surely lost, or I could yield to the Spirit of God. Thankfully I chose the latter. I told him, "You couldn't hit me."

"What do you mean I can't hit you?"

"Because I'm covered with the blood of Jesus"

"So you're saying that if I were to punch you right now, you wouldn't get mad?"

"You couldn't punch me; no weapon formed against me shall prosper."

After this, his friend asked: "What if we were to jump you, you wouldn't get mad?"

Again I responded, “You couldn’t jump me, He has given His angels charge over me and they protect me.”

After this brief confrontation they walked away.

The Jesus Model

Satan would have loved for me to react with either fear or anger (or both) in this situation. However, due to having studied the Scriptures and attempting to model my life after Jesus, I knew immediately what to do. Like Jesus, I began to deal with the situation using God’s Word.

Demonic forces were behind these men. However, the Holy Spirit led me to His Word and Satan was routed. We are told in Matthew 4:1, “*Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.*” This does not mean that the Spirit led Jesus to possibly fall into sin but rather led Him into a battle in which the Spirit Himself would give our Lord the right *rhema* Word to defeat Satan. This battle of Jesus against Satan was for our sakes. It was not only part of His redemption of mankind, but also to provide us an example for how to properly deal with the enemy.

Many of us who are Pentecostal and Charismatic (I place myself in both camps) have some idea about our authority over Satan and demon forces. Sadly, a number of us believe that resisting Satan is limited to screaming at him or one of his demons and commanding them to go away in the Name of Jesus. Don’t misunderstand me: casting out demons is vitally important. Furthermore, the Name of Jesus is powerful because it belongs to the great God we serve who became a man and died for us and rose again for our sakes. However, the authority behind the Name of Jesus, when used against Satan, must work in conjunction with the Word of God. This is how the Lord Himself successfully resisted the devil during His time on earth.

God’s Word: Your Most Effective Weapon

The Lord’s battle with the devil on the earth was for our sakes and not His own. He defeated the devil during this wilderness temptation and gave us a pattern to follow. He then defeated the devil through His death, burial and resurrection to ensure that those who come into covenant relationship with Him walk in constant victory.

Not only did Jesus defeat the devil for us through His finished redemptive work but He also made His Word, the Bible available to us as the basis of our authority. His Word enforces His victory over the enemy. This is the “sword of the Spirit” (Eph. 6:17-18) that must be wielded by every child of God if we are to walk as victorious Christians. If we have allowed Satan to distract us from the means of victory over him, which is the Word of God, we have only ourselves to blame. Nonetheless, in this book, we will learn how to take the sword of the Spirit and defeat Satan in every circumstance that we encounter.

Most of us know that faith comes by the agency of God’s Word (Rom. 10:17). This is why Satan targets the Word of God (Gen. 3:1-7). If Satan can get us away from the Word and have us concentrate on nice religious phrases or ritualistic practices, he can continue to successfully destroy our lives (Luke 8:12). Any successful resistance of Satan is by *faith* (1 Pet. 5:8-9). Any failure or defeat by Satan suffered on the part of the Christian is a *failure in faith* (Luke 22:31).

God’s Character and Satan

Ignorance of God’s Word hinders faith and Satan works to keep Christians ignorant. If we are ignorant of God’s Word we will also be ignorant of His true character. The distortion of God’s character leads to blaming God for the problems confronting us. We use such pious epithets such as “God is sovereign” or “God is in control”. When we hold to such beliefs about God we will not stand against the devil because we won’t see him as our problem. We will wallow in defeat, being beaten down by Satan and demons while blaming God. In contrast, John told his disciples, “*I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome **the wicked one***” (1 John 2:14).

The word “wicked” in the above passage is in relation to Satan. It comes from the Greek word “*poneros*” and among many things means, “bringing toils, annoyances, perils; of a time full of peril to Christian faith and steadfastness; causing pain and trouble” (StudyLight.org). These are all of the works that Jesus came to rescue us from. God is not the reason for the pain and trouble that we encounter in this world. *He is the deliver and rescuer from it.* Therefore, in this book we will come to learn that God is not at fault for our problems or defeats. WE ARE!!! We need to know God’s

Word in our warfare against Satan so that we can know who it is that is actually causing us problems.

Many of God's children are beaten down by trials and circumstances. They lack the joy and happiness that comes with a life of constant victory. Basically, they are living defeated lives. They passively submit to whatever comes their way, believing that God is the One bringing these difficulties (or allowing them) for some mysterious purpose. Their only thought is to simply hang on until Jesus comes or *hope* that the trial will pass them by.

Yet, the choice is ours whether to stand against satanic attack or passively allow Satan to beat us down. This is why Satan works hard to keep God's people ignorant of the truth. He knows that true knowledge of God's Word and His character destroys Satan's ability to win any battles against us. Had I accepted the fatalistic ideas about God and trials when those two Marines threatened me, it is very possible that I could have been seriously injured, killed, or placed in jail for an act of violence, thus making a mockery out of the gospel. However, because of God's Word I gained a victory over the wicked one. It is the "wicked one" who is responsible for evil and not our wonderful Heavenly Father. We will see this as we go further in our study of this truth that God's Word gives us devil destruction power.

Knowledge of God's true character, what Jesus accomplished in His redemptive work and the benefits that accrue from that are recorded in the Bible. In this book I make no apologies for the fact that I believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God and is the revelation of His will for our lives. Knowledge of its contents is vitally important if we are to walk in victory in this life.

In this book, you will learn how effective God's Word is in destroying the devil. When we say "destroy" we mean that we render him ineffective in our lives and circumstances. Jesus has already destroyed the devil but the devil continues to defeat many of God's people because they are ignorant of this fact. Satan is then able to blame God for his evil works against the child of God and there is no resistance offered. However, God's Word gives us the knowledge needed to make Christ's work effectual on our behalf. It reveals the truth about a loving God who does no harm to His children but on the contrary has made numerous blessings available to them. I pray that the lessons in this book will enable you to grasp this truth.

Chapter One

The Source of All of Our Problems

*We know that whoever is born of God does not sin; but he who has been born of God keeps himself, and the wicked one does not touch him. We know that we are of God, and **the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one.** (1 John 5:18-19; NKJV)*

In the Bible, the “world” is not necessarily speaking about the planet earth which we currently live on (though it obviously involves the earth). In most cases, it is in reference to the system of government run by Satan and his demonic hoard (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; 2 Cor. 4:4).

The world is full of evil because it is under the sway of Satan, the evil one. The New International Version renders it, “...*that the whole world is under the control of the evil one.*” Contrary to popular teachings, God is not the one controlling the misery and wickedness in this world. God is at war with it and is working to protect us from it, and will do so as we cooperate with Him.

Wickedness Controlling the World

It is the “wicked one” (Mat. 13:19, 38; Eph. 6:16; 1 John 2:13, 14; 3:12; 5:18, 19) or “the evil one” (Mat. 5:37; 6:13; John 17:15; 2 Thess. 3:3) who holds sway (control) over the world. Satan’s character is so malignant that both titles are attributed to him. Furthermore, the demonic forces that work for Satan and who are the source of much sickness, disease, sin and tragedy in this world are also called *evil* (Luke 7:21; 8:2; Acts 19:12-16).

As we noted in the introduction, the word “wicked” comes from the Greek word “*poneros*” which among many things means, “bringing toils, annoyances, perils; of a time full of peril to Christian

faith and steadfastness; causing pain and trouble”¹ All that is wicked and evil has its source in Satan, the evil one.

While so many people, including Christians, blame God for the pain and trouble in this world, the Bible lays the blame at the feet of God's enemy, Satan, *the wicked one*. All that is wicked and evil has its source in this malignant creature. This includes:

- Sickness and disease (Deut. 7:15; Luke 13:16; Acts 10:38 - interestingly enough, *poneros* can also mean “in a physical sense: diseased or blind”)
- Financial distress (Prov. 10:15; Luke 16:22-25)
- Accidents (Luke 13:3-5)
- Marriage issues (1 Cor. 7:5)
- Natural disasters (Job 1:12, 16, 18-19; Mark 4:37-40)
- All criminal acts to include murder (Job 1:17; John 8:44, 10:10)
- Persecution of God's people (Rev. 2:10; 1 Pet. 5:8-9)
- Blinding people to the truth about God and salvation (Luke 8:12; 2 Cor. 4:4)
- Hindering answers to prayer (Daniel 10:12-14)
- Enticing people to sin and keeping them in bondage to it (Gen. 3:1-7; Matt. 4:3; 6:13; 1 Thess. 3:5; 1 John 3:8)
- Exercising a negative influence on this world's political systems (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11)

These are all of the works that Jesus came to rescue us from. Therefore, God is not the reason for the pain and trouble that we encounter in this world. He is the deliver and rescuer from it. While Satan is exceedingly wicked, God is exceedingly good (Psalm 25:8; 34:8; 86:5; 106:1; 107:1; 118:1, 29; 119:68; 135:3; 136:1; Mat. 19:17). We are invited to “*O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him.*” (Psalm 34:8).

The True Source of our Problems

Despite these facts, God is too often falsely accused of inflicting pain and suffering. But Satan, the defeated one, is the actual inflictor. Jesus said, “*These things I have spoken unto you, that in me*

ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33). The word “tribulation” in this passage means “trouble, distress, or *problems*.”

Jesus said that we will have these things due to the fact that we are in this world. As long as we are in this world problems are inevitable. Though Christians are in this world we are not of it (John 15:19-21; 17:14-17). We have been left here as ambassadors of Christ to bring a message of reconciliation to those who do not yet know Christ (Matt. 28:18-19; Mark 16:15-20; 2 Cor. 5:18-21). Due to our mission we will be faced with satanic opposition. It is not God sending these troubles. On the contrary He is our deliverer from trouble:

Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name. He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him. With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation. (Psalm 91:14-16)

The word “troubles” in Psalm 91 comes from the Hebrew word *tsarah*. Strong’s dictionary gives the following definition: “tightness (that is, figuratively trouble); transitively a female rival: - adversary, **adversity**, affliction, anguish, distress, **tribulation**, trouble.”²

If we go by much of the sentiment we find in many Christian circles today, we may as well read the passage this way, “I will be with him in trouble; because I am the One who brings the trouble on him” People cannot have confidence in God’s promises of deliverance if He is *reputed* as someone who causes of the troubles and adversity.

God says that He will set us high above the trouble and adversity “...*because he hath **known my name**.*” It is by knowing the truth of God’s *reputation* or His *character* that gives us the confidence to overcome adversity. That is what is meant by *knowing God’s Name*. The word “name” as used in Psalm 91 does not mean “name” as we Westerners understand it (like naming a child “William”) but, and especially in the case with God, it has far more meaning. Jeff A. Benner of the **Ancient Hebrew Research Center** writes:

“What is God's name? Most will answer with Yahweh or God but we must remember that a name or *shem* in Hebrew is the character of the individual so the correct question should be ‘What is God’s character?’”³

By blaming God for the problems in life we miss one of the most helpful revelations concerning God’s character—that He longs to help us in trouble. He is no bringer of problems. Instead *He is a problem-solver*. The person who plays the role of problem-making is God’s enemy and our enemy—Satan.

Knowing God’s Character

God is saying in Psalm 91 that He will deliver us from trouble because we know the truth concerning *His character and nature*. If we believe that God is the one bringing us trouble then we will be reluctant to call on Him to deliver us from it. We will passively submit to it as some lesson that God is trying to teach us. But when we see God as the One who delivers us from trouble then we will aggressively resist it, knowing that He is not the source but the One who delivers. This is why His Word is important when dealing with satanic opposition. We cannot have a true knowledge of God’s reputation—what He is truly like, what are His characteristics, etc.—apart from His Word. Otherwise, we will accept Satan’s lies about Him and live in defeat. As God told Hosea, “*My people are destroyed because they do not know me*” (Hosea 4:6; New International Reader's Version).

A correct understanding of God is the only way to know Him and to see His true character (Jer. 9:24). This understanding can only come as we know what God says about Himself in His Word since He places His Word above His own character and reputation (Psalm 138:2). Therefore the only way to destroy the lying tactics of Satan is to have a true knowledge of God:

*(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that **exalteth itself against the knowledge of God**, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ (2 Cor. 10:4-5)*

The New Life Version renders the latter part of verse 4 as, “*Those things God gives to fight with destroy the strong-places of the devil.*” The devil places negative ideas in our minds concerning God. However, as we give God’s Word first place in our lives, it will bring healing to us in every area, to include our minds (Prov. 4:20-22).

God’s Word will destroy the devil in the sense that it will destroy his lying strongholds over our minds. It will cast down every high thing that Satan brings to us “*that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God.*” Satan brought a “high thing” to Eve that ran in opposition to the knowledge of God. She and her husband then forsook the Word of God and lost sight of the truth about Him (Gen. 3:5-7).

Jesus explicitly states that “*In the world ye shall have tribulation.*” God is our *very present help and deliverer* in the tribulation brought to us from the world and its ruler (Psalm 46:1-2). Satan, and not God, is this world’s present ruler and that is why we are consistently experiencing tribulation. Satan delights in destroying lives. If God were currently running the world there would be no death, harm or accidents. There would only be life, happiness and blessing which Christ’ millennial reign will prove.

During the millennial reign when Satan is bound for a thousand years, people will see that God’s reign is one in which nothing shall “*hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain.*” (Isa. 11:1-10; 65:17-29; Rev. 20:1-6). Therefore, God is not the source of our tribulations. Tribulation comes from the world where Satan is its prince. Though Satan is the source of the trials that we face in this world we are to walk in victory over him through faith. God has given us His overcoming Word that enables us to do this.

Distinguishing Between the Works of Christ and Satan

John writes, “*I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one*” (1 John 2:14b). John tells his young disciples that it is on the basis of God’s Word that they overcome the wicked one. *One cannot confidently use the Word of God as a weapon against Satan’s attacks if they are unable to make a distinction between what is of God and what is of Satan.*

In his book, *Satan: A Defeated Foe*, Charles H. Usher offers this advice, “Are we overcoming Satan in our circumstances? If we are to do so, we must learn to recognize what is from Satan and what is from God.”⁴ Jesus made these distinctions clear when He said, “*The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly*” (John 10:10). Notice the response of Jesus to a request by James and John to call down lightning on a Samaritan town for disrespecting Him:

But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village (Luke 9:55-56)

Jesus made it clear that He is *not* the One who sends adversity upon men. His desire is to deliver us from destruction. Too many people, including God’s own people, seem to believe that God is the One who steals, kills, and destroys. Yet Jesus said “*he that hath seen me hath seen the Father*” (see John 14:8-11; 2 Cor. 4:4; Heb. 1:1-3). Jesus also said that He only did what He saw His Father doing and what His Father told Him to do (John 5:19-20).

Not once in the Scriptures do we find Jesus giving sickness, tempting anyone to sin, calling down famine, bringing about natural disasters to punish His enemies or condemning anyone in wrath and judgment. On the contrary throughout the gospels we find Jesus healing the sick, feeding the hungry, delivering people from sin, averting natural disasters, and rebuking His disciples when they sought for violent methods in dealing with their opposition. Jesus exhibited total love—the kind that wants to help and not hurt. Jesus remains today our “harmless” High Priest (Heb. 7:26). The Father and the Holy Spirit are exactly like Jesus. The Bible makes several more distinctions that make this absolutely clear:

How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good,

and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him (Acts 10:38)

*And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand: And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand? And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? therefore they shall be your judges. But if I cast out devils by **the Spirit of God**, then the kingdom of God is come unto you (Matt. 12:25-28)*

To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me (Acts 26:18)

Scripture is clear that God is not out destroying men's lives. He is trying to save men from satanic destruction. Satan's government, which is the present world's system, is a kingdom of deprivation, death, and destruction. God's kingdom is a kingdom of love, life and liberty. The works of God are opposed to those of Satan:

He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:8).

The works of the devil is sin and hatred and all of its consequences to include trials, sickness, disease, violence, etc. Jesus' works, on the other hand, were works of healing and deliverance (John 9:1-3; Mark 6:5-6; 16:15-20). Every one of Jesus' miracles of healing

and deliverance was an attack on Satan's kingdom of death, destruction and deprivation.

The “Permission” Idiom of Biblical Language

A number of Bible passages, especially in the Old Testament, seemingly make God the source of evil and destructions. These might appear to contradict everything stated above. Many of these *alleged contradictions* are resolved by understanding the original language and culture in which the Bible was written. By understanding this and allowing the Bible to be its own interpreter we will alleviate all seeming contradictions. God, at different periods during the writing of Scripture, spoke through the language, culture and idioms of the people of those times.

One scholar has stated, “For when the Deity has condescended to speak by the mouth of men, he has always left them to use the modes of expression current and intelligible in the age in which they lived.”⁵ Another scholar stated that neglect of the study of the different cultural ideas, language and idioms of the ancient Hebrews when interpreting Old Testament passages has led to many errors.⁶ Failure to interpret these idioms in ways that they may be understood by the Western mind has caused us to mischaracterize God and charge Him as the direct cause of evil.

One of those often neglected idioms is what we might call the “permission idiom”. Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., Professor of Old Testament and former President of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary writes, “What God permits, according to the usage of Scripture, is just as frequently attributed directly to God, for Scripture is not as concerned as we westerners are about secondary sources or causes.”⁷

A thorough examination of Scripture shows us that the evil that is often attributed to God by inspired Biblical writers is actually the result of people removing themselves from God's protection, thus receiving the consequences of their choices in a morally ordered universe. God has often restrained and protected us from the full consequences of our rebellion and has pleaded us to stop, but often we continue to reject Him and remove ourselves from His protection. God so respects our free will that He reluctantly releases us to receive what we have sown (Gal. 6:5-6). The Hebrews have often understood this to mean that God was directly punishing us for our sins.

However, the Bible explains itself and shows us that these things happen by God’s reluctant *permission* and not His active *causation*.

Phillip Melancthon worked very closely with the Reformer, Martin Luther and was also a contemporary of John Calvin. Melancthon later rejected the harsh hyper-sovereignty doctrines espoused by these men that made God the cause of sin and misery in the world. His vigorous study of Scripture and research led him to discover the “permission idiom” of the Hebrew. In his comments on Romans 1:24 Melancthon writes:

“He gave them upthat is, he permitted them to rush by their own will, or as impelled by the devil: for this signification of permission is extremely frequent in the Hebrew verbsThis simple and true grammatical interpretation removes the labyrinths of multitudinous questions. And the apophthegm in Hosea, *From thyself is thy perdition, only in me is thy help*, is to be held as most true. Sin is neither desired, nor approved of, nor effected, by God. This true idea is to be held most tenaciously.”⁸

Many of the church fathers understood this principle of Bible interpretation but it seemed to have gotten lost during the Reformation period.⁹ Perhaps if this truth had been fully understood during the Reformation of the 1600s we would not be as mischaracterized today as the author of sin and misery as He currently is by those who continue to revere the 17th century reformers and their doctrines.

Satan: the Destroyer in the Old Testament

An example of the *permission idiom* is found in Exodus 12:12a: “*For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast.*” God is said to be the One doing the smiting (bringing death and sickness upon man and beast). Whenever this type of smiting is attributed to God we can confidently understand this as a Hebrew permissive idiom in which God is said to do the thing that He allowed or permitted to happen. This proven several verses later in Exodus 12:

“For the LORD will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel,

and on the two side posts, the LORD will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you.” (Ex. 12:23)

Verses 12 and 23 would appear to contradict each other apart from understanding the *permission idiom*. Some who advocate a belief that God is the actual inflictor of all sickness, disease and accidents ignore or reject this important truth. They believe that the word “destroyer” should be a “verb” rather than a “noun” (“destroying” rather than “destroyer”). In this view the Lord is the direct cause of the destruction and no other agent is involved. Many of these same people also claim that this is a reference to a destroying angel who actually works *for* the Lord and not *against* him (and they cite the following passages to support this idea: 2 Sam. 24:15-17; 1 Chron. 21:12-27; 2 Kings 19:35; Isa. 37:36; Acts 12:23).

Thankfully, for those of us who believe Jesus’ words in John 10:10 that Satan is the destroyer and not God, there is another view that sees the “destroyer” in Exodus 12:23 as a malevolent being that God must oppose. The key to understanding this truth is to understand the word “Passover” as used in this passage. This misunderstood word, once clarified, gives a whole new understanding to Exodus 12:23 that is consistent with our Lord’s teachings about God:

The common notion of God's passing over the houses of the Israelites is, that in going through the land of Egypt to smite the firstborn, seeing the blood on the door of the houses of the Israelites, he passed over, or skipped, those houses, and forebore to smite them. But that this is not the true notion of the thing, will be plain from considering the words of the sacred historian: where he describes very explicitly the action: For JEHOVAH will pass through, to smite the Egyptians; and when he seeth the blood on the lintels and on the two side posts, JEHOVAH will spring forward over (or before), the doorand will not suffer the destroyer to come into your houses to smite you.' Exod. xii. 23. Here are manifestly two distinct agents, with which the notion of passing over is not consistent; for that supposes but one agent; the two agents are the destroying angel passing through to smite every house; and JEHOVAH, the protector, keeping pace with him; and who, seeing the door of the Israelite marked with the blood, the token prescribed, leaps forward, throws himself with a sudden motion in the way, opposes the destroying angel, and covers and

protects that house against the destroying angel, nor suffers him to smite it.¹⁰

In The New Testament we read, “*Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them*” (Heb. 11:28). Read again 1 John 5:18 which says, “*....but he who has been born of God keeps himself, and the wicked one does not touch him*” (NKJV). By way of comparison it is the wicked one, Satan, who touches people in a way to harm them. God, on the other hand, is the protector. In his comments on Hebrews 11:28, Dwight J. Pentecost wrote:

“The words translated ‘passover’ in that text literally means ‘to hover over.’ The picture is that when the Lord saw the blood, He would position Himself over the door to protect all those who had sought refuge through blood by faith, and He would turn aside the destroyer who had come to execute judgment.”¹¹

It is evident from Scripture that the destroyer in Hebrews 11:28 and Exodus 12:23 is not God, but another person. The Psalmist would later tell us that it was “evil angels” (the angels that rebelled with Satan) that caused the problems for Egypt:

He cast upon them the fierceness of his anger, wrath, and indignation, and trouble, by sending evil angels among them. He made a way to his anger; he spared not their soul from death, but gave their life over to the pestilence; And smote all the firstborn in Egypt; the chief of their strength in the tabernacles of Ham (Psalm 78:49-51)

The word “cast” in verse 49 is from the Hebrew word “*shalach*” which means “allow” or “permit”.¹² The word “sending” concerning the evil angels appears to be mistranslated in most English versions. It comes from the Hebrew word “*mishlachath*”. According to Graham S. Ogden, “The rare noun *mishlachath* is difficult to define.”¹³ According to Strong’s dictionary it basically means, “a mission, that

is, (abstractly and favorable) release, or (concretely and unfavorable) an army.”¹⁴

Several translations prefer to use the phrase “a band of evil angels” or a “host of evil angels” rather than “sending evil angels”. This puts a whole different light on the passage. We have already explained how God’s wrath operates which is not by any emotional vindictive passion but rather by “giving up” people to the consequences of their sin. In this He allowed “His wrath” or basically removed the restraints and the hold that had that kept the “band, mission, or host” of evil angels. The **Leeser Old Testament** translates this as, “*He let loose against them the fierceness of his anger, wrath and indignation, and distress, a host of angels of misfortune.*”

This idea of “permission” rather than “causation” is seen in verse 50 where we read, “...*but gave their life over to the pestilence.*” God “smote” the firstborn of Egypt by letting loose the demonic forces that they themselves worshipped and gave their lives over to the destructive sickness that these forces bring. God “smites” by hiding His presence (Isa. 57:17).

God was holding back the evil forces poised to attack and inflict but Egypt’s stubbornness and rejection of God left Him with no choice but to let satanic forces loose upon them. However, God personally stood guard over the homes of those Israelites who obeyed His Word and covered their homes with the blood of the lamb. The Hebrew word for “passover” is the same word used in Isaiah 31:5: “*As birds flying, so will the LORD of hosts defend Jerusalem; defending also he will deliver it; and passing over he will preserve it.*” Therefore “Passover” should not be misunderstood as God simply *skipping* the house that had blood. It should be understood as God *guarding, preserving and protecting that house from the destroyer.*

In a more recent commentary we are told, “Here it is possible to see as the destroyer of the firstborn of Israel, not God, but some other power whom the Lord opposes and from whom He protects the Israelites.”¹⁵ Instead of the *destroyer* working alongside God as an agent of destruction, it seems that God is merely allowing him free access to the Egyptians due to Pharaoh’s failure to comply with God’s demands. Yet He opposes this destroyer to protect Israel, as He does for the child of God today when we obey and stand on His Word.

God's Word Delivers from Destruction

Understanding the truths stated above are important since God is often blamed for all of the sickness and disease suffered by mankind, to include His own faithful children. Many teach that God inflicts these things for sovereign mysterious purposes that cannot be explained. Yet, as we study the Scripture apart from deterministic theological bias that makes God the “first-cause” of all things – both good and evil – we find a different picture of our loving Father.

Exodus 12 shows us that an agent apart from God inflicted the plague upon Israel, bringing about the death of all of the firstborn. Yet God gives instructions to Israel that would prevent them from having to suffer as Egypt did. If it was His desire for His own to suffer the same plague as Egypt, He would not have given them *instructions* to prevent their *destruction*. The incident in Exodus also teaches us that faith and obedience go hand in hand. Failure to obey God's Word opens the door for the destroyer to wreck our lives. It is not enough just to believe God's promises for protection; we must do what His Word requires.

These truths are made clearer in the New Testament. In 1 Corinthians for example we learn that God actually permits Satan to bring about destruction to the lives of those who are deliberately disobedient. For a man that was involved in debased sexual sin, Paul commanded the church “*To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh*” (1 Cor. 5:5).

Satan, and not God, is the one who destroys the flesh through sickness and disease. Failing to obey God's Word and living in sin leaves God with no choice but to “deliver” a person to Satan. In other words, failure to know God's Word and obey it can possibly forfeit God's protection in our lives. In Psalm 107 we read how some foolishly sin and open themselves to affliction:

Fools because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted. Their soul abhorreth all manner of meat; and they draw near unto the gates of death. Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, and he saveth them out of their distresses. He sent his word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions. Oh that men would praise the LORD for

his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men! (Psalm 107:17-21)

In this Psalm we see a distinction between God's desires and the desires of the devil for our lives. God provides His Word to keep us *from* destruction. Satan blinds us to God's Word in order to lead us *to* destruction. The only way to overcome the one who brings destruction is by using the Word of God. The Word of God tells us what the blood of Jesus has done for us. It tells us how we may apply the blood in our warfare against the devil (Rev. 12:11; Col. 1:12-14).

It was not God's will for this judgment to fall upon Israel. Therefore, He gave Moses His Word. This *word* contained in the previous verses of Exodus chapter twelve instructs Israel on the application of the blood of the lamb that could *potentially* protect themselves and their households. The lamb represents Jesus, the lamb who was slain for the sins of the world (John 1:29; 1:36; 1 Pet. 1:19; Rev. 5:6-13; Rev. 12:11). Like Israel, every born again child of God can avail themselves of God's protection from the destroyer's destruction by adhering to God's Word.

Had the Israelites rejected this knowledge then the destroyer would have entered their homes and killed their firstborn just as he did to the Egyptians. Egypt represents or is a type of the world just as the Passover lamb was a type or representation of our Lord Jesus Christ. The world is under God's judgment today just as Egypt was in Moses' time (John 9:39; 12:31; 16:8-11; Acts 17:31; Rom. 3:6). This is why Satan runs rampant throughout the world stealing, killing, and destroying (Job 1-2; 1 Pet. 5:8-10). However, Christians are *potentially* protected from those things that come upon the world (Ps. 91:5-8; John 17:15; 1 John 5:18-19).

Many Christians needlessly suffer the things that the rest of the world suffers due to their failure to apply God's Word as Israel did. This is not to say that Christians will never experience trials. On the contrary, we should expect them (John 16:33). Nonetheless, while those who have not made Christ the Lord of their lives can be expected to buckle under Satan's destructive ways (Eph. 2:1-5), God's people should expect to stand against and overcome Satan (1 John 5:18, 19). Our failure to triumph over the enemy is due to our failure to apply the knowledge that God has made available.

Had the Israelites refused to obey God's instructions then they would have suffered the same fate as the Egyptians. It would not have been enough for Israel to *claim* the promise in Exodus 12:23 (in which God promised not to permit the destroyer to come into their houses) without first fulfilling the *conditions* of the promise. The condition was that they put the blood of the lamb on the lintel and on the door posts. Just the same, you and I today cannot *claim* God's promises of protection and victory over the devil until we meet the *conditions*.

Failure to fulfill God's conditions robs us of our legal right to claim His promises. Satan is a *legalist* (Job 1-2; Zech. 3:1-6; Rev. 12:9-11). If we stand against him using God's Word without meeting God's conditions, he will not relent because we have given him a foothold into our lives (Gen. 4:6; Luke 4:13; John 14:30; Eph. 4:27; 1 Pet. 5:8; 1 John 3:8). It is essential that we have full knowledge of God's Word to include both promises and commands. Apart from this knowledge one could not expect to be victorious because they cannot meet conditions that they are ignorant of.

Many Christians do not know their "rights in Christ" and passively allow the devil to bring destruction in their lives. Satan deceives them into believing that *God* is orchestrating the turmoil in their lives for some sovereign purpose and that they must accept it.

We must have knowledge of God's Word if we are to overcome Satan. Once we gain that knowledge then we must know how to apply it to every negative situation that confronts us. Satan is out to destroy us. He will do this by subjecting us to bondage to sin, sickness, fear, and anything else that he knows that he can destroy us with. God has made His Word available to us so that we can be delivered from Satan's destructive lies.

Satan is the Source of Adversity

The theology that teaches that God sends trouble and trials to test us is strange in the light of the great loving sacrifice that Jesus has made on our behalf. Why would God sacrifice so much for us only to send us adversity? If anything, the Bible clearly teaches us that *God cares about us and Satan is out to destroy us*. God truly loves you and wants nothing but good. Satan, on the other hand, is looking for a way to destroy you:

*Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon him; **for he careth for you.** 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. (1 Pet. 5:6-9)*

Notice how God cares while the devil seeks to destroy. We see that God truly loves us and wants nothing but good. Satan, on the other hand, is looking for a way to destroy us. Peter says that we are to resist his attacks by faith. Most of us are familiar with the principle, “*So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*” (Rom. 10:17). Your Faith in God cannot go any further than your knowledge of His character. True faith is dependent on true knowledge about God. This knowledge comes by the agency of His Word.

Knowing how much God loves you and knowing the true source of adversity will enable you better to stand against it. *Adversity* comes from the *adversary*. It is the *adversary* who brings *adverse* circumstances. If you accept the lie of Satan that all of your problems are from God and that He cares nothing about you, you will not have faith for overcoming the enemy. True faith that destroys the work of the devil in our lives is dependent on knowledge about Christ’s redemptive work on our behalf.

The “Evil” Day

Finally, when we learn the nature of the warfare we are engaged in then we will see that every negative attack that we face in life is attributed to the forces of darkness:

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. 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. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand (Eph. 6:10-13).

In contrast to the description of the Satanic forces in Ephesians 6, John tells us about God, “*This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all*” (1 John 1:5). The Bible uses many metaphors to describe evil. Some of them are death, sin, unrighteousness, perversion, and darkness. Jesus, in the message that John states that he heard from Him, clearly made a distinction between God and Satan when He stated that God is light and is the dispenser of only those things that comes from such goodness (James 1:13-17; Matt. 7:7-11). Darkness is totally a product of Satan’s kingdom reign (Acts 26:18; Col. 1:12-14).

Ephesians 6 makes it clear that “darkness” and “wickedness” is attributed to the devil’s attacks and not to a sovereign act of God. Furthermore, the word “against” is used at least five times here. We are not to tolerate wickedness. We are to stand *against* it. The Bible does not teach us to accept wickedness or evil as coming from God. It explains that there is an *evil one*, a wicked one, and that the day he brings evil he is to be resisted—not submitted to or tolerated.

We should also notice that the day in which Satan attacks God’s people is referred to as the *evil day*. What is the *evil day*? It is *any day that you are being attacked with evil* (Matt. 6:31-34) or “*within the evil day (the day of bad conditions)*” (Jonathan Mitchell New Testament). When this day comes we are to *stand* – not run away and hide. Nor are we to passively submit to whatever comes at us on this day. As Charles Usher notes:

“In the first place, the believer will be shown that he must not passively submit to everything that happens as God’s will. He will be taught that he himself is responsible for the proper controlling of his circumstances by prayer, and that he must resist every attack of the devil in and upon him.... Most important of all, he will be taught to recognize that because Satan has been overthrown at Calvary, therefore the believer has the right to be free from all the interference of the enemy in his circumstances.”¹⁶

One of the ways Satan deceives us into becoming passive in the midst of trials is through the false teaching that God sends trials to make you strong. Yet the Bible makes no such statement. In Ephesians 6 we are told to “be strong in the Lord”. This means that the trial is not what strengthens you but the Lord will strengthen you in the midst of the trials if you accept the strength that He has made available.

If God sent trials to make us strong then I can tell you that His method is an utter failure. I have seen trials have the exact opposite effect with most people. In contrast to popular but false teaching Jesus said, “...*for when tribulation or persecution ariseth **because of the word**, by and by he is offended*” (Matt. 13:21). Trials come because of God’s Word. Trials are not designed to strengthen us. Trials are designed to get us to forsake the Word of God. That is why we must be strong in the Lord. It is not the trial that makes a person strong. It is God who gives us strength in the midst of the trial. In 1 John 2:14, we read, “...*because ye are strong, and **the word of God** abideth in you, and ye have overcome **the wicked one**.*” Trials come to keep us out of God’s Word. Stay in the Word and stay strong in the midst of trials.

All of the misery in this world is the result of evil spiritual forces and humans with free will who abuse it. When we consider the exhortation that we must “fight the good fight of faith,” we no longer consider sickness, poverty, and tragedy as something that came about for a divine purpose. We consider these as attacks of Satan that must be overcome by putting complete trust in God.

Conclusion

Satan is the “wicked one” or “evil one”. We see that he is the source of all tribulation and adversity that we experience in this world. Therefore, it is essential that we understand that the only way to successfully overcome the attacks of the enemy in the evil day (the day that Satan attacks us with evil) is to take our stand of faith on God’s Word (Matt. 7:24-25). Most of God’s people are defeated because they fail in this very area (Matt. 7:26-27). As we continue our study, we will learn how to walk in victory over *every* attack of the enemy.

Chapter Two

Satan's First Defeat by God's Word

Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it (John 8:44)

If the believer is to aggressively stand against Satan without compromise, all doubts must be removed from his mind concerning the devil's role in the universe. Some have taught that God created Satan with a mysterious plan that he would someday wreak havoc in the universe, thus giving God an opportunity to put forth His secret agenda.

However, the Bible teaches no such thing. In this chapter we will see that satanic rebellion was never a part of God's plan. On the contrary, Satan started a war that God never wanted but is left with no choice but to fight for the sake of the salvation of His created universe and its residents. As we begin to understand this truth it will help to remove false ideas that the attacks of Satan upon us serve some mysterious purpose of God for our personal betterment and we will resist our enemy with the vigor and aggression that Scripture calls for.

Creation was an Expression of Unselfish Love

Jesus is the creator of all that is, including all of the angelic hosts (John 1:1-4; Col. 1:16-17; Rev. 10:5-6). Among the angelic hosts that He created there were at least three archangels (chief, ruling or leading angels): Michael (Rev. 12:7), Gabriel (Dan. 8:16-19; Luke 1:19-26), and an anointed cherub named *Lucifer* (*Morning-star*) (Isaiah 14:12).

In the beginning God created a universe free of evil. When God created the universe evil was never contemplated. There was nothing but happiness and harmony throughout creation. It was a universe fueled by unselfish, others-focused, *agape* love.

The angels sang for joy when they were permitted to see God's creative works (Job 38:4-7). There was no flaw or evil in God's creation (Eccl. 3:11). It was sheer absolute perfection. There was no war, sickness, or poverty. There were no trials or problems. There was no such thing as temptation and sin. These things were unheard of.

God is love (1 John 4:16). Everything He does, to include creating, is done from the basis of unselfish love. The Triune Godhead created in order to share the love and happiness that they had among themselves with their own "children".

Lucifer Opposed God's Word and Government

The Psalmist wrote, "*Bless the Lord, ye his angels, that excel in strength, **that do his commandments**, hearkening unto the voice of **his word***" (Psalm 103:20). Angelic adherence to God's Word and commandments was the norm even before the creation of man. *God is unselfish agape love (1 John 4:7-8)*. God would not have given to His angels any commandment that would have been grievous to them (1 John 5:3). God's Words expressed His desire and intent which was life, happiness and peace for His creatures (Jer. 29:11; Matt. 7:7-11).

God's commandment to His angels was simply to love Him and one another (Mark 12:31; John 13:34; 14:21; 15:10, 17; 1 John 3:23; 4:21; 5:2-3; 2 John 1:5-6). We know this to be a commandment to angels because God is love (1 John 4:7-8). God did not become love or invent love at some point in time. He has always been love. Love is as eternal as God is. Love for God and one another is not a commandment that God made for mankind. This is a universal commandment.

The archangel Lucifer (Light bearer) fully adhered to God's Word. But one day Lucifer began to become self-centered. He began to have new ambitions and these ambitions appeared to be in contrast to God's Word. Lucifer's "will" became opposed to God's will:

How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of

the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit (Isa. 14:12-15)

Part of Lucifer's new ambitions was to exalt his throne above the "stars". Stars in this context are a reference to the other angels (Judges 5:20; Job 38:7; Rev. 1:20; 12:1-4). Lucifer wanted to exalt himself above the angels. He wanted to take charge and become a tyrant and dictator.

Furthermore, notice the constant "I wills" of Lucifer. He became selfish and self-focused, concerned only with what he wanted. The basis of sin is caring only for oneself. These "I wills" were an attack on God and His own Word. God's Word is the expression of His will and intent:

***Every Scripture is God-breathed** (given by His inspiration) and profitable for instruction, for reproof and conviction of sin, for correction of error and discipline in obedience, [and] for training in righteousness (in holy living, **in conformity to God's will in thought, purpose, and action**), (2 Tim. 3:16; The Amplified Bible)*

Referring to the King James Version's rendering of the above passage, Adam Clarke wrote, "Is profitable for doctrine - To teach the will of God, and to point out Jesus Christ till he should come."¹ Evil was introduced when God's Word which expressed His good will was opposed by the will of another. Before this, God's created universe had no evil. It was a place of love, joy, contentment, fulfillment, excitement, fun and safety. There was never anything to fear. This was because the angels obeyed God's Word of love.

In the universe, there was one will – the will of unselfish, others-focused love. Lucifer's selfish will went against the will of the love-will of the Triune Godhead. When Lucifer opposed a will that is good then evil was born and he was the father of it (John 8:44). Clarence Larkin stated it well when he wrote:

“As long as Satan chose the ‘Will of God,’ there was no ‘Evil’ in the universe, but the moment he chose to follow his own Will, then he fell, and by persuading others to follow him he introduced ‘Evil’ into the universe. The root of sin is SELFISHNESS...”²

The primary basis of God’s Word is the commandments of love. Jesus said that on this hangs every other portion of God’s Word (Matt. 22:37-40). God’s kingdom and nature is pure, unadulterated, agape love. God’s love nature does not seek its own (1 Cor. 13:4-7) but is “others-focused” rather than self-focused. It sacrifices for the good of others and is willing to give even at great loss to Himself (John 3:16; 15:13; Rom. 5:5-8; 1 John 4:7-11).

God’s kingdom always ran on the basis of love. Satan introduced selfishness – ambition to be and have something in spite of the harm that it brings to others. Contrasting God’s nature with Satan’s this point becomes much clearer:

*“In this the children of God are manifest, and **the children of the devil**: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither **he that loveth not his brother**. For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, **that we should love one another. Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother**. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.”* (1 John 3:10-12)

The basis of Satan’s nature is murderous hatred (John 8:44). He stopped loving God and his fellow angels and followed blind selfish ambition. Satan rebelled against God’s Word.

Lucifer became a “Satan” of His Own Free-Will

God was not at fault for Lucifer becoming a devil. A vitally important truth about love is that, in order for it to be genuine, it must have the freedom to also *not* love. The Apostle Paul wrote, “...*use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another*”

(Gal. 5:13). Love cannot be forced or coerced. One must be able to freely choose to love or not love.

I can put a gun to someone's head and tell them, "either love me or I will blow your brains out!" Yet this will not cause the person to love me. They may fear me and tell me what I want to hear but they will not genuinely love me. God had given His angels freedom. In such a loving atmosphere there was never any reason to use this freedom to go against the Word of God.

Furthermore, God had created an atmosphere in which every desire of the heart could be met as long as it did not violate the law of unselfish love. In Ezekiel 28 we see how God had created Lucifer with magnificent beauty, wisdom, and had given him multiple gifts and room for great achievements:

*Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and **perfect in beauty**. Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. (Ezek. 28:12-13)*

God did not create an evil creature (Eccl. 3:11; Deut. 32:4). God created the one now known as Satan with wisdom and made him perfect in beauty. The anointed *cherub* currently known as Satan was created perfect and flawless. Iniquity was actually found in him later:

*Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. **Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.** (Ezek. 28:14-15)*

The prophet told King Saul, “*For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king*” (1 Sam. 15:23; see also Num. 15:31). Lucifer’s iniquity came by rebelling against God and rejecting His Word.

Quite often I have heard people say things like, “God did not create Lucifer to be Satan but He knew when He created him that he would one day rebel and made this a part of His plan.” The Bible does not teach this at all. According to Ezekiel, God *did not know* that Satan would become so monstrous when He created him. God actually *discovered* iniquity in him.

The word “found” is the Hebrew word “*matsa*”. According to **Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary** it means “to discover”.³ If God knew before Lucifer was created that he would become evil then why use language implying that He later *discovered* evil in him? It is obvious that if God discovered iniquity in Lucifer then it was not something that was foreknown. It was something that became known at the time that it was discovered.

Doesn’t God Himself hold men responsible and accountable for committing an action that they knew would lead to harm? (Luke 12:47; Matt. 25:24-30). If God preplanned everything, including evil then that makes Him the author of evil. Most might reject this but many still believe that God created the universe knowing that evil and devastation would ensue. Based on His own Word, this would still make Him the author of evil. In contrast to popular Christian philosophy, God states that He has nothing whatsoever to do with evil either through creation, planning or neglect. When God confronted Israel over their horrible sins He implicitly stated that what they did never once entered into His mind (Jer. 7:31; 19:5; 32:35). With Satan, God never says that He knew the day that He created him that he would one day turn evil. He actually *discovered* iniquity in him at a point in eternity’s timeline. Therefore, G. H. Pember is correct when he says that this verse, “....shows that God is not the author of evil.”⁴

Most of the early church fathers believed that Ezekiel is dealing with Satan’s downfall. The early church did not have the struggles with the so-called “problem” or “mystery” of evil that we have today.⁵ Church Father Tertullian (160-225 AD), debating the gnostic leader, Marcion, also taught from Ezekiel 28 that God was in no wise responsible for Satan becoming who he is today:

“If, however, you choose to transfer the account of evil from man to the devil as the instigator of sin, and in this way, too, throw the blame on the Creator, inasmuch as He created the devil—for He makes those spiritual beings, the angels— then it will follow that what was made, that is to say, the angel, will belong to Him who made it; while that which was not made by God, *even the devil, or accuser, cannot but have been made by itself*; and this by false detraction from God.... If you turn to the prophecy of Ezekiel, you will at once perceive that this angel was both by creation good and by choice corrupt.”⁶ (Emphasis are mine)

Therefore, evil was birthed into our universe by blind selfish hatred and selfish ambition through the archangel formerly known as Lucifer.

Pride was Satan’s Ultimate Downfall

Paul taught the attributes of God’s unselfish love when he wrote, “*Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil*” (1 Cor. 13:4-5). This is the exact opposite direction taken by Lucifer. He became puffed up because of his beauty:

Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee. (Eze. 28:17)

Lucifer failed to acknowledge that he was only what he was at that time because God made him this way. However, he would later become proud. Paul warns church leaders not to appoint new converts into church leadership when he writes, “*Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil*” (1 Tim. 3:6). The natural law of *cause and effect* brought the devil into condemnation and continues to do so with anyone who follows his example. This should also help us to see that any successful resistance of Satan and his evil forces only works as we humble ourselves before

God (James 4:6-7; 1 Pet. 5:7-10). If we are in pride then we are in Satan's territory and he has a right to destroy us.

Nonetheless, we learn from Satan's demise that evil begins when love is absent. Love is unselfish and is not prideful. Paul said, "*Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; **charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up***" (1 Cor. 13:4). On the other hand, Jesus, who is God, took the very opposite route that Satan took by becoming a man to redeem man from Satan's reign (Phil. 2:5-8).⁷ It is significant that Jesus chose to show that God Himself is willing to become a servant, proving that His way of ruling is complete different than Lucifer's (Matt. 23:8-12; Mark 10:41-45; John 13:1-15).

The Birth of the Lie

Satan was able to lead numerous angelic hosts astray by doing the very same thing he does with human beings today; he opposed God's Word. More than likely Satan had been one of God's closest friends and had much opportunity to see how God operated. He saw that God performed many creative acts by His Word. He saw that it was through His Word that God governed the universe.

Seeing how powerful the Word of God is, Satan figured that He needed to somehow render God's Word powerless in order to achieve his own goals to exalt his throne above God's and be like Him. How would he accomplish such a feat seeing the magnificent power of the Word? How would he persuade others to follow him since Satan knew that the angels sustained their very own lives by every word that proceeded from the mouth of God (Matt. 4:4)? After giving much thought to it Satan came up with a device never heard of before. It was called *lying*. Since he had already begun lying to himself that he could dethrone God, he would now attempt to use this same new device to work *against* God and rally forces to stand with him. Satan would oppose God by opposing His Word.

Since God's Word is truth (Psalm 119:160; John 17:17) then Satan would simply birth into existence a new concept that is the opposite of truth. Jesus said that "*When he speaketh a lie, **he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.***" This means that Satan came up with this concept called a *lie* totally on his own. He father and birthed it into existence.

Character Assassination

Outside of the God kind of love words can become weapons. The Psalmist cries out to God about his enemies who “*whet their tongue like a sword, and bend their bows to shoot their arrows, even bitter words*” (Ps. 64:3; see also Ps. 55:21; 57:4; 59:7). Solomon wrote, “*There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword: but the tongue of the wise is health*” (Prov. 12:18). These passages demonstrate the power that words have. Most of us have heard the saying, “sticks and stones can break my bones but words will never hurt me”. The Bible as well as our own personal experience proven that this is not a true statement. If words and speech can be viewed as “swords” then there is something more to them than we give credit for.

God intended words to be used for loving creative purposes but Lucifer twisted this principle and was the first to use them to slander and destroy. Lucifer began to engage in false accusation and slander, thus *becoming a devil*.⁸ This was some of the iniquity that God found in Lucifer:

*Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. **By the multitude of thy merchandise** they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee. Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, **by the iniquity of thy traffick**; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee. (Eze. 28:15-18)*

G. H. Pember wrote, “For the word translated ‘merchandise’ may also (as an investigation of the root will show) signify ‘detraction’

or ‘slander’; and we know that the very name ‘Devil’ means ‘the slanderer,’ or ‘malignant accuser.’”⁹ In his study on the subject, Dr. Robert D. Luginbill translates Ezekiel 28:16 as follows: “*In your extensive conspiring, you were filled with wickedness, and you sinned. So I cast you from the mountain of God as one profaned, and I blotted out [your memory] from among the stones of fire, O covering cherub.*” Dr. Luginbill further writes:

“Satan’s conspiracy is first explicitly mentioned here, that is, his active attempt to carry out his plan of the five ‘I wills’. The Hebrew word *rachal* (לכר), translated here as ‘conspiring’, has the two-fold meaning of repetitive motion (‘trading’ or ‘trafficking’) and of slandering. In the context of Satan’s activities, it fits our notion of conspiracy quite well. Once arrogance had led to perverted thinking (v.17), these mental attitude sins blossomed into the overt activity of canvassing his fellow angels for support, slandering God in the process, an activity characterized by Ezekiel as ‘wickedness’. Satan was attempting to besmirch God’s reputation to gain adherents and further his own goals.”¹⁰

Lucifer was able to deceive the other angels (and possibly a pre-adamic race) by maligning and slandering God’s character.¹¹ He used lies and deception which he fathered and practiced with “perfection”. Lucifer sought to dethrone God and make His Word ineffective in the hearts of the other angels (Mark 4:14-15; 7:13).

There is no better means of assassinating someone’s character than to call their word into question. This is exactly what Lucifer did to God. He used his newly formed weapon, *the lie*, and opposed God’s truth and slandered His character. *Truth* is not limited to intellectual facts. *Truth is reality*. Lying is a perversion and distortion of reality. By falsely slandering God Lucifer was able to distort reality in the minds of the angels that fell with him, thus giving them a picture of God that was completely untrue.

The fact that God always tells the truth and never lies is the very thing that makes Him trustworthy. Lucifer’s attack on God’s Word was to make Him appear untrustworthy, distorting reality in the mind of the angels, thereby causing them to lose faith in God. If Lucifer could get the angels to question the truth of God’s Word then he can succeed at casting aspersions upon God’s character, thus leading to massive distrust and eventual rebellion against God.

Lucifer Introduces Violence

Lies and slander are dangerous weapons. Solomon wrote, “*A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren*” (Prov. 6:19). This is what Lucifer did and we see it could be done as we view Absalom’s life. Solomon also wrote, “*A man that beareth false witness against his neighbour is a maul, and a sword, and a sharp arrow*” (Proverbs 25:18).

Words can be dangerous. The first weapon that was ever created was the lie. Through it Lucifer sought to destroy God. Lucifer knew the power of words because he saw the power of God’s Word in a creative sense. He would simply do the opposite by taking his word to oppose God’s Word and become a destroyer. Lucifer used lies and slander as his arrows and his sword in order to maul God.

About Lucifer who became the devil, Jesus said, “*He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him.*” Liars and murderers suffer the same eternal penalty:

But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death (Revelation 21:8)

Notice that liars join murderers in suffering eternal conscious damnation. Slander is equated with murder and Lucifer became the very first violent creature. God’s harsh penalty can be further understood when we see the course that slandering and lying leads to. When a person wants to reach the top for their own personal gain they will stoop to anything in order to get there, including *violence*. Through his lies and slander, Lucifer, who became Satan, was the first to introduce violence into God’s non-violent and peaceful universe:

By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned:

therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. (Eze. 28:16)

Satan was the first creature in the universe to ever resort to violence. All of the wars, abuse, gang violence, drive by shootings, etc. are engineered by Satan. Jesus attributed this to the fact that he did not remain in the truth. Opposing God's Word of Truth turned Lucifer into a murderer.

There should be no mystery as to why Jesus equated slander with murder (Matt. 5:21-22). Jesus said, "*For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, **murders**, adulteries, fornications, thefts, **false witness, blasphemies***" (Matt. 15:19). Both murder and slander start with a heart devoid of love and one that is full of evil. The act of slander is the use of words that lead one to justify acts of violence. Lucifer's attack on God and His Word led to an all-out violent war in Heaven:

And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. (Rev. 12:7-9)

Though this passage may be speaking of a future war, like most Bible prophecy, Rev. 12:7-9 also gives us a glimpse into the past.¹² Lucifer and a third of the angels (Rev. 12:3-4) rebelled and war ensued. God had no choice but to release another of His archangels, Michael along with his forces, to meet Satan in combat and depose him. While God never planned for war to occur in Heaven, He is an omni-wise, all-knowing God who is prepared to meet any situation as if He had planned for it.¹³

In our world today we see the evidence of Satan's violent nature. Sickness, disease, poverty, hatred, crime, broken relationships, natural disasters, death, abuse, and other sadness has never been a part of God's intentions for this world. Jesus is the *Creator* but all of the

above-mentioned things are basically *anti-creation*. It is Satan's attempt to undo God's creation through violence.

Jesus' mission on earth is summed up in the fact that He "...went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him" (Acts 10:38). Jesus did not come to bring evil and destruction, but to undo the work of the *evil one* and *destroyer*, because these works were never a part of His creative intentions (John 10:10; Heb. 2:14; 1 John 3:8).

The Word of God that Satan Attacked would Destroy Him

If God were a tyrant like Satan, and like the picture that Satan often paints of God to angels and to men, then Satan would not dare approach Him (see Job 1 and 2 for example). However, Satan failed to understand that within the laws of the moral universe there is an inherent consequence to sin (Matt. 25:41; Rev. 20:10). As Jesus stated it, "...for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword" (Matt. 26:52b).

Words were never meant to be weapons. They were meant to be used for expressions of love, peace, and creativity. Satan would twist all of that and begin to turn words into weapons of violence. However this would also become his undoing. Once Satan introduced the concept of using words to attack the very Word of God, then God's Word would be turned into a weapon against him (Matt. 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-14; 2 Cor. 10:3-5; Eph. 6:10-18; 1 John 2:13-14; Rev. 1:16; 2:12; 19:15, 21).

God would now announce a new concept to the slanderer (devil) and accuser (Satan). A concept that was never necessary until this violent act of opposition against God and his Word occurred. This new concept was called *judgment*. The very Word of God that Satan opposed would destroy him (render him powerless and ineffective in his operations) and would judge him permanently in the future (John 12:47-48; Acts 13:46).

God would triumph over this friend who turned himself into an enemy. He would not triumph over him by exerting His great power to crush Satan (though God certainly has the ability to do it). He would do it by allowing the very Word that Satan attacked to judge him and

be his destroyer. Michael and his angels would carry out a word of judgment against Satan:

*And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: **he was cast out into the earth**, and his angels were cast out with him. (Rev. 12:9)*

However, lest we think that Michael and his group were able to take on a mighty being like Satan with his own power (Jude 9), notice how God Himself takes credit for what was done to Satan:

*Your heart was filled with pride because of all your beauty. You corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor. **So I threw you to the earth** and exposed you to the curious gaze of kings. (Eze. 28:17; NLT)*

*How you are **fallen from heaven**, O shining star, son of the morning! **You have been thrown down to the earth**, you who destroyed the nations of the world. (Isa. 14:12; New Living Translation)*

By attacking the Word of God Satan did not realize that God would use the very words of His mouth to bring judgment upon him. Remember that, “...his angels, that excel in strength, **that do his commandments**, hearkening unto the voice of **his word**” The angels carried out the word of judgment against Satan. He was thrown to the earth along with his followers. God’s Word prevailed over Satan. That same Word from God, when utilized by one of His children, can enable us to prevail over him as well.

Chapter Three

Failing to Use the Word Against Satan Defeated Adam

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. (Gen. 1:26)

As we saw in the last chapter, God did not crush Satan with His great might after he rebelled (though there is no doubt that He could have). If God had used His omnipotent power to harm Satan this would have accomplished nothing more than to make his accusations against God appear plausible. Satan may have suffered physically, but he would have won the information war. Satan's lies about God's love would have lingered. Therefore, God had to allow Satan to have his way in order to prove that it brings only death and destruction.

Sadly, Satan's rebellion had a negative impact on the original heavens and earth. So sometime (perhaps centuries) after Satan rebelled, God began the restoration of the earth to its original condition (Gen. 1:1-19) and created new creatures in His own image and likeness to rule over the region that Satan once ruled.¹

Man Given God's Word to Conquer the Enemy

The knowledge of their authority is actually the first "Word" God gave to the first man and woman:

*"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. **And God blessed them, and God SAID** unto them, be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and **subdue it: and have dominion** over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over **every living thing that moveth upon the earth.**" (Gen. 1:27-28)*

God blessed man and gave him dominion over creation. Man was to act on the Word of God and *subdue* the earth and *take dominion* over it. The word “subdue” is the Hebrew word “*kabash*”. According to Strong’s, it means to “conquer” and “to bring into subjection.”² In his Bible commentary, Driver says that “The word (*kabash*,—properly *tread down*) is used of the subjugation of a conquered territory.”³ This same word is used in Numbers 32:20-29 in relation to the tribes of Reuben and Gad taking possession of the land (see also Joshua 18:1).⁴

In the last chapter we saw Satan already conquered by God when he was thrown from heaven. The enemy was already defeated. There was nothing more required of man than to obey God’s Word and exercise it authoritatively against him.

Emphasizing the fact that man would have to deal with a hostile invader; God gave Him another Word commanding him to *exercise* his delegated authority. This Word was sufficient to thwart the enemy. Also in this Word God expressed man’s liberty to choose sides in the war between Him and Satan. In Genesis 2:15-17 we read:

And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

The *Brown-Driver-Briggs’ Hebrew Definitions* says that the word “keep” means to “keep, guard, keep watch and ward, protect, save life.” It also means, “to be on one’s guard, take heed, take care, beware.” In his book, *Earth’s Earliest Ages*, G. H. Pember says, “the Hebrew of the latter verb also suggests the idea of watching over or guarding, and seems to point to an enemy and possible assailant.”⁵

Many theologians have rightly taught that Adam was supposed to protect the garden from hostile intruders that were already present.⁶ Therefore, the commission to “guard the garden” expresses a delegated authority to deal with any hostile intruders. A guard has the authority to determine who can have access to the thing being guarded and who

is prohibited. Therefore these two words; *subdue* and *keep*, show that Adam had been given God's promise of victory over an already conquered foe. Watchman Nee writes:

“Two words in Genesis are very meaningful. One is ‘subdue’ in Genesis 1:28, which can be translated ‘conquer.’ The other is ‘keep’ in Genesis 2:15, which can also be translated as ‘guard.’ We see from these verses that God ordained man to conquer and guard the earth. God’s original intention was to give earth to man as a place to dwell. It was not His intention that the earth would become desolate (Isa. 45:18). God desired, through man, to not allow Satan to intrude upon the earth, but the problem was that Satan was on the earth and intended to do a work of destruction upon it. Therefore, God wanted man to restore the earth from Satan’s hand.”⁷

We see that God gave Adam authority to both protect what was given to him and to conquer. Adam simply needed to *take* what was given him. All he needed to do was stand on God’s Word and he could have routed the enemy.

This is also true concerning the sphere of authority that God has given His people today. Not too long ago my wife and I were having a conversation (I forget what it was). She responded to something I said with, “what if the devil heard you say that?” I asked her, “How could he? I commanded him to leave our home a long time ago. The only way that he or any demons can hear anything I say in this home is if someone invited him here.” God has given you and I dominion in our homes, over our bodies and other delegated territory in which we have been made stewards.

Adam was armed with God’s Word and His delegated authority. The only foe he had to contend with was one that had already been defeated. God gave man everything his heart could ever desire. There was nothing God withheld from him except one single tree. Man had access to all of the trees except one. God withheld it for man’s own protection and not through an act of stinginess.

Why the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil?

Why did God place that particular tree in the garden in the first place? There is much we can say about the reasons but we will stick to

how this relates to using God's Word to overcome the devil. In the last chapter we learned how Satan slandered God and falsely accused Him in order to get the angels to follow him in his rebellion. Satan was prepared to do this exact same thing with man.

When God created man and gave him so much abundance and authority Satan was prepared to accuse Him of bribing these new creatures into loving Him and worshipping Him only for what they can get out of Him. Satan seems to believe that everyone is like him and that all of God's creatures as well as God Himself are selfish and self-seeking. He was prepared to accuse God of bribery in order to get the worship, love and obedience that He craved. An example of his deceptive tactics is found in the book of Job:

And the LORD said to Satan, Have you set your heart against My servant Job, because there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and upright man, one who fears God and turns away from evil? And Satan answered the LORD and said, Does Job fear God for nothing? Have You not made a hedge around him, and around his house, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his livestock have increased in the land. But put forth Your hand now, and touch all that he has, and he will curse You to Your face. (Job 1:8-11; Modern King James Version by JP Greene)

Satan had set his heart against Job and was seeking for a way to destroy him (Eph. 4:27; 1 Pet. 5:8-9). He claimed that Job was worshipping God from a purely selfish motive. He stated that Job only served God because God had "*blessed the work of his hands*". He was doing the same thing with Adam and Eve since "...**God blessed them, and God SAID unto them, be fruitful, and multiply**". The tree of the knowledge of good and evil was partly for their protection. As long as they remained loyal to God Satan had nothing upon which he could base an accusation and get an inroad into their lives.

The forbidden tree was also meant to route the attacks of Satan on God's character, thus protecting the faith of His loyal angels. Notice how Satan accuses God of buying Job's worship with all the

blessings that God bestowed on him. This is his *modus operandi*. He was ready to pounce on God before the angelic hosts with this same accusation concerning Adam and Eve. Satan was ready to put doubts in the minds of the angels that had not defected and were still serving God. He was attempting to justify his own rebellion against God and perhaps recruit more angels for his cause.

In order to protect Adam, Eve and the angels from the persuasive lies of Satan, God needed something to shut the accuser's mouth. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil was necessary for this. God has to answer Satan's accusations in order for the universe to understand that Satan is a liar and that He is a fair God. God must allow men and women to freely choose between His government and Satan's government (Joshua 24:15; James 4:7-8; 1 John 3:10).

If men are not able to choose freely then they cannot offer God genuine love and worship. This is what He desires most. God is not a despot or a dictator. He gives men freedom to make choices for or against Him, but warns of the consequences of making the wrong choice. Satan, on the other hand, desires to enslave and abuse men. However, he knows that he is unable to do so except that men *choose* to submit to his tyrannical reign.

Nothing good was withheld from Adam. Even the Tree of Life was accessible to him. He was only forbidden from the *one thing that would hurt him*. In His love, God presents us with wonderful opportunities and nearly begs us to choose against alternatives that bring devastating consequences (Deut. 30:15, 19; John 3:16-18).

Every opportunity to choose obedience to God's Word rather than submission to the enemy is an opportunity to show loving loyalty to God and prove Satan wrong in his false claims against God. Every time we stand on God's promises against Satan's attacks of temptation, sickness, disease, poverty, depression, unforgiveness and other areas in which he attacks are an opportunity to prove how powerful God's Word is in routing satanic destruction.

Satan Immediately Defeated the First Man

The forbidden tree was not placed in the garden from any selfish motive on God's part but for man's protection. Man simply needed to stand on God's Word and Satan would have been defeated.

God in His love makes His best available to us and then allows us the choice to take His best or to reject it. Adam chose to reject it:

*And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; **and he did eat.** (Gen. 3:6)*

God had given man dominion over every part of His creation (Gen. 1:26). Few understand the importance of this. Once God gave dominion to man He could not revoke it (Rom. 11:29). For God to interfere with man's decision would be to revoke the dominion that he was given, thus making God a covenant breaker (Ps. 89:33-35). God *must* keep covenant despite the risks involved. Sadly, man chose against God and took himself out of God's personal authority and protection (1 Tim. 2:13-14), thus placing us under Satan's tyranny:

Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned (Rom. 5:12)

Paul continues to write, "*For if by one man's offence **death reigned by one***" (Rom. 5:17a) or as the Contemporary English Version puts it, "*Death ruled like a king because Adam had sinned.*" When Adam and Eve disobeyed God, ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and fell under a penalty of death, they, in essence, gave Satan rulership of this world (Luke 4:5-6; John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; Eph. 2:1-5; 6:10-12; 2 Cor. 4:5; 1 John 5:18-19).

The non-canonical book, **Wisdom of Solomon** says, "*For God created man to be immortal, and made him to be an image of his own eternity. **Nevertheless through envy of the devil came death into the world:** and they that do hold of his side do find it*" (2:23-24). Though this book is not a part of our Protestant Bible, it was written during the intertestamental period and shows us that the early Jews understood the fall of man as an attack of Satan and a war between two kingdoms.

Hence, a careless reading of the story of the fall would make it appear as if God was the actual inflictor of death and that He did it out

of avarice. Using Genesis 2:17, some promote the false idea that God inflicted death upon man because He felt slighted by the fact that Adam would *dare* disobey Him. Yet anyone who knows the character of God would know better. The truth is that Adam became an unnecessary casualty of an ongoing war between God and Satan. Adam took sides *against* God and placed himself under the reign of death. He did this despite God's firm warning not to do so.

Death is the *natural consequences* of sin. Death is *separation from God* (Rom. 6:23; 1 Cor. 15:56; James 1:15) who is the source of life (Deut. 30:20; Ps. 36:9; Jer. 2:13; 17:13). The law of sin and death (Rom. 8:2) works in the same way as the natural law of gravity. When you violate its laws you pay the consequences. Violating the law of sin and death can no more be blamed on God than when a man jumps from a tall skyscraper to his death. It was the choice of that person to violate the law of gravity just as it was Adam's choice to violate the law of sin and death. When you sin you remove yourself from God's life-giving presence. Naturally, you die.

Death – Living Under Satan's Tyranny

The Bible teaches that he who sins is of the devil and becomes a servant to sin (1 John 3:8; Rom. 6:16; John 8:34-35). Adam and Eve gave themselves over to Satan and thus died the moment they ate the fruit. They placed themselves and their descendants under Satan's government of death:

And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience (Eph. 2:1-2)

Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. (Heb. 2:14-15)

Man was conquered by Satan and his government of death and “*through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage*”. Peter adds, “...for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage” (2 Pet. 2:19). By rebelling against God, Adam abdicated his God-given authority to Satan (Luke 4:5-8; John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; Acts 26:18; 2 Cor. 4:4; Col. 1:13-14; 1 John 5:18-19).

This is why there is evil in the world today. Too often the so-called “mystery of why evil persists in this world” is wrongly centered on God’s goodness. *Man* was given dominion over the earth and *man* allowed the devil to plunge this world and its habitants under a government of death. On the other hand, Jesus offers us freedom from this satanic dominion by offering us the new birth and eternal life (John 3:5-18; 2 Cor. 5:17). We need to be transferred from Satan’s kingdom of death to God’s kingdom of light, life and love. It is not our fault that we were born into the kingdom of darkness. We inherited this through our natural birth. However, since Jesus provided a cure through His death, burial and resurrection then we are responsible as to whether or not we accept or reject the provision.

How Adam Should Have Dealt With Satan

Adam could have prevented all of this and life today would be enjoyable. There would be no hatred, sickness, accidents, poverty, or any of the sorrows we face in life. Nonetheless, as sad as the story of Adam and Eve is, we can learn some very positive lessons from it. Believers today have been given numerous promises, commands, and warnings about the tactics of our enemy. So in the story of Adam and Eve we are given a lesson to *not* do as our first parents did. If we allow Satan to undermine *God’s authority* we are, in effect, allowing him to undermine *our authority* since our authority is derived from God.

Please note that Satan approached Eve through a serpent (Rev. 12:9-11). The serpent was a beast of the field that was under subjection to Adam and Eve and should have been subdued. The serpent was one of the *living things that moved upon the earth* and was also one of the *creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth*. Since Adam had authority over all the animals of the earth, he was to exercise it over the serpent.

When the serpent began to question the Word of God the man and woman had the authority, based on God’s promise of authority

over this beast of the field and based on the authority of God's Word of warning which the serpent questioned, to subdue it with the truth. Instead, they allowed themselves to be *conquered by the serpent* instead of *conquering the serpent*.

It was man's duty to act upon God's Word, speak it against the devil and take possession of God's creation. Man failed in his God given responsibility and turned everything over to the devil. As recorded in Matthew 4:1-11 and Luke 4:1-14, our Lord took authority over Satan by reminding him of God's Word. Adam should have exercised his dominion in a similar manner by reminding the serpent, which Satan was using as his mouthpiece, that God's Word is true.

In Matthew 4:10, Jesus gives us an example of exactly how to deal with Satan. When we paraphrase this passage to fit Adam's situation we see exactly how he should have dealt with the serpent:

“And Adam answered and said unto him, Get thee hence, serpent: for Elohim has said, ‘But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.’”

This is how Adam *should have* reacted to the serpent. The message is clear for us: we must learn God's Word and we must use it authoritatively against Satan when he attacks us. Failure to exercise our God given authority on the basis of His Word can end in disastrous results. Satan is out to destroy. God's Word is our only protection.

Man's Fall was Never in God's Plan

Some claim that God *sent* (ordained) the serpent to test Adam and Eve. The Bible teaches differently. It states that Adam was to “conquer” and have “dominion” (authority). God did not send Satan in the garden to *conquer* Adam. ***God put Adam on the earth to conquer Satan.*** Satan thwarted Adam despite his God-given ability to defeat him Adam and Eve were given God's Word and authority over the earth and the destiny of it was entirely in their hands. In his wonderful book on prayer, Andrew Murray writes:

“Man’s destiny appears clearly in God’s language at creation. It was to *fill*, to *subdue*, and to have *dominion* over the earth and everything in it. These three expressions show us that man was intended, as God’s representative, to rule here on the earth. As God’s deputy, he was to fill God’s place, keeping everything in subjection to Him. It was the will of God that everything should be done through man, i.e., the history of the earth was entirely in his hands.”⁸

God never meant for man to be subjected to anyone but Himself. In the beginning God created man with authority over the rest of His creation. The sphere of man’s authority was the whole earth and all of the works of God’s hands:

*For thou hast made him but **little lower than God**, And crownest him with glory and honor. Thou makest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; **Thou hast put all things under his feet:*** (Psalm 8:5-6; American Standard Version)

The phrase “under his feet;” that which is placed there is in subjection to that person (Eph. 1:22; Heb. 2:8). It is also a phrase that speaks of having conquered an enemy (Josh. 1:3-5; 2; 10:7-25; Sam. 22:38, 39; 1 Kings 5:3; Psalm 18:37, 38; 47:3; 91:13; Isa. 14:25; Lam. 1:15; Mal. 4:3; Luke 10:17-20; Rom. 16:20; 1 Cor. 15:25; Rev. 11:2).

Upon man’s creation, God had already placed him in a position of victory over any enemies that would attempt to invade his authorized territory, which were the whole earth as well as the sky around it. Seeing that man was given such vast authority and that all things were placed under his feet, then it stands to reason that the only person that man was meant to be in subjection to was God Himself.

Let us learn from the first man’s defeat. God’s Word can thwart and conquer Satan. With God’s Word the born again Christian has everything he or she needs to win a successful campaign over the enemy. In the following chapters we will learn the power of God’s Word for victory and the strategies He has given us to be consistent winners. There need not be any more defeats as it was with our first parents.

Chapter Four

Jesus' Legal Defeat of Satan

*And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; **it shall bruise thy head,** and thou shalt bruise his heel. (Gen. 3:14-15)*

Satan defeated Adam and Eve by blinding them to the truth and giving them a distorted picture of God (Gen. 3:1-5). The devil has since been successful through pagan religions and Pharisaical-inspired Judaism to continue to paint a warped picture of God in the minds of men throughout the centuries. When He incarnated upon the earth, Jesus' first mission was to reveal the truth about what God is really like and to expose Satan for who he is (John 14:8-11; 2 Cor. 4:4; Heb. 1:1-3; 1 John 1:5).

Love Could Not Leave Us under Satan's Tyranny

After giving the world a much more accurate understanding of God's character, Jesus would then *demonstrate* this truth. Jesus, the second member of the Triune Godhead would prove that God, unlike the selfish picture of Him that Satan gives to man, would show that He is love and that He is willing to die for His creatures. The Lord's mission on earth would now end in the ultimate demonstration of love, which was to die for us (John 15:13; Rom. 5:6-8). Yet, it would be this sacrifice of unselfish love that would *legally* crush the head of Satan's kingdom of selfishness and hatred.

There is something about the love of God that could not just forsake man after he took the devil's side in this war. Therefore, God would once again give man another "Word of God" to help him to deal with his captor. This Word from God as recorded in Genesis 3:14-15

was the very first prophecy about Jesus coming to earth as a man and His intentions to *legally* conquer Satan on our behalf.

Let there be no doubt that the serpent being referred to is *Satan* (Rev. 12:9; 20:2; 2 Cor. 11:3, 13-15). Satan was the one in the garden performing His work of sin and murder “in the beginning” (John 8:44; 1 John 3:8. Compare to Matt. 19:4, 8; Mark 10:6; 2 Pet. 3:4 in which the phrase “from the beginning” is usually a reference to the creation of the man and woman). Genesis 3:14-15 is a direct reference to what Jesus would do to Satan (Luke 10:17-19; Rom. 16:20; 1 Cor. 15:25-28). Basically, Jesus came to restore to us the place of victory we lost through *accepting the lie of Satan rather than the truth of God* (Gen. 3:1-10). Adam’s failure was a failure to stand on God’s Word. However, in Genesis 3:15 God gives a fresh Word of victory over Satan to encourage fallen man’s heart.

Satan’s Legal Right to the Earth

Quite often the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ is taught from the perspective that Christ came to appease an angry and wrathful “Father”.¹ Oh what a sad, deceptive and distorted picture this is of our Heavenly Father. It was out of sheer unselfish love that the Father sent Jesus to redeem us (John 3:16; Rom. 5:8; 1 John 4:14-19; Rev. 1:5).

We were casualties of war and rather than just leave us captive to His enemy, God set out to rescue us. That is what the redemptive work and salvation message of Jesus is all about. We pointed out in our last chapter that man was never meant to be under Satan’s dominion. He was created to be a victor from the moment of his creation (Gen. 1:28; Psalm 8:5-6). He had been given full authority over the works of God’s creation, but man sold out to the devil and sold us under his government of sin (Rom. 7:14). When man fell under Satan’s tyranny, everything that God had placed in man’s possession automatically became Satan’s as well.

In Luke 4:6 Satan tells Jesus, “*And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it.*” Jesus does not dispute any portion of Satan’s claim here but simply defeats his temptation by the Word of God, thus making this particular temptation ineffective.

Nonetheless, Satan says, “...to whomsoever I will I give it.” The father of lies was telling the basic truth here that whoever is in authority has a *legal* right to do with that which is given to him. The Psalmist said, “...the earth hath he **given** to the children of men.” (Psalm 115:16b). Since the earth had been given to man, he had a legal right to give it away. That is exactly what man foolishly did.

While God has the physical power and might to wrest this world from Satan by force, this is not God’s nature. God’s omnipotent power is governed by His love, goodness, wisdom and His righteousness (2 Chron. 16:9; 1 Cor. 13:2; 14:1; 2 Cor. 6:7; 2 Thess. 1:11; Rev. 5:12; 7:12). To take back this world and rescue man it would have to be, “*Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts*” (Zec. 4:6).

When mankind sided with Satan he actually entered into a covenant with the kingdom of death (Isa. 28:15, 18). Therefore, only a man who was not under death’s authority could legally release mankind from the covenant (Rom. 5:15-21; 1 Cor. 15:21-22). If God acted in power outside of righteousness, thus violating His own righteous principles of covenant-keeping (Psalm 89:33-35), then Satan would have had legitimate accusations which would have placed doubts about God’s character in the minds of His loyal angels and mankind itself.

Satan has already accused God to Adam, Eve, and the watching angels claiming that God was an egotistical tyrannical despot (Gen. 3:1-7). So while God has the physical power to destroy Satan, He would only have made Satan happy in the process. In the midst of his destruction Satan would have told everyone watching, “See, I told you he is a tyrant. I told you that he is unforgiving and vengeful. He is a hypocrite. He gives us a law of love and righteousness that he himself does not follow.”

How Did Jesus Resolve this Issue?

Satan would be right in making such an accusation because, in a sense, he won this world “fair and square” when Adam handed it over to him. Paul wrote, “*Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men....*” (Rom. 5:12a). In the ongoing war between God and Satan man chose sides against God, thereby aligning himself and his progeny under

Satan's kingdom of death, darkness and destruction. Disregard for God's Word gave Satan's reign of death a legal entrance into our world.

For God to force it away from Satan would be a violation of all of His righteous ethics. The rest of the universe would have lost trust in God and served Him out of *fear* rather than *love*, which is not God's desire at all (1 John 4:17-18; 2 Tim. 1:7). Heaven would no longer be Heaven but a place not unlike North Korea if *slavery from fear* replaced *service from love*. Satan, the accuser, would have won his case and won his war against God.

Therefore, the only *righteous* way for God to take back this world and rescue His beloved mankind would have to be done *legally*, or, within the keeping of His own righteous laws and standards. Otherwise, God would be accused of holding a double-standard and He could never be trusted in a true sense of what it means to genuinely love and trust someone. God has to set an example for us to follow so He cannot have one law for His creatures and another for Himself (Matt. 5:43-45; Luke 6:35; John 13:39; 2 Cor. 3:18; Eph. 5:1-2). Therefore, rescuing mankind from satanic tyranny would require the ultimate sacrifice and demonstration of love. This would require God becoming one of these creatures and then dying for them. That is exactly what He did and by this act He was able to overcome the world on our behalf:

These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world (John 16:33).

Note first of all that Jesus said that *in the world* you will have trouble. All of the misery in this world is not, as popularly taught in some circles, the result of God controlling things. The Bible credits Satan with having all control in this world (1 John 5:18-19). Jesus makes it clear that the world is the source of our miseries, but He also gives some good news along with this truth, which is that He has overcome the source of our problems.

The Lord has *spoken* His Word to us to give us peace. God's peace is at war with the turmoil that Satan intentionally brings into our lives. Standing on and adhering to God's Word will enable peace to win out. This is because Jesus has won a legal battle and has conquered the world. This does not mean that we will never experience problems. In this world we are to expect problems but Jesus makes it clear that the source of our problems, which is the world, has been defeated by Him and legally deprived of its power to hurt us. The Amplified Bible says:

I have told you these things, so that in Me you may have [perfect] peace and confidence. In the world you have tribulation and trials and distress and frustration; but be of good cheer [take courage; be confident, certain, undaunted]! For I have overcome the world. [I have deprived it of power to harm you and have conquered it for you.] (The Amplified Bible)

Sin and death have power in this world to hurt because man gave it legal entry. Though man gave Satan legal entry, Jesus, through His redemptive work, legally casted him out: "*Now is the judgment of this world: now shall **the prince of this world be cast out***" (John 12:31). Satan's kingdom of sin entered into this world but Jesus casted him and his reign out of it.

Jesus' "casting out" Satan has rendered him powerless and ineffective. "Cast out" does not mean that Satan was cast out of the earth. It means that he was cast out of the heavenly courts where he is no longer able to render a legal defeat to God's covenant children. The Greek word for "cast out" is *ekballo* which means to "be deprived of the power and influence he exercises in the world"¹ John gives us an even greater picture of how this was done in the "Revelation" he received from the resurrected Christ:

And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was

cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death (Rev. 12:7-11).

The salvation wrought by Christ brought us the manifestation of His kingdom—His government. Satan was then “cast down”. The Greek word is *kataballo* which means “to put in a lower place.”

Placing John 12:31 together with Rev. 12, we see that Satan has suffered a crushing defeat by the blood of Jesus. Even though he is on the earth, he is now powerless against those connected to Christ. He has no *legal right* to torment us. Though he will continue to launch attacks, through the blood of Jesus we have the right to enforce his defeat. Based on the above, a better way to render John 12:31 is as follows: “*Now is the time for this world to be judged; now the ruler of this world will be overthrown.*” (Good News Translation)

Jesus makes it plain that Satan is this world’s ruler. However, He uses language concerning Satan’s position of defeat: “he has been judged, cast out, and has NOTHING in Jesus” (John 14:30; 16:11). Jesus gave Satan a crushing defeat. None of it was done by force on God’s part. Satan lost his hold on the world when he murdered the innocent Son of God. On God’s part, allowing the shedding of Christ’s blood was the legal, nonviolent undoing of Satan’s legal reign.

Satan hated God and lusted after the opportunity to kill Him. Satan, like a mad man blinded by hatred, ignored any repercussions that would accrue from killing the sinless, righteous Son of God. He deceived himself into thinking that he could hold God Himself in his prison of death (Acts 2:22-27) and took advantage of the opportunity to kill Him (Luke 22:53). The resurrection of Christ proved him wrong (1 Cor. 15:54-58) because, “....*God raised Jesus and unleashed Him from the agonizing birth pangs of death, for death could not possibly*

keep Jesus in its power” (Acts 2:24; The Voice). The reason that it was not possible for death to keep Jesus in its power is because the wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23; James 1:15). Since Jesus had never sinned Satan blindly and *illegally* placed Jesus under his power of death, thereby forfeiting his legal rights over the earth and mankind.

Disarming Satan of His Weapons and Authority

The full implications of Satan’s overthrow will be appreciated more as we dig deeper into Scripture. The Bible depicts Satan as having an actual kingdom (government) that is directly opposed to God’s kingdom. Therefore, Satan legally held a certain amount of authority over the subjects of his kingdom and he tortured them.

Jesus came for the express purpose of delivering these captives from Satan’s governmental authority of darkness, death, and destruction:

If Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? because ye say that I cast out devils through Beelzebub. And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast them out? therefore shall they be your judges. But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you. When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils. (Luke 11:18-22)

Satan trusted in his armour (the power of death) to hold Jesus and to keep Him as his captive, thereby, keeping his hold on his kingdom. Jesus took away Satan’s trusted armor, plundered his domain and took all that he had. There was no “divine deception” or “fishhook theory.” He made it publicly known what He would do to Satan. Furthermore, the Lord was quoting a Word from God that had been prophesied by Isaiah long before His incarnation (Isaiah 28:13).² Everything that Jesus did was done righteously and legally with no trickery or deception. Satan killed the Son of God with full knowledge

of what could happen. His rage and hatred of God blinded him to the reality that doing such would make the Word prophesied through Isaiah effective.

But what does it mean for Christ to take away Satan's armor and divide his spoils? In Ephesians 4:8 Paul writes, "*Therefore it is said, When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive [He led a train of vanquished foes] and He bestowed gifts on men*" (The Amplified Bible).³ Paul tells us that Jesus actually disarmed and stripped Satan of all power, authority, and the hold that he had on mankind. Jesus was telling his critics, and serving Satan notice, that His death, burial, and resurrection would be the means of vanquishing Satan and legally removing his authority from over men.

Paul attempted to illustrate what Christ had done by providing a picture that his readers were familiar with during this period of Roman imperialism in which he lived. The picture is that of an emperor who has defeated an enemy and, stripped them of their armor, and then parade them naked through the city amidst a cheering crowd.⁴ Paul gives another allusion to this in the book of Colossians:

*Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; **And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.** (Col. 2:14-15)*

Remember that Jesus told his critics that He would overcome Satan, take away his armor and divide his *spoils*. In Colossians we learn that He *spoiled* principalities and powers. The word "spoiled" means "disarmed". Jesus *disarmed* Satan and the other authorities that ruled with him, making them ineffective in their warfare against us. He took all of their weapons. By disarming Satan, he took away all of his authority over us. Another translation makes this clearer:

God took away the power of the leaders of this world and the powers of darkness. He showed them to the world. The battle was won over them through Christ.
(New Life Version)

The New Century version says, “*God stripped the spiritual rulers and powers of their authority*” and The Message paraphrases this as, “*He stripped all the spiritual tyrants in the universe of their sham authority....*” Paul is telling us here that Satan and his evil demonic forces have been stripped of all authority over us. Jesus disarmed our enemies, took away their authority, vanquished them and divided the spoils of war with us just as it was prophesied in Genesis 3:15. Our redemption from satanic bondage was accomplished through the shed blood of Jesus. Jesus has completely defeated Satan.

Freedom from the Authority and Works of Death

The disarmament of Satan was possible because Jesus, though sinless, suffered what *we deserved*. By this He achieved a victory over the enemy, and shared the spoils of victory. Jesus’ primary disarmament was that of Satan’s weapon of death. In Hebrews we read:

*Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might **destroy him that had the power of death**, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. (Heb. 2:14-15)*

As we have stated, all that is wrong, hurtful and perverse in this world is due to the fact that it is a world that is ruled by Satan under a government of death and darkness. Jesus came to take away the authority that Satan once held that enabled him to bring about all of this misery.

It should be remembered that Satan’s “destruction” does not mean we no longer encounter problems from him. The word “destroy” as used in this passage is from the Greek word *katargeo* which means “‘to nullify,’ and so to render something inoperative or ineffectual.”⁵ “Destroy” as used in Heb. 2:14-15 does not mean to blow something out of existence. It means that Satan has been rendered *ineffective*.

Though Satan has not been put out of action we can rejoice in the fact that his works against us have been rendered inoperative and ineffective. In order to have this truth in actual experience we must apply what God's Word says about Jesus' redemption on our behalf.⁶ Since God's Word always explains itself, let's look at the epistle of 1 John to get a clearer understanding of Satan's destruction:

*He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy **the works of the devil.*** (1 John 3:8)

The Greek word for “*destroy*” in this passage means “*to loose, dissolve, sever, break, demolish.*” (Vines).⁷ Basically the word “*destroy*” can be understood to mean “*render powerless.*”⁸ Sin has placed men and women under Satan's dominion and gave him the legal right to attack and hurt us (Acts 26:18; Eph. 2:1-6; 1 John 5:17-20). Jesus came to redeem us from the *works* that the devil legally used to destroy mankind. Our Lord came for the express purpose of destroying Satan's works against us. Jesus now possesses all authority over death (Rev. 1:18) and He is the Word of Life (1 John 1:1).

Connecting Heb. 2:14 with 1 John 3:8 we see that the works of Satan are all culminated in his work of death and that this word entails. Dr. Beth Snodderly, president of the William Carey institute, has written a 271 page scholarly dissertation on 1 John 3:8. Dr. Snodderly says that the main focus of her dissertation is, “...understanding the meaning of the phrase, ‘the works of the devil.’”⁹ She comes to the following conclusion in her research:

The summary of the inter-texture studies concluded that the devil is an evil being who has been sinning since the beginning of his rulership over the earth. His inherently sinful nature demonstrates opposition to God's will. While the devil's works can be summarized as bringing death—both physical (disease and deformity, social chaos, mental chaos) and spiritual (unbelief, hatred), the Son of God appeared to give life (1 John 4:9). The appearing of the Son of God was seen to result in works and characteristics that are the opposite of those associated with the sin of the devil, thus nullifying or destroying them.¹⁰

More than a century before Dr. Snodderly, William Matson wrote, "...by death I here mean what Scripture often means by the same word,—all the ills that come upon man in this life and in the life to come. Satan, the enemy, brought sin into the world and all its sad consequences."¹¹ In Deuteronomy 28:1-13 Moses lists the blessings that come as a result of obedience to God's Word such as *fruitfulness, abundance, protection, direction, victory, success, holiness, honor, riches, and dominion*. These were the blessings God meant for Adam and Eve to walk in from the very beginning. Sadly, the rest of Deuteronomy 28 gives an even longer list of consequences for rejecting God's Word such as *unfruitfulness, insufficiency, frustration, failure, defeat, bondage, poverty, fear, and all kinds of sickness and disease*. These things came into the world as a result of Adam's disobedience and the devil's dominion. These are the *works* of Satan (Job 2:7; Luke 13:16; Acts 10:38)

In Deuteronomy 30:15-19 we are told that the curses listed above are the consequences of having chosen death. God does not afflict death on man. He is the giver of life. Death is the result of separation from God and yielding to the devil. The "curses" listed in Deut. 28 which includes sickness and poverty are the results of this death. Anything that does not have its original source in God has no life in it. This can only mean that Satan is its likely source. All negative circumstances are due to *the death dealing work of Satan. Death is anything that has its origin with Satan and his works*. The famous reformer, Martin Luther put it best when he said:

"I HOLD," he said, "that Satan sends epidemics and sicknesses amongst men, for he is a prince of death. Therefore St. Peter saith, 'Christ healed all who were held captive by the devil.' To this end the devil uses natural means, poisonous air, &c., as a murderer uses a sword."¹²

Satan is a death dealer. He comes *to steal, and to kill, and to DESTROY* (John 10:10). He comes to impart his *death* into our *lives*. However, Jesus also said that he came *that they MIGHT have LIFE, and that they might have it more abundantly*. The life of Christ is available for those who accept Satan's defeat. We need no longer be subject to the bondage of fear. Fear of death is bondage, but Jesus has

delivered us from this bondage by making His *life* available to us. The redemptive work of Christ has legally loosed us from Satan's works of death.

Death is no friend or tool of God. He has never taken pleasure in the death of wicked people (Eze. 18:32; 33:11). God has been at war with death ever since Satan instituted it by His separation from God and his leading others to follow him in this. Death is considered by God to be an enemy (1 Cor. 15:26) and it has its primary source with the one Luther labels "a prince of death."

It is difficult to understand why so many believe that God receives some perverted pleasure from watching His children suffer poverty, sickness, failure, and defeat. The Word of God does not support such a notion. God has revealed His desire and His desire is that we *choose life*. Christ's redemptive work has given us a choice.

Satan's Defeat Makes God's Word "Devil Destruction Power"

It is now our decision as to whether we suffer death under Satan's reign or *life* under Christ's government. Since Jesus came to destroy the devil's works, and since He has succeeded, ***then God's Word is devil destruction power*** in the sense that it exposes the works of Satan and tells us how to utilize Jesus' destruction of those works in our very lives.

God's people must realize that they are not fighting against flesh and blood (Eph. 6:10-12). Whether we are dealing with sickness and disease, problems on the job, problems at home, marital issues, church issues, financial issues, or whatever the physical problem might be, it has to be seen as having originated as a *spiritual issue* and it must first be dealt with in the spiritual realm:

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ (2 Cor. 10:3-5)

As far as Satan's position, we have already read in Revelation 12:10, "*the accuser of our brethren is cast down.*" God, by the assistance of His angels, have already forcefully removed Satan from Heaven. He was able to do this legally due to the redemptive work of Jesus, who dealt him a legal defeat through His blood. God's people now overcome Satan by the blood of the Lamb and the word of our testimony. It is by God's Word that we discover what the blood of Jesus has done for us.

Since he is clearly defeated, the only effective weapons that Satan has are his lies. Notice that his attempt is to bring "high things" (arguments) that exalt itself "against the knowledge of God." The "knowledge of God" is conveyed through the Word of God (Num. 24:16). Through the Word of God we are now to cast down every lying argument that Satan attempts to bring against us. "Pulling down" and "casting down" in 2 Cor. 10:4-5 is the Greek word "*kathaireo*" which can be translated "destroy". The **New Life Version** renders verse 4: "*We do not use those things to fight with that the world uses. We use the things God gives to fight with and they have power. Those things God gives to fight with **destroy the strong-places of the devil.***"

Phillip's New Testament also makes it clear concerning what we believe to be Paul's primary thought here:

*The truth is that, although of course we lead normal human lives, the battle we are fighting is on the spiritual level. The very weapons we use are not those of human warfare but powerful in God's warfare **for the destruction of the enemy's strongholds.** Our battle is to bring down every deceptive fantasy and every imposing defence that men erect against the true knowledge of God. We even fight to capture every thought until it acknowledges the authority of Christ.*

Then there is the New Century Version which says, "*Our weapons have power from God that can **destroy the enemy's strong places,***" and the New International Reader's Version which says, "*My weapons have the power of God to **destroy the camps of the enemy.***" All of these translations allow us to see the fundamental truth that we

are attempting to convey which is that ***God's Word is Devil Destruction Power.***

As long as we see the problems in life primarily as physical problems then we will always attempt to deal with them in our own strength. We will get high-interest loans to solve the financial issue, we will rely on doctors and medicine to heal our sickness and disease, we will look to ungodly counselors with their myriad views of psychological solutions to deal with our troubled family and home life, and we will seek retribution and vengeance upon those who cause us problems and heartache. Since Jesus has conquered all of these problems in His redemptive work, we can overcome them in our own lives by asserting the authority of God's Word concerning them.

God's Word works against the devil because Jesus has already destroyed him (Heb. 2:14-15; 1 John 3:8). When we use God's Word against the devil, we are simply declaring in faith his defeat at the hands of Jesus. Satan is already destroyed but now, by the Word of God, we are destroying his arguments in our lives.

As we shall see through biblical examples in later chapters, we must recognize that the victory is already ours in every circumstance and we must learn to *fight the good fight of faith* (1 Tim. 6:12). The reader no longer needs to submit to the weight of problems and trials in his or her life. We no longer need to take a fatalistic view of our circumstances, only *hoping* that God might intervene and change them without confident that He will *surely* intervene on our behalf to do so. We will learn that God's faith building Word is an effective weapon for destroying the works of Satan in our lives because God's Word is declaring to us every area in which Satan has already suffered defeat.

Chapter Five

Our Victorious Position in Christ

“There can be no permanent victory in the lives of God’s children until they see and appropriate the fact that Satan was defeated at Calvary. The church of God, as whole, will not be able to face the satanic floodtide by which it is confronted unless it learns to wield the power and victory that Calvary gives in a clear and ringing testimony to the defeat of the devil.”¹ (Charles Usher)

We must come to realize that it is on the basis of God’s Word that we overcome the wicked one. John wrote, “...*because ye are strong, and **the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one*** (1 John 2:14b). The Word of God informs us that Jesus has defeated the devil on our behalf. He did not do it for *Himself*, but He did it for *us*. It is through studying God’s Word that we become knowledgeable of Christ’s victory over Satan and how we can make that victory effectual in our own lives. Victory already belongs to us, but we must have knowledge of it.

Satan and Evil Forces Dethroned by Christ

When Jesus conquered Satan and his evil forces, he dethroned them and stripped them of any authority that they had:

We do discuss 'wisdom' with those who are mature; only it is not the wisdom of this world or of the dethroned Powers who rule this world, it is the mysterious Wisdom of God that we discuss, that hidden wisdom which God decreed from all eternity for our glory. (2 Cor. 2:6-7; The James Moffatt Bible)

To dethrone someone means to remove them from any position of power and authority that they once had. What Jesus did by dethroning Satan was to restore God's original intent for man. God's Word says, "*Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; **thou hast put all things under his feet***" (Psalm 8:6).

This is the way it was always meant to be. Man was supposed to always be master of his domain under God's loving authority. It was never God's intention for him to be in subjection to Satan. Sadly, man sided with Satan and placed himself under Satan's authority. The overwhelming love of God, through His finished work, turned the tables on Satan and restored the Father's original intent for His beloved children:

*Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: **And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.** (Eph. 1:20-23)*

All things being under the feet of Christ simply means that He has thoroughly defeated His enemies (Josh. 10:24-26; Psalm 110:1). Those of us who have made Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior are a part of His church—His body. Therefore we are connected to Him and share in His victory. If we are Christ's body, and all things are under His feet, then naturally all things are under our feet as well.

Born-Again Believers Enthroned by Christ

If there is any doubt as to whether or not we share in Christ's victory over His (and our) enemies in Ephesians 1, it is made clearer as we continue to read chapter 2. In conquering and dethroning Satan through His death, burial, resurrection and ascension, Christ identified all who would enter into covenant connection with Him as sharers of this authority:

*Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, **according to the prince of the power of the air**, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.... Even when we were dead in sins, **hath quickened us together with Christ**, (by grace ye are saved;) **And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus** (Eph. 2:2, 5, 6)*

What a wonderful truth. This is what some have referred to as “Throne Rights”² or “Throne Life”. We are, positionally speaking, seated in heavenly places. We are enthroned with Christ and share His authority. When Christ *dethroned* Satan He in turn *enthroned* us. This is our present position due to our union with Christ. Our enthronement with Christ places us above those dethroned and conquered enemies. We now rule over them with Christ. Look how some of the more modern translations render verse 6:

In our union with Christ Jesus he raised us up with him to rule with him in the heavenly world. (TEV)

God has brought us back to life together with Christ Jesus and has given us a position in heaven with him. (God’s Word Translation)

raised us with Him from the dead, and enthroned us with Him in the heavenly realms as being in Christ Jesus, (Weymouth)

We are already *enthroned* with Christ. We already rule with Him. This is *past tense* and not *future tense*. This is not something that God has put off for some future date. It is something that belongs to every believer that is in union with Christ. Paul wrote again, “*For if by one man’s offence death reigned by one; **much more** they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness **shall reign***”

in life by one, Jesus Christ” (Rom. 5:17). Notice that Paul uses the phrase “much more”. This means that if what Adam did was able to bring us in bondage to Satan’s government of death and destruction, what Jesus has done by giving us His grace and righteousness is one hundred thousand times more able to deliver us and enable us to reign over our former captors.

Furthermore Paul said that we are to “*reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.*” We are in union with Christ *now*. He reigns *now* (1 Cor. 15:25). Therefore it is in *this life* that we reign over the forces of evil. It is not something that needs to wait for “the sweet by-and-by”. David said, “*I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living*” (Psalm 27:13).

We need to start acting as if it is true in all of our circumstances. We must learn to accept what God says over and above what our circumstances are saying. We may not *feel* like we are enthroned and able to reign over sickness, disease, poverty, lack, trials, and the many other problems that confront us in this life. We may *feel* like Satan is still ruling over us as we look at all of the hardships in our lives. However, the truth of Satan’s defeat and our position in Christ is not founded upon *feelings* (2 Cor. 5:7). God’s Word has the authority to change our situation if we will stand on our throne rights. Reverend George B. Peck in his classic book titled, *Throne-Life or the Highest Christian Life* offers this Biblical advice:

....the believer determines henceforth to accredit God’s Word as veritably and unalterably true, as it has been shown him, concerning his present position and privileges in enthronement with Christ, far above all his enemies. He decides to take God’s view as his own view, unquestionably, from this moment, and continually, irrespective of circumstances or appearances. He means to consider himself as in Christ, wholly beyond the power of Satan to make him miserable.³

We do not have to be defeated by the problems that the prince of this world brings our way. We can rule in every circumstance and every situation that confronts us. We can exercise our throne rights. Many of God’s children are potential victors over the devil and do not know it because they have not taken the time to study God’s Word. Even though Satan has been defeated, so many of God’s children

remain in bondage and are living beneath the privileges that Christ wrought for them.

S. D. Gordon wrote, “What our Lord has done for us, we must each accept and claim for ourselves. Our Lord defeated Satan on our behalf. We must each of us claim all the power of that defeat on the battlefield of our own lives.”⁴ In order to claim this victory over the devil we must know the truth about what Jesus did in His death burial and resurrection and accept this truth over and above what our circumstances say, what others say, or how we feel. We must recognize that due to our connection through Christ, His defeat of our enemy is our victory as well.

Christ’s Motive is Pure Unselfish Love

When I was in the military I had earned a number of privileges due to having endured basic training, technical schools, tests, military exercises, remote tours and a number of other sufferings that military personnel must go through. I was able to use the tax-free Base Exchange, commissary, free gym facilities, and the numerous other benefits and programs. However, my wife, who suffered none of the things that I endured, was able to receive these exact same benefits simply by virtue of her covenant-connection to me through marriage.

Nevertheless, I wanted my wife to enjoy the benefits that I suffered for. This was for no other reason than that I loved her (and still do). The same is true (on a much higher level) concerning the finished work of Christ. We were in bondage to Satan and his kingdom of death and destruction and we rebelled against God. Yet, God loved us so much that He would come to us as a man and endure all that was necessary in order to rescue us. In His supreme act of love Jesus conquered the devil and his reign of hatred. Because Jesus conquered Satan on our behalf, we enjoy the privileges of that victory. Jesus *more than conquered* the devil and in our connection to Him we automatically become *more than conquerors*:

*“Nay, in all these things **we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.** For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, **nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor***

height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Rom. 8:37-39)

The basic dictionary definition of the word “conquer” is to “defeat, vanquish, overcome, subdue, gain the mastery over.” This is what Christ has done to the devil. You and I are *in Christ* and through Him we have the victory (1 Cor. 15:57; 2 Cor. 2:14). Another translation of Rom. 8:37 says, “*NO, in all these things we are more than victorious through Him, for He has already won the victory for us and demonstrated such love for us*” (The Truth New Testament). We are “victorious” through Christ.

The Greek word translated “more than conquerors” gives even more insight. According to one scholar, “It may be translated ‘superconquerors.’ Christians win a surpassing victory through the one who loved us.”⁵

I was fascinated with comic book superheroes when I was a kid so this word “superconqueror” impresses me. The comic book superheroes were always resourceful and were always willing to find ways to defeat the bad guys and save their city, or the WORLD. Jesus has made us into “super-beings” who are able to triumph over every situation and problem caused by the bad guys—the principalities and powers—because of the “super-triumph” that we were given by Christ.

However, the difference between the comic book fantasy and the Christian reality is that in the Christian reality we are not looking to defeat the super-villains. Jesus, the real superhero⁶ has, as we shall see momentarily, already defeated and disarmed all of the super-villains on our behalf. Our part is to merely enforce Christ’s victory when the bad guys attack.

The Overwhelming Love of Christ

Notice Paul’s emphasis on the love of God in Romans 8:37-39. God loves us very much. He made a tremendous sacrifice to ensure that we would have *super-victory* over the forces of evil as we remain in our covenant connection to Him. Notice also that no principality or power (which is usually a reference to Satan and his demonic forces –

Eph. 1:21; 3:10; 6:10-12; Col. 2:15) have the ability to separate us from the *love of Christ*.

Biblically speaking, separation from Christ is *spiritual death* and places us in Satan's domain (Isa. 59:1-2; Eph. 2:1-5). Satan makes the attempt to separate us from Christ's love by feeding us with lies that keep us ignorant of who we are in Christ Jesus and what belongs to us as a result of His finished work. If He can bring a separation from Christ, as he did with Adam and Eve, he is able to get us into his territory and destroy us. God is not going to let that happen to us.

The word "separate," in the original Greek, means "to divorce". This is a vital truth that details the importance of our relationship with Christ in relation to victorious living. Many couples divorce over problems encountered in a marriage. However, God says that there is not one issue and not one devil that would motivate Him to divorce us. He loves us, longs for relationship with us and works to keep it maintained.

In this world we will have opposition. Satan will bring problems in an attempt to divorce us from Christ, but if we stay *in Him - in relationship with Him*, then we will have victory over every possible problem and opposition that could confront us.

Paul was convinced that nothing could separate Him from the source of victory over every demon and problem. We must be convinced as well. We can only be as convinced as Paul was when we become *Word-Focused* rather than *problem-focused*. We are to have a "victory viewpoint" and a "position perspective". If we focused on our position in Christ which is a victorious position then we are better able to confront and overcome problems rather than allowing them to defeat us. We must remember and declare that we are *more than conquerors through Christ* despite how we may feel or what we see going on around us.

Triumphant through Jesus

So we can see that it is through Jesus that we more than conquer evil forces. Another exciting aspect of this truth is that Jesus has thoroughly disarmed the satanic forces, thus assuring our victory in each and every situation that we may confront:

*...when in your baptism you were buried with him, and raised to life with him through your faith in the power of God who raised him from the dead. Yes, you who were dead through your misdeeds and physically uncircumcised, God raised to life with Christ. He forgave us all our misdeeds, canceled the bond which stood against us, with its requirements, and put it out of our way when he nailed it to the cross. **He disarmed the principalities and dominions and displayed them openly, triumphing over them through him.*** (Col. 2:12-15; Goodspeed New Testament)

Through Him we are already victorious over satanic forces. We don't need to *fight* in order to gain victory. Our fight is one of faith by which we claim the victory that is already ours against forces that at the moment appear to be opposed to this truth. Since our union in Christ allows us to share in His triumph over Satan and his evil forces the only fight we have is the fight of faith in which we enforce the truth of God's Word over Satan's deceptions—deceptions that claim that he still has power and authority to inflict and hurt us.

Yet, all Satan has are his *lies* but we have the Word of God that reminds us that Jesus has effectively stripped him of any power and authority he ever had over us. Jesus has already “...*overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils*”. (Luke 11:22). Jesus took away Satan's armor (his weapons – disarmed him) and then He plundered the devil's domain and took all that he had. Satan is ineffective against a child of God who knows the truth concerning his or her victory based on our union in Christ Jesus and is willing to stand on what God's Word says concerning it.

Why is Satan still Active if He is Defeated?

When God's people learn about the victory that Jesus wrought on their behalf and begin to grab hold of the fact that their covenant-connection to Christ makes them everything that He is then not only will their perspective change, but also the way that they react to life's situations will change. But this does beg the question: “If Satan is already a defeated foe, why must we still contend with him? Why is he still able to cause so many problems in the world and even in the

Lord's church?" S. D. Gordon offers some insightful answers to these questions:

If our Lord had been acting on His own account simply, and only, the conflict would have been closed up at once, and the defeated never able to do more. But our Lord was not acting for Himself. He was acting for us. And there is something for us to do in settling the conflict. We must accept as our own what was done for us. We must step in and take possession of what had been our own originally, and what is now won back for us. Our Master practically says, "Take possession of what I have redeemed, what I have bought back for you."⁷

The fall was not God's intent. He never wanted it to happen. God was hurt and grieved over man's fall (Gen. 6:1-6) but not discouraged. As Udo Middleman wrote, "God, who invested so much of himself in his creation, is not ready to abandon it for any reason, ever."⁸ God was determined to defeat Satan and to do it in a way in which Satan could not accuse Him of unfairness or exerting His omnipotent divine power as an advantage over him.

But why was it necessary for God to have to deal with Satan this way in order to be fair rather than to just place him and his forces in the lake of fire where they could do no more harm? Rest assure that this day is coming (Matt. 8:28-29; Rev. 12:12; 20:10) but why is that time not yet? The answer can be found in a study of the ongoing war between two kingdoms or two forms of government:

*Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: **Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins** (Col. 1:12-14).*

Notice that the Father "hath" delivered us from the power of darkness. This is a done deal. Satan is the prince of this world and has an oppressive government (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; Eph. 2:2). When we accepted Jesus as our personal Lord and Savior, a transition took

place. Satan no longer has any rights to us. Born-Again Christians are free from Satan's kingdom (John 3:1-7). Before God could permanently rid the universe of Satan He needed to rescue men from this tyrant's government so that they would not share the same fate as him. Though we are still on earth, we are *now* free from Satan's tyranny.

Again in Revelation we read, "*Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down*" (Rev. 12:10b). Why has the kingdom of our God come? "*...for the accuser of our brethren is cast down*". God's kingdom has come because Satan has been defeated. It's by the blood that we overcome (Rev. 12:11). We stand in the victory that Christ has won for us. We are overcomers and more than conquerors due to the redemptive work of Christ. *The problem is that so many of God's own children keep asking God for deliverance when deliverance has already been made available to them.* The problem is not with *God's giving*, but with *our taking*. Ignorance of what Christ has already accomplished on our behalf continues to prevail in the body of Christ. It is ignorance concerning the victory that already belongs to us that keeps so many of God's people defeated in life.

Our translation into God's kingdom of light and love and our removal from Satan's kingdom of death and darkness is a *now* salvation. *Now* is come not only our deliverance but our ability to reign over the forces of darkness because we are *now* in the kingdom. We *now* have to advance that kingdom by routing Satan. This was the original intent for man. As Watchman Nee writes:

Today God has caused us to share the victory of the Lord Jesus. Wherever the victory of the Lord Jesus is displayed, there Satan must leave. We must simply stand steadfast, because the Lord Jesus has already won the victory. In His redemptive work, the Lord Jesus destroyed all the legal ground of the devil. Satan's entire legal rule has been terminated through redemption. Redemption was the sentence by which Satan was deprived of his legal position. Now the responsibility of exercising this sentence is upon the church.⁹

If the advancement of this kingdom were automatic then we would never read where we are instructed to pray, "*Thy kingdom*

come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven” (Matt. 6:10). Contrary to popular fatalistic theology, this passage is not teaching us to submit to every circumstance that we are confronted with. Amazing how Satan has been able to twist God’s Word and spread such a lie that weakens the people of God against him. This prayer is just the opposite. It is a prayer of authority. It is exercising our throne-power and our victorious position in Christ. It is demanding demonic forces be removed and that God’s kingdom reign on the earth.

Jesus said, “*But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you.*” (Matt. 12:28) The “kingdom of God” means that Satan has been *dethroned* and Jesus has been *enthroned*. Jesus shares that throne right with His church. It is up to the church to advance that kingdom and remove Satan’s reign from every area of this world.¹⁰ God’s *original* purpose for man was exactly as the Lord’s prayer teaches in its context which was to work in partnership with God to *subdue* (to conquer and bring into subjection; to overpower by superior force; overcome) the earth (Gen. 1:26-28). Originally, man was supposed to deal with Satan.

Sadly, Adam failed in his mission. Man fell under legal bondage to Satan and was unable to accomplish the purpose for which he was created. We came under Satan’s kingdom reign. Jesus redeemed man from Satan’s kingdom and brought us under His. Now we are to advance that kingdom by sharing the gospel with others, allowing ourselves to be a channel by which God demonstrates His power to heal (physically, spiritually, and emotionally), to deliver from demonic oppression and possession, and to set captives free (Mark 16:15-20).

God’s Reputation

This is a war between two kingdoms – the *kingdom of darkness* and the *kingdom of light*. This is a war between *truth* and *error*. Whichever one is able to infiltrate your mind and control your thinking is the one that rules over you (Acts 26:18; Eph. 4:18; 2 Cor. 4:3-4). This is why God cannot just vanquish the enemy using His might alone. This war is not about “might makes right”: “*Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.*” (Zech. 4:6)

Satan has already accused God of being a tyrant and a bully who gets His own way by sheer power (Gen. 3:1-5). Therefore, for

God to now forcefully dispose of Satan permanently on the basis that Jesus has dealt him a legal defeat, without having fully demonstrated to the world why he deserves it, would still win Satan sympathy and cause others to distrust God and be afraid of Him.

When the time comes to throw Satan into the lake of fire there will be no doubt that God is just in doing so. Satan will have proven himself to be so evil, so malignant, and so much beyond repentance that not no creature in the universe will ever again doubt why God had to deal with Satan in this manner (Rev. 20:1-8).¹¹

Because of His love for us He wants to remove all doubts about His justice so that we can enjoy eternity with Him and serve Him without fear (Luke 1:74-75; Rom. 8:15). In the meantime, God desires to win men's hearts by the demonstration of His love. This cannot be done by force. Forced love is no love. Immediately putting an end to Satan's activities will not win men or even remove doubt from any angels who may have wondered about the accusations Satan launched against God during his original rebellion.¹²

Due to how Satan has consistently maligned God's character, the universe would not see God putting a stop to Satan by using His omnipotence as an act of love but as a conquest of *might*, which in turn would give fuel to Satan's false accusation, making them appear to be plausible. Others may begin to become afraid of God and will comply with His demands out of sheer fear of punishment, but they will not do it from a heart of love. This is not what God desires at all: "*There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.*" (1 John 4:18) If God was to deal with Satan in this manner then Satan would be the winner because as he is being brought down by God's power he will sneer and say, "See, I told you that Yahweh is nothing but a bully who demands His own way and will destroy anyone who gets in His way".

Furthermore, Satan has already blinded men (2 Cor. 4:4). God's forcefully throwing Satan into the lake of fire before the right time would do nothing to save them. On the contrary it would seal their condemnation because, in all fairness, once God has finally dealt with Satan permanently He must do the same to *all* of his followers (Rev. 20:10-15; Matt. 25:41). Therefore, God's people must be the ones to vanquish the enemy *before the final judgment* by standing on His Word and sharing it with others.

We fail to understand God's patience. He has not yet permanently done away with Satan because He does not want any of the people still following him to perish. Therefore, for the sake of so many billions who have yet to hear the gospel, God is patiently waiting before bringing final judgment (2 Pet. 3:8-9). Oh how men, even many good men, have maligned God's character and made Him out to be sadistic. So often we are taught that God does not destroy Satan because He uses him as a tool to test people. This is so far from the truth. God is not in any kind of partnership with Satan. *They are enemies*. They are not working together and Satan is not working for God. He is in continuous rebellion *against* God.

God's motives are totally based on unselfish love. God does not want any of the wicked to die and meet the same fate as the one that they are following (1 John 5:19; Eze. 18:20-23, 32; 33:11). This is the primary reason that God tolerates him. God wants to release as many people as possible from Satan's bondage before placing him into his eternal punishment, which sadly, all that follow him now must suffer as well. However, because God has given everyone free-will to choose for or against Him, He cannot save any of them without their consent (Deut. 30:15, 19; Matt. 23:37; Luke 7:30; John 5:40; Rev. 3:20). This is why it is so important for you and I to advance God's kingdom agenda by warring against Satan on the grounds of his legal defeat. We must proclaim God's Word and use it to crush Satan in all areas where his kingdom still reigns so that his captives can go free.

When man has dealt with Satan by simply standing on God's Word—that Word that Satan attacked in the beginning—and is able to prove that God's Word is sufficient then Satan will no longer be able to malign God through his lies and deceptions. When we fulfill God's design for us then every creature will see Satan for who *really* he is and will see sin as the destructive entity that it is. People will see how sin separates us from God (Isa. 59:1-2; Eph. 2:1-5) and forcefully removes us from His umbrella of protection.

The universe must see that God hates sin out of His sheer love for the creature rather than out of a dictatorial attitude in which His only desire is to have His own way. This is why it is imperative that God's people stand in their victory-position and vanquish Satan's works on earth *now*. The world must see through God's people His love as well as His victory over demonic forces.

Conclusion

The Word of God is devil destruction power in that it informs us as to how Jesus has destroyed the devil and his works and has made this victory available to us. Satan is an already defeated enemy. We must claim this victory by faith, a subject that we will explore further in our next lesson. When we accepted Christ as our Lord and Savior and went through the rite of water baptism (Rom. 6:1-6), we automatically came into union with Christ. This is what the Bible means when it refers to God's people as being "in Christ". Because of this union with Christ we become the "superconquerors" that He already is by our connection to His death, burial, resurrection, and ascension. Our victorious position in Christ always enables us to have the victory. It is now our duty to walk in this victory and advance God's kingdom against Satan and his demonic forces.

Jesus, through His sacrifice, has brought men out of the kingdom of darkness and into His kingdom, thus restoring to man his original position and ability to subdue the forces of darkness. You cannot advance the kingdom while whining and complaining about being broke, sick, tired, and beaten down. We have to show the world that God enables us to be victorious over these things. His Word can change our circumstances because Satan has no right to attack a child of God's kingdom. We are no longer under his government. Therefore, if we display the same joyless defeated attitude that the world has then how will this win them over to God's kingdom?

Chapter Six

Appropriating the Victory through Faith

“Once the truth of God regarding Satan’s defeat at the cross becomes a reality to the heart and mind of the believer, he will be filled with a buoyancy of hope which nothing else can produce. For him to realize that the devil has no right over any part of his life—that Jesus has completely vanquished this foe who appears to him so strong—will create in him a faith that will enable him to fling off the enemy in the power and might of the Spirit.”¹ (Charles Usher)

Jesus, as we have learned from our previous lessons, has rendered a legal defeat to Satan and has removed all legal rights he had to harm us. However, Satan has no respect for a legal decision that is not enforced. He will attack and harm any child of God who does not exercise their throne rights and enforce Satan’s defeat. There are a number of reasons why God’s people do not enforce Satan’s defeat. Allow me to list a few of them:

- Ignorance of the true source of their problems (blaming God rather than the devil or their own personal failures).
- Ignorance that Satan is defeated.
- Ignorance of who they are in Christ.
- Ignorance concerning how to walk in the light of Satan’s defeat and their positional victory in Christ.
- Ignorance of what *Biblical* faith actually is.

This ignorance has kept many of God’s people in bondage and has even destroyed many of them. In previous chapters we have dispelled most of this ignorance.

Faith comes through the Agency of God’s Word

In this chapter we will learn the importance of faith in appropriating the victory that Christ has gained for us through His death, burial, and resurrection. John writes:

*For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, **even our faith**. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? (1 Jn 5:4-5)*

Remember that “the world” is a reference to the system of government run by Satan and his followers (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; 2 Cor. 4:4). When we walk in victory over the world, we walk in victory over the one who holds sway (control) over the world (1 John 5:18-19). John says that we experience this victory through the new birth and a faith connection.

So what is this “faith” that John is referring to and how does it enable us to overcome Satan’s system of government? Jesus says, “*These things **I have spoken unto you**, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; **I have overcome the world**” (John 16:33).*

Jesus said that He has *overcome the world*. This includes its master, Satan. This is a done deal. Jesus also said, “*I have spoken unto you*”. Paul said, “*So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God*” (Rom. 10:17). Jesus told us that He has already conquered the world in which Satan, *the wicked one*, is its ruler. His spoken Word to us was meant to impart faith to appropriate His victory. Jesus has overcome the world and if we trust in the integrity of His Word then we get to share in that victory.

Truth, Trust and then Triumph

The foundation for faith is knowing that God’s Word is *truth*. Faith, simply put, is believing that what God’s Word says in connection to our victory over Satan is *true* despite all circumstances in our lives that appear contrary to this. Again, Paul writes:

*That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye also trusted, **after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise.** (Eph. 1:12-13)*

The only way for God's Word to impart faith is for us to firmly understand that it is the *only* source of *truth*, especially in regards to Satan's defeat. There is something I like to call the "trinity" of victory: **Truth**, **Trust**, and then **Triumph**. Once you are convinced that God's Word is *truth*, you will have no difficulty *trusting* Him, and this trust in the integrity of God's Word will lead to your *triumph* over Satan and circumstances.

We have every reason to trust God's Word over any other source of information. God is the "God of truth" (Psalm 31:5; Isa. 65:16; John 14:6, 17; 15:26; 16:13; 1 John 5:6). His Word is a "word of truth" (2 Sam. 7:28; Psalm 119:43, 142, 151; Dan. 10:21; John 17:17; 2 Cor. 6:7; Eph. 1:13; Col. 1:5; 2 Tim. 2:15; James 1:18). Truth is such a vital part of God's character that He tells us that He cannot lie (Titus 1:1, 2; Num. 23:19). It is impossible for Him to lie (Heb. 6:18). God cannot lie, He hates lying and finds it abominable (Prov. 6:16, 17). Seeing that God is truth, His Word is truth, and it is impossible for Him to lie, we have every reason to trust what His Word says concerning Satan, his works, and our victory over them.

The Gospel of Your Victory

Paul says that his readers began to trust God, "*after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.*" Most tend to limit "salvation" here as only a guarantee of Heaven after death. While "salvation" does involve this guarantee, it is not limited to the idea of simply making it into Heaven when we die. In the context of Paul's writing it is primarily in relation to our victory and deliverance from the forces that were keeping us from entering Heaven in the first place. (Ephesians 2:1-9). In Revelation 12:10-11 we read:

"And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death."

John writes, “...now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God” Our salvation is *now* and is *present tense*. Sadly, we limit the benefits and blessings of salvation to a distant future. Our primary concept of salvation is limited to “not going to hell when I die” and “I am guaranteed to make it into Heaven.” Thank God that salvation involves these wonderful blessings but it involves so much more. Remember that mankind came under Satan’s kingdom government of death, defeat and destruction. John writes in Revelation “...now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God” Salvation involves deliverance from the enemy’s camp and a transfer into a different kingdom (Col. 1:12-14). Salvation is the defeat of Satan’s reign of death over us and the results of his government of death such as sickness, disease, poverty, etc.

The word “salvation” used in Eph. 1 and Rev. 12 is from the Greek word “*soteria*”. It is not that much different than the Old Testament word in which God rescued Israel and gave them victory over their enemies (Judges 6:14; 2 Chron. 20:15-17).² Edward Schillebeeckx says that, “Soteria or salvation thus understood can already mean the forgiveness of sins, victory over Satan and eternal life.”³ Another expert in the original New Testament languages, Nigel Turner, gives a most profound definition of salvation:

Soteria has secular meanings of victory, deliverance, preservation, security and, in later post-Christian papyri, bodily health. In secular Greek soteria had moreover been 'a means of safety', a safe return, and a security or guarantee.⁴

So salvation can be understood as victory over Satan and his evil works (1 John 3:8). Some English translations seem to grasp this point. For example, **The Complete Jewish Bible** translates Revelation 12:10, “*Now have come God’s victory, power and kingship, and the authority of his Messiah*”. The **Easy to Read Version** renders it, “*The victory and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Messiah have now come.*”

Mankind entered a war that had been raging between God and Satan for what may have been centuries before his creation. If man had remained loyal to God he would have always been on the winning side

of this war. Sadly, Adam and Eve yielded their God-given dominion to Satan and man has since been his captives—his prisoners of war. Satan has tortured his captives with fear of death, sickness and disease, accidents, selfishness, crime, murder, negative weather patterns, tragic losses and numerous other painful evils. Because of the first couple, we were captives of Satan who kept us as his prisoners. We needed Jesus to come and rescue us (Luke 11:21-22; Acts 26:18; Eph. 2:1-5; Col. 1:12-14; 2 Cor. 4:3-4; Heb. 2:14-15; 1 John 3:8). Jesus came directly into the enemy’s camp, defeated him and gave His salvation-victory to us.

Our Warfare is centered on Information

We now understand how the Word of Truth opens our eyes to our victory over Satan, thus imparting faith that enables us to walk in it. The last thing Satan wants is for you and I to get wind of the fact that he is a defeated enemy and that we are victors over him. He knows the damage that we are able to do to him and his kingdom when we are walking in faith based on God’s Word. Satan, in his dastardly wisdom, has determined that he will target the seed of our faith before it has an opportunity to germinate and cause him damage. Jesus said:

*Those by the way side are they **that hear**; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. (Luke 8:12)*

If Satan is successful in stealing the Word from us then he is successful in destroying the source of our faith. If he can keep us from appropriating faith then he can easily defeat us.

How is Satan able to steal the Word from its hearers? His primary way is through *lies and deceptions*. In Ephesians 6:11 we read, “*Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand **against the wiles of the devil.***” “Wiles” is from the Greek word “methodeia” which means “methods, schemes, strategies, attacks.”² This word “methodeia” was also used by Paul in Eph. 4:14 in which he admonishes us to be careful about believing all kinds of doctrines because many of them are taught by men who “...*lie in wait to deceive*”. Another translation of Ephesians 6 says, “*Take up God’s*

instruments of war, so that you may be able to keep your position against all the deceits of the Evil One....” (Eph. 6:11; The Bible in Basic English)

The faith or trust needed for appropriating all that Christ has done on our behalf comes by hearing and hearing God’s Word of truth. **Thus God and His people are engaged in an information war with Satan.** Satan is indeed a deceiver (2 Cor. 11:13-15; Rev. 12:9; 20:3, 8) as well as a liar. Nothing destroys faith like believing a lie. It was through this method that Satan was able to get a third of the angelic hosts to follow him into rebellion against God (Rev. 12:1-4). This was the very method that Satan used to destroy Eve (Gen. 3:1-7). In John 8:44 Jesus said:

*Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: **for he is a liar, and the father of it.***

The New Living Testament says, “*When he lies, it is consistent with his character; for he is a liar and the father of lies.*” Lying and deceiving are a part of Satan’s nature. The craft of lying originated with him. He has perfected the art and has mastered it so well that his lies appear to be truth to the majority of the world.

Satan’s Greatest Lie: Fatalistic Passivism

Lying is Satan’s greatest weapon. Satan does not want us to know that he is a defeated enemy and uses lies and deceptions to keep this knowledge from us. It is this ignorance that keeps us in bondage and leads to our destruction (Isa. 5:13; Hosea 4:6). If Satan can get you to believe a lie then He can keep you in bondage. For most Christians, he has been able to hide the truth about his defeat at the hands of Christ. Those who acknowledge it make it a minor part of the gospel, something to be mentioned only occasionally. For the most part, Satan’s works are accepted as God’s will and go unchallenged. Satan has only been able to defeat many Christians by lying to them and keeping them from the truth concerning their victory in Christ.

Since many believe that God is behind their problems and that Satan is still effective and undefeated then they sense no need to resist his attacks against them and their family. Many things that we accept as God's will are in reality, Satanic assaults. Our best defense against Satan's lies is simply the truth, which is God's Word.

Sadly, Satan's defeat is meaningless to the Christian who has been deceived into believing that God, rather than Satan, is the source of their problems. As long as they continue to believe that "God is in control" and that He is "sending evil to work for their good" they will submit to the evil rather than stand against it. This is exactly what Satan wants. As S. D. Gordon notes:

"There is a good deal of meek submission by Christian people that is both cowardly and sinful. What comes along is yielded to as God's will. Whereas a great deal of what comes along is not His will, but is the result of the planning of the evil one. Aggression means a thinking keenly into God's way of working, a seeing clearly what is His will, and what is opposed to His will, and then a vigorous resisting in the Victor's Name of anything not God's will."⁵

So many Christians have mistakenly identified faith as some type of *passive trust in God*. Too many have what I believe is a "que sera, sera" attitude in which they believe that whatever happens is God's will and that "trusting Him" means that whatever outcome we receive in any situation was ordained by God for some good purpose. Since Satan is unable to completely destroy the idea of faith, he has given us a substitute for *true faith* by teaching unsuspecting Christians a passive ineffective type of trust. Satan's lie leads one to believe that all of the negative experiences in our lives are from God's sovereign hand and by simply believing that God will somehow work things out according to his plan we, in that sense, trust Him.

However, faith is *not* folding our hands, exclaiming that "God is in control" and that it will turn out the way He wants in the end. "Faith" is not a passive trust that God will take all of our trials and somehow make them work for our good. Faith demonstrates itself by resisting satanic attacks and fighting from our position of victory. Faith is not "fatalism" but active resistance against Satan's tactics by claiming the victory won for us by Christ.

Our Defeat is due to a Failure of Faith

Sadly, many people do not want to stand in faith on God's Word to get results. Many would rather passively wait for God to do something on their behalf without having to expend any energy themselves. "After all," they reason, "God is in control so if it is His will He will change things. All things happen for a reason and work together for our good".

Yet, many of these same people become bitter and angry with God when He does not "control" their situations in the way that they believe that He should. They begin to feel sorry for themselves if God does not change their situation without any real effort on their part. We must realize that when Jesus defeated the enemy, He gave the control to us.

Because of Jesus' victory over the devil through His death burial, resurrection, and ascension, we now have authority over the forces of Satan. However, *this authority is exercised by faith in Christ's accomplished victory over the devil*. Every victory of Satan over us is a failure of faith on our part.

*"And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, **that thy faith fail not**: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren."* (Luke 22:31)

Jesus did not rebuke Satan and command him to stay away from Peter. He did not pray that God would surround Peter with a legion of angels to protect him. Neither did He pray that God would disapprove Satan's request. Jesus prayed that *Peter's faith would not fail*. He knew that it was Peter's faith that would overcome Satan and his desire to destroy him.

Faith is essential for dealing with Satan (Gen. 3:1-7; Matt. 17:19-20; Luke 22:31; 1 Tim. 6:12; Heb. 11:28; 1 Pet. 5:8-9; 1 John 5:4-5). Every defeat that a Christian suffers at the hands of Satan is due to a failure in faith. This is why Satan seeks to attack your faith by attacking the very Word of God itself (Luke 8:12; 2 Cor. 4:4-5). Satan

is able to dominate in an atmosphere of unbelief. He was able to overcome the disciples by nothing more than their unbelief (Mat. 17:19, 20). The difference between victory and defeat is faith in the finished work of Christ or unbelief concerning it.

Aggressive Faith is the Only Way to Defeat Satan

In 1 Tim. 6:12 we are told to “*Fight the good fight of faith*”. There would be no need for God to exhort us to *fight* this way if *faith* was merely a matter of passive acquiescence. Instead, it is a fight to trust God to overcome satanic opposition and to bring about that which He has promised (see Daniel 10:10-21). All that the devil attacks us with (sickness, poverty, oppression, etc.) was dealt with in the redemptive work of Christ and can be resisted by faith. Since Jesus has already defeated the devil (John 16:33; Rom. 8:37-39; Joshua 1:3, 1 Cor. 15:57; Col. 2:14-16; 1 John 3:8; 4:4; Heb. 2:14-15) our fight of faith is simply to appropriate that victory.

We can be tempted to believe that God has acted on our behalf and that we have victory over the devil only when everything seems to be going well in our lives. If we are healthy in our bodies, we are financially sound, our children are behaving as sweet little angels, we have peace of mind, and life is going smooth then many of us erroneously believe that this is all the evidence that is needed that Satan has been defeated in our lives.

If this is what we are waiting for before we can declare the victory then we are not fighting the good fight of faith as the Bible teaches. True faith is not based on feelings, emotions, or physical evidence. Paul said, “*For we walk by faith, not by sight*” (2 Cor. 5:7). In Hebrews 11:1 we read, “*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*” Faith that is dependent upon visibly peaceful circumstances as its evidence is *not Biblical faith*. In Biblical order, the favorable visible circumstances that we wish for comes *after* the believing and not *before* (Matt. 21:21-22; Mark 11:22-24; John 11:40; 20:27-29; Acts 27:25; James 1:5-7).

In the fight of faith, we are not necessarily trying to *obtain* victory. The fight of faith is doing battle against the lies that tell us that we are defeated when Jesus has already wrought the victory on our behalf. The good fight of faith is simply accepting the truth concerning Satan’s defeat and believing what the Word of God says concerning

our victorious position. Therefore we are not necessarily fighting *for* victory. As Christians we are fighting *from a position of victory that has already been obtained*.

Our part is *to utilize God's language of faith which realizes what Jesus has already done*. We are to do this regardless of whether or not we presently *see* victory in our circumstances (Mark 11:24; John 20:24-29; 2 Cor. 5:7; Heb. 11:1). So "fighting the good fight of faith" means resisting Satan's lying circumstances by faith in what God's Word says concerning our victory in Christ Jesus:

*Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: **Whom resist steadfast in the faith**, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. (1 Pet. 5:8-9)*

Notice that Satan must *seek* someone to devour. He is unable to devour anyone at his own whim and will. He must be given opportunity to do this. The door must be opened for him (Gen. 4:7). When Peter tells us to resist Satan steadfast in the faith, he is telling us not to accept Satan's onslaughts. He is telling us to stand in our position of victory. The word *resist* used in 1 Pet. 5:8 means "*to counteract, oppose, defeat, and to **withstand**.*" It is the same thing we are told to do in Ephesians 6:

*Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. 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. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to **withstand** in the evil day, and having done all, to stand (Eph. 6:10-13).*

I once heard a preacher misquote the passage this way: “We need to put on the armor of God so that we can *stand* the wiles of the devil.” Actually the passage says, “*Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand **against** the wiles of the devil.*” The preacher left out the word “against”. The difference is if we “stand the wiles of the devil” then we just put up with them. However, if we “stand *against* the wiles of the devil” then we are not accepting Satan’s attacks against us but confronting them head on.

Notice phrases such as “be strong”, “put on”, and “ye may be able”. This shows us that it is *our responsibility* to get victory and not God’s. God has provided us with the resources that we need to defeat the enemy. If we are defeated then it has nothing to do with control or lack of it on God’s part. He has delegated His authority to us and expects us to exercise it. He has given us His Word and expects us to utilize it against the enemy. He tells us to “withstand” or “resist”. *Withstand* does not mean to simply stand there and take it. As noted above, it is the exact same word used in 1 Peter 5:8 which means “to resist” or oppose.

Utilizing the Language of Faith

We often fail to aggressively resist Satan because we fail to study what God’s Word says about all that Christ has done through His finished work. In 1 John 2:14, we read, “...*because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome **the wicked one.***” Notice two things that this verse states:

- Ye are strong
- Ye have overcome

“*Ye are strong*” and “...*and ye have overcome the wicked one*” This is the “language of faith”. These statements teach us to see things from God’s victorious perspective rather than from a circumstantial perspective. He does not say that “ye are going to overcome the wicked one”. He says that ye have overcome him. Another translation says, “...*because you have a hold on God's truth and because you have defeated the evil one.*” (1 John 2:14; J. B. Phillips). We have a hold on God’s truth when we acknowledge that Satan is defeated in our lives despite whether we *see it* or *feel it*. Another translation says:

*“Fathers, I write to you because you know him, the one who has lived from the beginning. Young men, I write to you because you are strong. **You believe God's word. You have won the victory over the devil**”* (World English New Testament).

Faith sees the victory that God has given as a “present tense fact” and not something to be put off for the future. From God’s perspective we are already strong and we are already overcomers. *The language of faith* sees and speaks things from how God sees things and not from how circumstances dictate to us.

Since he knows that faith is the only means by which one can resist him successfully, the devil has cleverly invented ways to destroy true faith in God’s people. If he can keep people from trusting God then he is able to prevent the will of God in their lives. This will open opportunity to destroy his target. However, you have been given God’s present tense promise of victory. Utilize these promises as a shield of faith and walk in the victory that Christ has made available to you through His great sacrifice.

In order to see the works of Satan defeated in our personal lives we must learn to apply *the language of faith*, which looks to God’s Word to know what Jesus has done on our behalf and sees His victory as a present tense truth. Satan attempts to trick us into putting off all victories until the future. That way he can continue to beat on us. However, when we claim our victory as a “now” victory we will see Satan’s works in our lives defeated much sooner.

Gideon and the Language of Faith

Gideon has always appealed to me as one of the easiest examples to refer to when studying how we are to apply God’s language of faith in our walk of victory over the devil. In Judges 6:12 we read, *“And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him, and said unto him, The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour”*.

The Israelites were being oppressed by their enemies, the Midianites. Even though it seemed that Midian was successful in their persecution of Israel, thus leaving Gideon quite fearful of them, the

angel of the Lord gave Gideon a faith revelation that revealed things from God's perspective. *God saw Gideon as a mighty man of valor.* Yet we see that Gideon was acting like anything *but* a mighty man of valor. Despite this, God, speaking and utilizing the language of faith, declared that Gideon *is* (present tense) *a mighty man of valor*:

*And Gideon said unto him, Oh my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt? but now the Lord hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites. And the Lord looked upon him, and said, **Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee?*** (Judges 6:13-14)

Notice two statements made by God concerning Gideon that were definite statements of faith. He says, "*The Lord is with thee, **thou mighty man of valour***" (v. 12) and "*Go **in this thy might**, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee?*" (v. 14) God is telling Gideon that he is *already* a mighty man of valor and that he *already* has might. God did not wait until Gideon had defeated the Midianites in combat to tell him this.

God continued to speak faith building words to Gideon, even giving a dream and an interpretation to two men that absolutely established that victory belonged to Gideon *before* the battle began, "*And his fellow answered and said, This is nothing else **save the sword of Gideon** the son of Joash, a man of Israel: **for into his hand hath God delivered Midian, and all the host***" (Judges 6:13-14). This was a prophetic confirmation of God's Word to Gideon. This Word so strengthened Gideon's faith that as we read on, *we find him finally speaking the language of faith* rather than the complaining and talks of doubt that one reads earlier in Judges 6:

And it was so, when Gideon heard the telling of the dream, and the interpretation thereof, that he worshipped, and returned into the host of Israel, and

said, Arise; for the Lord hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian. (Judge 7:15)

The Scripture says that, “Gideon heard the telling of the dream.” Remember that “*faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God*” (Rom. 10:17). Gideon has heard God’s Word, his faith is strengthened, and he now begins to line his confession with God’s Word.

Gideon tells his men, “*Arise; for **the Lord hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian.***” Gideon says this before the battle has begun. He is saying the same thing about his situation that God said about it. Gideon sees that his enemy is already defeated long before there is any tangible evidence of it. Faith claims the thing God promised *before* it ever sees any visible tangible evidence. It says the same thing about a situation that God says despite what the circumstances appear to be.

We *must* speak God’s Word if we want results. If God says that our enemy is defeated then by the authority of His Word, and not on the basis of our present visible circumstances, we are to claim victory in those areas of our lives in which Satan attempts to attack us.

Using God’s Promises to Overcome Satan

Christians need to apply this principle to all of God’s promises if they are to experience victory over Satan’s works in their lives. In Romans 4, we see that present tense possession *is the language of God*. Notice verse 17 which says, “(As it is written, ***I have made thee a father of many nations,***) *before him whom he believed, even God...*” (Rom. 4:17a). God said this to Abraham *before* there was ever any visible or tangible proof of this promise to him. He also expected Abraham to accept this statement as a present fact in spite of the conditions that told him it was impossible. This is *the language of faith—to take God’s promises as our present possession*.

Victory in life’s battles comes from knowing the truth about what Christ has accomplished on our behalf and what we have become as a result of it. “Truth” concerning our victory in Christ is not based on our present circumstances, but on what God has said about it (John 8:31-32, 44; 17:14-17; 2 Tim. 2:25-26). Faith takes God’s Word as

truth even when it contradicts natural circumstances. In Psalm 91:3-4 we learn how God's truth protects us from satanic onslaught:

*“Surely he shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisy pestilence. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his **truth** shall be **thy shield** and buckler.”*

The New Living Translation paraphrases the latter part of verse four this way: *“His faithful promises are your armor and protection.”* These promises are available to those who trust God and believe that they are truth, despite any contradicting circumstances.

We are to withstand Satan's attacks using God's promises. Paul wrote, *“Above all, taking **the shield of faith**, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked”* (Eph. 6:16). We utilize this shield of faith by standing on what God has promised against Satan's lies. The late Baptist preacher, C. H. Spurgeon, said, *“There is a sacred art in being able to handle the shield of faith. Let me explain to you how that can be. You handle it well if you are able to quote The Promises of God against the Attacks of your Enemy.”*⁶

Spurgeon's advice is useless unless we have knowledge of God's promises and God's character. Jesus said, *“...and ye shall know the **truth**, and the **truth shall make you free**.”* (John 8:31-32; 17:14-17). Only knowledge of the truth will bring deliverance and liberation (Prov. 11:9; James 1:25).

Satan's lies keep us in bondage to sin but God's truth-promises sets us free (John 8:34-36; Rom. 6:18, 22; 1 John 3:8). Satan's lies keep us in bondage to sickness, but God's truth-promises bring health and healing (Luke 13:16; Matt. 8:16-17). Satan's lies keeps us in bondage to fear, but we are set free through God's truth (Heb. 2:14-15; Rom. 8:14-15; 2 Tim. 1:7; Psalm 27:1-3; Gal. 5:1). To overcome Satan in every area of our lives we must acknowledge the truth of God's promises over his lies and claim these promises by faith.

We have already been redeemed from Satan's dominion. We have already been delivered from Satan's evil government (Acts 26:18; Col. 1:12-14). Faith recognizes what Jesus has already done and sees it as true despite obstacles that speak to the contrary. Satan is

ineffective against a child of God who knows the truth concerning his or her victory in Christ Jesus. In order for one to appropriate faith to overcome satanic forces, one must gain knowledge of all that God has promised and use them as a shield against the lies of the enemy.

Conclusion: God's Truth-Promises Versus Circumstances

The way to make the redemptive work of Christ *effective* in our lives and make Satan *ineffective* is to stand on God's Word of Truth that informs us about our victory in Christ Jesus. Christ's victory can only be made practical in our lives as we stand on God's Word concerning Satan's defeat and our victory over him. The way of defeat for our enemy and the way of victory for us is to have God's Word *in* us. Satan knows this and that is why he must go after the Word of God. It is the primary source of faith for victory. It is the primary means for defeating him.

Claiming God's promises in order to combat the devil's lies is often more difficult than it sounds. Many Christians are very easily discouraged because circumstances in their lives are not always consistent with what God says in His Word. The devil's strategy is to make us focus more on the circumstances than on God's Word. Then the devil deceives us into believing a lie that since our circumstances are not lining up with God's Word then His promises are not applicable to us. Agreement with God's Word may often mean that I authoritatively state my confidence in the Word over and above the circumstances and situations that confront me that are contrary to what the Word says they should be.

All of God's promises are appropriated by *faith*. Faith does not rely upon physical circumstances. It believes that what God says is true and is just as real as if it were physically present (Heb. 11:1; Mark 11:24; 2 Cor. 5:7). Satan has DECEIVED many Christians into accepting the lie that God did not mean what He said due to the fact that their circumstances did not appear to line up with God's Word. Nonetheless, God's truth has authority over circumstances, but you and I must *stand* on that truth and accept its authority if we want to see our circumstances change to fit the declaration of God.

Chapter Seven

Why Satan MUST Yield to God's Word

*Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.... And take the helmet of salvation, and the **sword of the Spirit**, which is **the spoken word of God** (Eph. 6:11, 17; New Heart English Bible)*

Here is one of the most undeniable passages in the Bible teaching us the value of God's Word as an offensive weapon against satanic forces. All that we have studied in this book so far and afterwards can be summarized in the passage above. We are to *take* the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God as we stand against Satan and his wiles.

The most formidable weapon in the world has been made available to us. Yet this begs the question as to why God's Word would have an effect on Satan. What is it about God's Word when utilized by the believer that enables him or her to defeat Satan within their realm of influence? While Jesus' legal defeat over Satan gives us authority, what is it about God's Word that forces Satan and his demonic hosts to submit to this authority?

Though Satan has been rendered a legal defeat he appears to carry on his activities as though he still has a chance for victory. He also appears to have no real respect for God or any of God's people. He seems to still be gaining victory over most segments of the church. Therefore, what is it about God's Word that, when wielded by God's people, will bring Satan defeat in our personal lives?

Words as Weapons

In chapter two we learned that Satan was the first to introduce violence into God's peaceful non-violent universe. He spread his hatred and violence using his lying accusations as a weapon against God. This would later bring his own defeat as the "war over words" turned against him.

Since Satan's fall and negative influence on the universe, God has revealed that words can indeed be used as weapons. The Bible has depicted words as weapons, though often in the negative. The Psalmist cries out to God about his enemies who "*whet their tongue like a sword, and bend their bows to shoot their arrows, even bitter words*" (Ps. 64:3; see also Ps. 57:4). Solomon wrote, "*There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword: but the tongue of the wise is health*" (Prov. 12:18). Concerning God's use of Isaiah as His prophet he wrote, "*And he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword*" (Isa. 49:2; see also Hosea 6:5). These passages demonstrate the power that words have. If words and speech can be viewed as "swords" then there is something more to them than we give them credit for.

Jesus demonstrates the power of His own word as a sword that can do great damage to those He fights against (Rev. 1:16; 2:16). At the end of the age when Jesus returns to deal with the His enemies, we will have a vivid demonstration of just how powerful this sword of His mouth truly is (Rev. 19:11-21). In these passages, we see that the words of men, both good and wicked, have some power and can be a weapon for good or evil. Yet, we see that the Word of God as used by our Lord has even greater power than that of men. What better weapon could we choose in this warfare than God's Word itself since it possesses the very life and power of God?

Logos

The fact that God's Word is a formidable weapon is made evident in John's epistle in which he says that the young men during his time had been victorious over Satan through its use:

*I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are **strong**, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one (1 John 2:14)*

The apostle writes, "*because ye are strong.*" The word "strong" is the same Greek word "ischus" that is found in Ephesians 6:10 in reference to God's own might: "*Finally, my brethren, be*

strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.” “Might” by definition is “superior strength”. These young men had *ischus*, God’s *might*, which made them strong. They possessed this might-superior strength because they had God’s Word living in them. By this might, this superior strength, they defeated Satan. One can only “be strong” by “being strong in the Lord” if they will be victorious in this warfare. We will touch on this further momentarily.

The “Word of God” that made these men strong enough to overcome Satan is from the Greek word *logos*. It is the same word that the writer of Hebrews referred to as a *sword*—a *weapon of life and power*, when he wrote, “*For the word of God is **quick**, and **powerful**, and sharper than any twoedged **sword***” (Heb. 4:12). The Amplified Bible renders it, “*For the Word that God speaks is **alive and full of power** [making it active, operative, energizing, and effective]*”. The Message Bible paraphrases it “*For God’s Message is full of life and power*”. No wonder these young men had God’s might and were victorious over the wicked one: they had the *logos* abiding in them with its life, power, and energy.

Furthermore, our Lord Jesus told us that, “.....*the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are LIFE*” (John 6:63). Divine life is in the Word of God because the Holy Spirit, Who is the inspirer of the Word is the One Who gives life to it: “.....*for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life*” (2 Cor. 3:6).

The life and power of God’s Word is demonstrated by how it is able to give a spiritual rebirth to those who are enslaved to Satan’s kingdom of death and destruction: “*Being born not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which **liveth and abideth forever***” (1 Pet. 1:23). Phillips Translation says: “.....*the **live permanent word of the living God has given you his own indestructible heredity.***” God’s Word has the life and power to overcome spiritual death which is satanic bondage (Heb. 2:14-15). The realm of death is defeated by the life giving power of God’s Word.

Satan operates under a kingdom of death and destruction. God’s omnipotent miraculous power has been shown to easily overcome *physical* death (1 Kings 17:17-24; 2 Kings 13:21; Matt. 9:23; Mark 5:23; Luke 8:41; John 11:38-44; Acts 20:9, 10). The most powerful demonstration of God’s miraculous power and authority over death is when He raised Jesus (Acts 2:22-25; 1 Cor. 15:20-28, 53-58).

Through the resurrection of Christ both physical and spiritual death has been conquered and destroyed (Eph. 2:1-5).

God always had the *power* to overcome satanic death. However, because man had chosen to place himself under Satan's reign of death God was not always free to exhibit His power over it on man's behalf, from a legal aspect, without violating man's free choices, thus breaking His own covenant of freedom (Rom. 5:12-14; Deut. 30:15, 19).

God is now free to exhibit His life giving power on behalf of any faith-filled believer willing to receive it. God's Word can impart life into any situation. The born again experience serves to illustrate the power of life that God's Word has over Satan and death. Once we see how God's Word is able to overcome death and impart life then we will not hesitate to use this Word against the one who *had* the power of death. Since Jesus has already issued Satan a crushing defeat on our behalf then we need not allow ourselves to be in bondage to his power of death.

Rhema

The *logos* is powerful in itself. Because the *logos* resided in the young men referred to in 1 John 2:14 so did the potential for overcoming the wicked one. The phrase "word of God" in Eph. 6:17, our foundation text, comes from a different Greek word called "*rhema*". In order to experience personal victory; the *logos* that resides in us must become a *rhema* by the direction of the Holy Spirit.

A *logos* is the sum total of God's Word. By contrast, a *rhema* is an "utterance" or a *spoken word* which is distinct from *logos*. It is the *rhema* of God's Word that we must live by and that will bring supernatural results. Quoting from Deut. 8:3, our Lord Jesus responds to Satan: "*But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God*" (Mat. 4:4). Jesus is using the word "*rhema*" in this passage. Now look at what God says through Isaiah:

*So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth:
it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish*

that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. (Isa. 55:11)

The *rhema* is that utterance that goes forth from God's mouth that will accomplish the very task that it is sent to do. *It* (The Word) will accomplish the thing that pleases God. God's Word is so powerful, it seems to take on a life of its own:*and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it* (Isa. 55:11). It is by God's *rhema*, that which goes forth from God's mouth, that all things are upheld, thus demonstrating its power:

*Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and **upholding all things by the word of his power**, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high (Heb. 1:3)*

The Greek word for "power" used here is "*dunamis*" which is the miracle working power that God endues believers with (see Acts 1:8). The *rhema* is filled with miracle working power because the Holy Spirit Himself ensures the fulfillment of God's Word. We see this in the case of Mary when she was chosen to bear our Savior:

*Then the angel said to her, **The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you [like a shining cloud]; and so the holy (pure, sinless) Thing (Offspring) which shall be born of you will be called the Son of God. And listen! Your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is now the sixth month with her who was called barren. For with God nothing is ever impossible and no word from God shall be without power or impossible of fulfillment.** Then Mary said, Behold, I am the handmaiden of the Lord; let it be done to me according to what you have said. And the angel left her. (Luke 1:35-37; The Amplified Bible)*

Yet, the fulfillment of this *rhema* did not happen apart from Mary's cooperation. In great faith Mary said, "let it be done to me according to what you have said." Faith always expresses itself by a *positive confession*, a verbal affirmation of confidence that God's Word is true and that it will happen as promised.

God's Word is backed with power so that you and I can be confident as we are speaking it with authority against the obstacles and circumstances that demonic forces attempt to destroy our lives with. God's Word is a formidable and powerful weapon against the enemy. Nevertheless, we are highly dependent upon the Holy Spirit to give us the right *rhema* at the right time to confront satanic assaults. In all actuality, it is the Holy Spirit that gives God's Word its miracle working power.

God's Word is Empowered by God

In Luke 1:37 we are told that "no word from God shall be without power" but just before that Gabriel said, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you" (v. 35). Here we see that the Word from God is not lacking in power because it is empowered the Holy Spirit. The miraculous power that is in the *rhema* of God is because the Holy Spirit Himself is giving that Word its power.

Eph. 6:17 says that God's Word is "the sword of the Spirit". There is some debate about whether this is speaking of the "human spirit" or the third member of the Triune Godhead.¹ I firmly believe it is the latter since, first of all, it is the Holy Spirit who brings "all things to your remembrance, whatsoever **I have said** unto you." (John 14:26). While it is imperative that God's people memorize Scripture before there is conflict with satanic forces, we must also be completely dependent upon the Holy Spirit to give us the right Bible promise at the right time in order to route our enemy.

Secondly, the Bible clearly states that the weapons we use are empowered by God Himself: "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but **mighty through God** to the pulling down of strong holds." (2 Cor. 10:4). Our weapons have great might and power, demonstrating their effectiveness for disintegrating anything that the enemy attacks with, but this is only because God empowers them. Earlier we looked at the fact that the young men possessed *ischus*,

God's might, His superior strength. This was due to having the Word of God in them. We saw that this is the same word used in Ephesians 6 in relation to God's own might. Paul tells us that we are told to rely completely on God's power when using our weaponry. Preceding the command to put on our armor and to take the sword, we are told to first be strong *in the Lord* and in the power of *His* might:

*Finally, my brethren, **be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.** Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil (Eph. 6:10, 11)*

In this passage we are given three words in relation to God and the armor that He provides us for defeating Satan: “strong,” “power” and “might.” How can we have anything less than victory over satanic forces with this kind of weaponry? We have already talked about “might” so we will briefly look at the other two and then look at this *might* once more.

The word “strong” is the same word used in Philippians 4:13 which reads, “*I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*” With this “strengthening” we have unlimited potential to accomplish great things for Christ and to do irreparable damage to Satan's kingdom. It is through the empowerment of Christ by the agency of the Holy Spirit that we are able to use the armor. We are not required to simply be strong, but to be strong (empowered and strengthened) in the Lord. The empowerment is made available to us, but the choice is ours to receive or reject it.

The “Power” of our Weapons

Furthermore, the empowerment that we receive is in the power of His might. Concerning the word “power,” F. E. Marsh gives us the Greek definition:

“*Kratos*”—This means the manifestation of power, or the strength which is requisite in order to perform any given action. It is translated by the words “*strength,*” “*dominion,*” and “*power,*” in speaking of God's power in action (Luke 1:51; 1 Peter 4:11; Jude

25; Ephesians 1:9; Colossians 1:11), and it is also rendered “*mightily*” in Acts 19:20, when reference is made to the widespread influence exerted by the effective working of the Word of God. When applied to the believer, the word is used to describe what God does in him (Colossians 1:11)²

In his definition Marsh references Colossians 1:11 which says, “*God will strengthen you with his own great power so that you will not give up when troubles come, but you will be patient*” (New century Version), or as the KJV renders it, “*Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power.*” Again there is the combination of “*dunamis*” which is the power that the Holy Spirit endues the believer with and “*kratos*” which enables us to perform any and every task.

The warfare against the devil that we have been called to is a winnable war. We have been promised supernatural strength and power as long as we are in union with Christ. We have been given sufficient power and strengthening as a result of this union that ensures the defeat of satanic principalities if we would just put it to use.

God’s own character and might is well able to overcome the malignancy of satanic opposition. Nonetheless, this *might* for destroying satanic strongholds is exercised by faith:

And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come (Eph. 1:19)

The “*mighty power*” here is goes back to the word “*ischus*” that we have already seen empowers us for defeating Satan by using God’s Word. This *mighty power* for overcoming Satan is the same power that raised Christ from Satan’s dominion of death. As a result of this *ischus*, this *might of God*, Christ was raised from the dead and placed above all of the principalities and powers, which naturally

includes satanic principalities and powers. Satan's forces cannot compete with such great power.

This great might is made available to us in our personal warfare with Satan. This same might places us above satanic opposition because we are in union with Christ and are seated with Him (Eph. 1:6). However, if we are not seeing this might in our lives, we need to check to be sure that we actively believe God to work it rather than *hoping* that "he'll simply do it in His own good time." There is a difference between *faith* and mere *wishing*.

It is the Spirit of Christ, the Holy Spirit who resurrected Christ from the dead (Rom. 8:9-11), and it is He who makes the might of God available to us in our warfare against satanic forces. It is only by His power, and not by simply quoting Scripture, that we overcome the devil. Yet when we use the Word of God backed by the miraculous power of the Spirit, we become a dread to the devil.

Why Satan Must Yield to God's Word

This is why the Word works against Satan and why He must obey it when it is spoken with authority by a blood-washed child of God. Satan has no respect for God or His authority. Satan hates God and refuses to obey Him. If Satan was moved simply by the *authority* of God's Word then he would not be rebelling and destroying today. Satan only respects *power*. Therefore God has to back His Word with superior power if the child of God is to defeat Satan with it.

The Holy Spirit not only brings to our memory the right *rhema* at the right time but He also empowers the *rhema*. He gives personal victory over the devil as we yield to Him and His leading. The *rhema* is given to us by the Holy Spirit at the crucial point of a battle with demonic forces. There is no victory over the devil apart from the empowerment of the Spirit. Jesus Himself had to be *anointed* with the Holy Ghost and His power before He could destroy the devil's works:

*"How God **anointed** Jesus of Nazareth with the **HOLY GHOST** and **power**: who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him."* (Acts 10:38)

This Scripture shows us exactly what the *anointing*, the *empowerment* of God, is able to do to Satan's works. This same Holy Spirit is the reason why the *sword of the Spirit* is anointed. Again we find that even the Lord Jesus, the Living Word of God, was very much reliant upon the Holy Spirit in the exercise of authority over the devil: "*But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you*" (Matt. 12:28). Jesus told the Pharisees that He casted out devils by *the Spirit of God*. The Spirit of God works in line with the Word of God. The Holy Spirit anoints the Word of God to accomplish that which pleases God (Isa. 55:11).

Isaiah wrote, "*.....the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing*" (Isa. 10:27). Smith's Bible Dictionary describes a "yoke" as: "A well-known implement of husbandry, frequently used metaphorically for subjection, e.g. 1 Kings 12:4, 9-11; Isa. 9:4; Jer. 5:5; hence an 'iron yoke' represents an unusually galling bondage. Deut. 28:48; Jer. 28:13."³

It is Satan's intention to bring us into subjection to him by putting unbearable yokes upon us. Satan would try to bind us in a yoke of sickness and disease (Luke 13:16) but God's Word is anointed to destroy that yoke (Ps. 107:20; Prov. 4:20-22). Satan would try to put us in a yoke of poverty and failure but meditating upon God's anointed Word will destroy that yoke (Josh. 1:8; Ps. 1:1-3). Satan would try to put us in bondage to a yoke of sin but God's anointed Word can easily destroy that yoke (Ps. 119:9-11). Satan would try to put us in fear, doubt and unbelief (Rom. 8:15-16), but God's Word is anointed to destroy that yoke and impart faith (Rom. 10:17).

The Word is anointed to get results. The *anointing* is able to destroy all of the bondages that Satan attempts to place upon us and the lives of those we minister to. But we must believe the Word in order for this anointing to work. It is by the Spirit of God that His Word becomes a reality in our lives. Everywhere the Word is manifested in our lives is an area that the devil has been defeated.

Faith Releases the Power

If the Holy Spirit has made this much power available to His church, why do we see so little of it? Basically, it is due both to a lack of knowledge of God's Word as well as the power God is willing to display on behalf of those who will believe it: "*And Jesus answering*

said unto them, Do ye not err, because ye know not the scriptures, neither the power of God” (Mark 12:24).

The power, which is the anointing, is resident in the Word because the Holy Spirit backs the Word with power. The word “power” here comes from that same Greek word we have already discussed, *dunamis*, which we said means *miraculous power*. God’s Word has the power to perform miracles because it is anointed by the Holy Spirit. However, lack of knowledge of the Word as well as faith in its power to produce results prevents the average person from experiencing the fullness of God’s miraculous power. In Romans 4:17, Paul wrote concerning Abraham:

*(As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him **whom he believed**, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and **calleth those things which be not as though they were**. Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, **according to that which was spoken**, So shall thy seed be. (Rom. 4:17, 18; see also Psalm 33:9; 148:1-6; Heb. 11:3).*

God made a *promise* to Abraham and we also have promises from God that are available to us (2 Pet. 1:3-4; 2 Cor. 1:20-22). How did Abraham get God to activate the power of life to bring the fulfillment of His promise? It says that *he believed*.

This is why it is necessary to fully understand how God’s Word is resident with power and why we have taken a whole chapter to deal with this. Apart from faith in the power of God’s Word it will be nothing more than a lifeless book full of stories and poetry. We may believe in its historical accuracy, its inspiration, and its ability to stimulate us intellectually, but we will also remain defeated by satanic forces if we do not come to grips with its God-given power to thwart and destroy the works of the enemy.

Satan performs “lying signs and wonders” today and there is a definite increase in supernatural satanic activity which is a sign of the last days (Matt. 24:24; 2 Thess. 2:8-10; Rev. 13:11-14). Yet Jesus said, “*I give unto you power [or authority] to tread on serpents and*

scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy” (Luke 10:19). The word for power as related to Satan is “dunamis” which we have already seen is defined as “miraculous power”. Christ has given His Church authority over the lying signs and wonders of the devil.

God does not expect us to confront Satan without any power backing our authority while allowing Satan to use miraculous power. The Holy Spirit anoints His Word with His great power to counter the limited power of Satan.⁴

Speaking Life Rather Than Death

As we believe God’s Word He will activate the life in the Word and it will change our situations. He will bring life to our dead circumstances. If you are familiar with the story of Abraham and Sarah, you know that God promised them a child when they were well beyond child bearing years. God specializes in doing the impossible. However, true faith in God’s Word does not consider the circumstances that Satan brings that would make His Word appear to be untrue. Again, we see in Abraham:

*“And not being weak in faith, he **considered not** his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb.”*
(Rom. 4:19)

Abraham did not consider the circumstances. He did not consider the “deadness” of his situation. Instead he considered God’s promises and the fact that God is able to give life to the dead. If we want to walk in true faith we too must consider and declare the Word of God over our impossible situations.

Satan works primarily within the physical realm. If he can get us to focus on what we see rather than on what God’s Word says then he will have us right where he wants us. God is not dependent on us having favorable circumstances in order to fulfill His promises. We need to remember this when Satan brings our way “lying symptoms” of sickness and other physical trials that look to do us in.

Satan knows that as long as we do not believe what God says then we cannot receive God's empowerment to affect his defeat in our own lives and personal circumstances. Therefore he will continue to hold on to ground in our lives as long as he can. Satan is fond of making God look like a liar. This is what unbelief is—calling God a *liar*.

The difference between victory and defeat as well as to whether we will experience the power of God's Word is ***what we choose to do with our mouths***. Solomon wrote, "*Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof*" (Prov. 18:21). The Easy to Read Version renders this, "*The tongue can speak words that bring life or death. Those who love to talk must be ready to accept what it brings.*" To demonstrate further that these choices are truly dependent upon us, Moses writes:

*See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil.... I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: **therefore choose life**, that both thou and thy seed may live* (Deut. 30:15, 19)

Moses taught that life and death was not just physical animation or cessation (Deut. 30:15, 18). Death and Life have to do with whether we are in relationship with God and whether we are experiencing His blessing in our lives. Moses made *death* synonymous with *cursing* and *life* synonymous with *blessing*. This blessing and cursing, or life and death, spoken of by Moses dealt with the difference between poverty and prosperity, sickness and health, and God's presence and the absence of it (see Deut. 28). Now, when coupled with Solomon's admonition, we can bring Moses' teaching in line with Proverbs 18:21.

The Power of our Words

Our words have a very strong impact on our health, children, and environment. Our words certainly go beyond simply making someone angry or happy. If one continually tells a child that he or she is going to grow up to become a worthless member of society, and if

that child does not learn to reject those words, he or she will surely become what was spoken. The parent will have spoken *death* into that child's life. On the other hand, if a parent continues to tell a child that he or she can be great and can accomplish anything in this life, quite often the child becomes a productive member of society.

While God is the One who empowers His Word, He leaves the choice to receive His life and power in our hands, or rather, *in our mouths*. Our words demonstrate our confidence in God and what He has said or our confidence in Satan and his lies. Anything that goes contrary to God's Word is a lie from Satan no matter how real it may seem to be at the time. If Satan is able to get us to "believe what we see," accept it as truth, and speak and act in line with it then we have closed God out and let Satan in.

God will not force the good things that He desires to give through clenched teeth (Psalm 103:1-5; Psalm 81:10-11). If we choose not to open our mouths wide, through faith-filled prayer and a confident faith expression of God's promises then we have limited Him from doing what He desires to do for us.

God has created man with a will that is free. God seeks to bless and Satan seeks to destroy. God does not force His blessing upon us but expects us to receive them by faith (Heb. 11:6; James 1:5-7). In order to bring destruction, Satan must be given an opportunity (Eph. 4:27; 1 Pet. 5:8-10). We do *not* have to give it to him.

Therefore, our words and actions open doors and grants Satan authority to wreak havoc in our lives. On the other hand, our words, when consistent with God's Word, closes the door to satanic assaults. We invite God in to exhibit His power through our faith (Mark 11:22-24) and we limit God through our unbelief. God is a gentleman and He simply will not force His way into our lives (Psalm 78:41; Rev. 3:20; Mark 6:5-6) no matter how desperately He desires to help us.

Many believers do not understand that God places such an importance upon the words of our mouth. Jesus felt so strongly about this that He told us that we would be held accountable for every nonproductive word we speak (Mat. 12:34-37). Believe it or not, our words have an effect in the spirit realm and can certainly affect our lives.

As we have already learned, Jesus taught that words, particularly His own, had more than just PHYSICAL consequences.

He taught that His words are “spirit and life” (John 6:63). This is an implication that our words are more than just sounds coming out of our mouths. Our words have some impact in the spirit realm.

Therefore, complaining, moaning, and giving verbal acknowledgment to what Satan is doing in our circumstances is indeed speaking *death* and giving him the opportunity he seeks (see 1 Cor. 10:10). On the other hand, praise, worship, and a verbal acknowledgment of God’s promises in the midst of every situation will overcome death and bring forth the *life of God with power* in all of our circumstances.⁵

Conclusion

To conclude, allow me to briefly go over the most salient point of this chapter as well as highlight some of the deceptions that Satan has attempted to use to keep God’s people from operating in the supernatural power that He makes available through His Word.

Satan is unable to combat or resist God’s omnipotent power. However, Satan also knows that God, due to His righteousness and integrity, cannot display His power on our behalf if we choose not to believe and accept His Word and promises. Therefore, Satan has created a number of deceptions intended to hinder our faith in God.

In our last chapter we mentioned that one of Satan’s deceptive ways is to get us to put off for the future what the Bible says is ours at this very moment. Then he will move us, by our words, to say *futuristically* what God says is ours *now*. For example, we have emphasized throughout this book that Satan is already a defeated foe and he is defeated right now in every area of our life. Yet, too many Christians will put his defeat off into the future during the millennium and the judgment. In the meantime he is able to wreak havoc in their lives right now because they are not taking their stand on God’s Word in those areas that exhibit his defeat, many areas which we will examine in more detail in a later chapter.

Satan has also been able to discredit the truth about verbal expressions of faith. He has deceived some well-meaning Christians into going to extremes with it and moves them to claim things that God’s Word does *not* authorize. Others will see these extremes and “throw the baby out the baby with the bathwater”. Either way, Satan is

able to hinder God's power from manifesting in the lives of believers and he gains a victory.

Furthermore, Satan has had his *counterfeits* of this truth with Christian Science and other metaphysical and mind science cults. In many of these cults you are taught to lie and deny the reality of your circumstances. Many Christians understandably do not want to be associated with such cultic foolishness but in doing so many of them will reject the genuine Biblical truth about the authority of our words to actually *change* circumstances.

In line with this Satan has been able to raise up "ministers" who accuse God's people of borrowing and practicing cultic concepts derived from these mind science and metaphysical groups. There is a major difference between what the cults practice and what the Bible actually teaches. As we have seen, Abraham did not take His circumstances into consideration when they appeared to contradict God's Word. Nevertheless, he never denied the existence of his circumstances as many mind science cults will teach one to do. He simply saw God's Word as having more authority than his circumstances (Heb. 11:1).

We do not teach or practice denying the reality of the mountain but we can command it to move based on the authority of God's Word (Mark 11:22-24). Once we have done this then we can "believe that we receive" *before we have seen* the mountain removed. God's power will ensure that the mountain is moved in consistency with His Word.

Jesus has defeated Satan and has made His power available to us. However, His victory is meaningless to us apart from believing the Word of God, verbally expressing it and acting upon it. The victory of Christ is made a reality in our lives as we authoritatively assert it in every attack of the prince of death. Then we will see the miraculous power of God to heal from sickness and disease, deliver, provide and do all of the things that God has promised against the works of our enemy. You see, ***God's Word is devil destruction power.***

Chapter Eight

Verbal Confrontation with Satan

*“Then Jesus **said** unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: **for it is written**, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.” (Matt. 4:11)*

In the last chapter we talked about the power of the tongue and how it is the determiner of life and death in our lives and circumstances. In this chapter we will look more at the fact that it is God’s Word, spoken authoritatively and forcefully by His people, which brings the results of the Word in our lives and gives us the victory over Satan that already belongs to us.

The Word Must be Spoken

God has given His people authority over all of the power of the enemy (Luke 10:17-20), but our authority is exercised by verbal commands. You cannot rout the enemy using “mental telepathy”. You must issue commands that are consistent with God’s Word. For example, in His temptation in the wilderness, Jesus commanded the devil to leave, but He did it verbally on the basis of the Word.

Matt. 4:11 says, “*Then Jesus **said** unto him....*” Jesus had to use against Satan what I like to call His “saying power”. We will learn momentarily that we have this same “saying power”. If we are to experience Christ’s victory then we need to exercise this power.

In verses 6 and 7 of Matt. 4 we see that Satan tempted Jesus to do something presumptuous, misquoting a promise from God that spoke of angelic protection. Jesus saw through the lie and responded to Satan with God’s Word. As our Lord continued to stand on the Word of God against the attacks of Satan He experienced both victory over Satan and the reality of God’s promised angelic protection: “*Then the devil **leaveth him**, and behold, angels came and ministered unto him*” (Matt. 4:11). What Jesus would have forfeited if He had yielded to temptation, He actually *received* by submitting to the Father’s authority and authoritatively exercising the Word against Satan.

Authority must be exercised verbally in line with God's Word. In the Bible, we read of Jesus *rebuking* demons (Matt. 17:18) and the works of the devil (Matt. 8:26; Luke 4:39). In Luke 4:33-37, Jesus confronted a man with an unclean spirit in the synagogue. The spirit cried out to Jesus and asked to be left alone. Nonetheless, Jesus dealt with the spirit:

*“And Jesus **rebuked** him, **saying**, hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the devil had thrown him in the midst, he came out of him and hurt him not. And they were all amazed, and spake among themselves, saying, What a **WORD** is this! For with **AUTHORITY** and **POWER** he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out.”* (Luke 4:35-36).

Notice two words used here: “rebuked” and “saying”. Both statements show Jesus verbally and authoritatively dealing with a satanic entity. A rebuke is a command or an order. It is a stern verbal expression of disapproval that can actually be an attack or a defense. Only those who have authority over that which is receiving a rebuke can issue one, as Peter so sadly discovered (Matthew 8:32, 33). Every command or rebuke of the enemy must be done by *saying* something. As we have seen in Matt. 4, the commands we issue must be consistent with God's Word.

There is no substitute for having knowledge of God's Word when we need to exercise authority over satanic forces. A pastor that I served under told us a story about a confrontation he had with an evil spirit. He was well known in the Christian community for his boldness in dealing with demons. One evening he received a phone call from some Christians who were attempting to cast a devil out of a woman but were having a difficult time. They asked him for his help. However, his wife was out and he was watching his children. So desperate for his help they sent someone over to watch the children while he came to do ministry.

When he arrived, the evil spirit was speaking through the woman and saying, “You can't cast me out. None of you can cast me out.” This pastor simply found a chair, opened his Bible and began to read all of the Scriptures promises concerning our authority. After

spending a little time brushing up on his Biblical authority, he said, “Now I am ready. Devil, come out of her in Jesus Name.” The woman was set free.

The Necessity of Verbal Warfare with the Enemy

Despite the fact that every born again Christian has delegated authority from God, many of God’s people suffer defeat because they simply refuse to speak the Word or make a confession that is consistent with God’s Word.

Some believe that Satan (or his demons) is not to be addressed verbally but that if we just remember God’s Word, this is sufficient. Yet, we as we said earlier, do not exercise authority using *mental telepathy*. We must take God’s Word and address Satan with it from *our mouths*. We must understand that Satan does not read minds. Paul said, “*No one can know what anyone else is really thinking except that person alone, and no one can know God's thoughts except God's own Spirit*” (1 Cor. 2:11; New Living Testament; see also 1 Cor. 2:6-8). Therefore, he cannot receive a “mental rebuke.”¹

Others believe that Satan should simply be ignored. This is a sad and dangerous teaching. While we should not obsess over the devil and spend all of our waking hours thinking about him or even constantly focusing on him in our worship services, neither is he to be ignored. Satan speaks and acts contrary to God’s Word and must be rebuked using this Word.

Another very dangerous and more subtle fatalistic idea that many in the church have accepted is that if they just pray then God will get the devil off of their backs and turn things around. This idea seems Biblical but it really isn’t.

Before we go any further please note that I am not belittling the importance of prayer. I believe strongly in it and I try not go a day without communication with my Heavenly Father. I have written several books on the subject and may write more. And it certainly plays a vitally important role in our warfare with Satan (Daniel 10; Eph. 6:17-19; James 4:7). Nevertheless, when it comes to dealing with the devil and changing one’s circumstances, there is a place where prayer must end and exercising one’s authority based begins. Take note of how God rebukes Moses when Israel was in danger:

*And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will shew to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever. The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace. **And the Lord said unto Moses, Wherefore criest thou unto me? speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward: But lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea** (Exodus 14:13-16)*

God basically asked Moses, “Why are you wasting my time and your time praying. It’s time to take authority. I have given you a rod. USE IT!!!” Moses had used this rod to exercise authority over the plagues that came upon Egypt. He knew his authority. This is why God rebuked him for praying instead of exercising authority. When he stopped praying and started using “the rod of God” it was then that the Egyptians were defeated (Ex. 14:17-28).

So many of God’s people are waiting and hoping for God to help them and intervene in their situations. They are praying and asking God to get the devil off of their backs. They are asking God to change their circumstances. And yet God is waiting for them to take the means that He has provided for their victory. God’s Word is the weapon for triumph in this warfare we enlisted in when we made Christ our Lord and Savior.

Exercising Authority over Sickness

So there is a time when prayer must end and verbal confrontation with the devil begins. Let us use another example from the life of our Lord as a further illustration of this. Most of us who believe in the wonderful truth concerning divine healing are quick to pray over the sick and ask God to heal them. This is indeed a Scriptural practice (Mark 16:15-20; James 5:14-16). However, we should be careful not to limit our ministry to the sick only by *asking God to heal*.

Jesus and his disciples often had verbal confrontations with sickness and the evil spirits that were behind it. They treated sickness as an *enemy* and not as some mysterious blessing from God's sovereign hand as some are prone to do. An example is seen in our Lord's ministry to Peter's mother in law:

*And he arose out of the synagogue, and entered into Simon's house. And Simon's wife's mother was taken with a great fever; and they besought him for her. And he stood over her, and **rebuked the fever**; and it left her: and immediately she arose and ministered unto them (Luke 4:38, 39)*

In this case Jesus did not pray and ask the father to heal this woman. He rebuked the sickness itself, commanding it to go. Here again we see a verbal confrontation with the enemy by rebuking the work of the enemy with authority.

So many people treat sickness as a blessing from God, but Jesus viewed sickness as something hostile and deserving of a victorious confrontation. If all of the church viewed sickness the way that Jesus and His early followers did and recognized that it should be excised by our authority, we would make a greater impact in the world (Luke 13:16; Acts 10:38). But more importantly, we must recognize the necessity of a verbal confrontation with satanic forces and use our *saying power* in line with God's Word in winning it.

Some years ago I attended a church which had a hospital visitation program. Once a month we would go to the hospital and minister to the sick and pray for them. On one occasion some friends and I were going through a ward when we heard a woman moaning: "OOOOOOOH! It hurts so bad!" We went straight to her room and asked her if she would like for us to pray for her. She said, "Yes, please do." We grabbed hands and began to pray in the Spirit.

As we were praying the Holy Spirit told me, "Troy, command that spirit to come out of her stomach in Jesus' name." I let go of my companions' hands. I pointed at her stomach and commanded, "Devil, get off that woman's stomach in the name of Jesus! Loose her and let

her go!” After I did that she stopped moaning and with a surprised but pleasant look on her face said, “I feel so much better now.”

Saying Power

I was able to minister to the lady because I believed what God’s Word says about my authority in Christ. I knew that I could do the same works as Jesus because He Himself said so (John 14:12). Believe it or not we are able to operate in the same saying power that Jesus operated in during His time on earth. Jesus could not have made this any more clearer than He did in Matthew. First notice what Jesus did to a fig tree:

*And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and **said unto it**, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig tree withered away (Matt. 21:19)*

Now I would like to avoid all of the scholarly debates about the symbolic meaning of the fig tree and why Jesus felt compelled to curse it. I would just say here that Jesus has never done anything out of vindictiveness nor just to simply display His great power. Everything Jesus did, He did from an unselfish motive and He did it on behalf of others. Obviously there was something about this tree that required Him to curse it.

However, the primary lesson that we learn from this incident is that Jesus *said* something to the tree that caused it to wither up and die. Jesus had *saying power*. The casual uninformed reader will see this and say, “But yes, Jesus is God. He is the Creator of our universe. Of course He is able to speak to things and produce results. But we’re not God.” This is only half true. Indeed Jesus was and is and always shall be God, the second person in the Triune Godhead. And certainly the Bible makes it clear that Jesus is the Creator of all things. And definitely we mere humans are not deity.

But when Jesus came to earth, He came as a man just like you and I. He did not operate with any God-like advantage that we lack. When Jesus came to earth He came not only to sacrifice Himself for

our redemption but to also show how we can walk in authority if we would simply have faith in His Word. In the passages that follow His successful cursing of the fig tree, Jesus states with abundant clarity that we are able to do exactly as He did:

*And when the disciples saw it, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig tree withered away! Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall **say** unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done. And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive (Matt. 21:20-22)*

In a nutshell Jesus is saying that we have the same *saying power* that He has. We can speak to obstacles that are in the way of our God given mission and command them to move out of our way. While Jesus connects this to prayer, this is not the type of praying that asks God to move the obstacle out of our way. It is the type that speaks directly to the obstacle itself and demands that it moves.

Jesus did not pray to the Father and ask Him to make the fig tree wither. We all know that Jesus is the greatest example of a man who spent much time in prayer—sometimes all night in prayer. Jesus sacrificed sleep in order to spend time with the Father. Yet, when we read through the gospels and we find Jesus ministering, He does not ask the Father to remove sickness, deliver from demons, stop storms, or curse fig trees. He speaks directly to the problems and commands them to cease from their activities.

Jesus said that we have this same *saying power*, this same authority to speak and command and see changes. In the gospel of Luke Jesus is recorded as saying:

*And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might **say** unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you (Luke 17:6)*

Whether it is a mountain or a deeply rooted sycamore tree, faith in God and His Word will release the power of God to remove obstacles. God is simply waiting for us to speak out the command. Many of God's people are too timid and afraid to follow Jesus' instructions here. Yet they wonder why problems continue to persist after spending so much time praying about them. God expects us to use the *saying power* that He has given us.

And if He was not clear enough in His statements in Matthew and Luke, He states it again in one other passage in Matthew in relation to our warfare with demonic forces. When Jesus' disciples were unable to cast a demon out of an epileptic boy, Jesus took over and accomplished the task:

And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour. Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting (Matt. 17:18-21)

Jesus *rebuked* the devil. He did not pray it away. The devil will only move when you issue him a *verbal command*. Jesus' reply to the question of His disciples indicated that they had the same ability if they simply exercised faith. He did not allow any excuses for their failure (as we are prone to do today).

Please note that Jesus did not say that His disciples were unable to cast out the evil spirit because He is God and they were but mere human beings. He told them that the problem had been their *unbelief*. He then further illustrates His point by telling them that if they would have faith (and faith comes by the agency of God's Word – Rom. 10:17) then they can use their *saying power* and see obstacles removed. Note also that He said this in relation to deliverance from

demons. Our saying power is to be used against satanic forces of evil. It is to be used to bring deliverance to ourselves and others.

Saying Power in Action

Of course Satan is able to throw a number of excuses our way to keep us in unbelief and from moving in the *saying power* that we have been given. One of the many sorry excuses for not operating in this is the idea that Jesus meant this only for His disciples. It is the false cessationist ideology that claims that the passages just referenced were meant for those who were with Jesus at that time and were not for us today.

Aside from the fact that the Bible states that everything written in Scripture is for our profit and our learning (2 Tim. 3:16; Rom. 15:4), we are provided with numerous examples from which we are also exhorted to learn from (1 Cor. 10:11). In the midst of warfare when Joshua was faced with the obstacle of the sun going down before the battle was over (thus risking losing the war due to darkness), we find Joshua operating in *saying power*:

Then spake Joshua to the Lord in the day when the Lord delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon. And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day (Joshua 10:12-13)

Notice that Joshua *said* something. He spoke directly to the problem and commanded it to obey him. Of course we know from modern day science that the sun actually stands still while it is the earth that moves and rotates. However, God did not expect Joshua, nor you and me, to have a vast working knowledge of the intricacies of His creation before exercising our faith.

Now notice how David practiced saying power in the famous fight between him and Goliath. We will quote from a literal translation

so that we can see from the original Hebrew how David actually expressed his saying power:

*And David said unto the Philistine, `You are coming unto me with sword, and with spear, and with buckler, and I am coming unto you in the name of Yahweh of Hosts, Elohim of the ranks of Israel, which you have reproached. **This day does Yahweh shut you up into my hand--and I have smitten you**, and turned aside your head from off you, and given the carcase of the camp of the Philistines this day to the fowl of the heavens, and to the beast of the earth, and all the earth do know that Elohim is for Israel. and all this assembly do know that not by sword and by spear does Yahweh save, that the battle [is] Yahweh's, and **He has given you into our hand**. And it has come to pass, that the Philistine has risen, and goes, and draws near to meet David, and David hastes and runs to the rank to meet the Philistine, and David puts forth his hand unto the vessel, and takes thence a stone, and slings, and smites the Philistine on his forehead, and the stone sinks into his forehead, and he falls on his face to the earth. And David is stronger than the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and smites the Philistine, and puts him to death, and there is no sword in the hand of David (1 Sam. 17:45-50; Concordant Literal Translation)*

In the literal translation we see that David spoke everything in *present tense*. David is speaking *the language of faith*. David saw that his enemy was *already a defeated foe*. David is confident that God has already given him the victory over Goliath and *says so*. David told the giant exactly what he would do to him *before* he did it. His words came to pass. David used *saying power* based on his knowledge that God's enemy was already a defeated one before the fight began.

This is the good fight of faith that we are expected to fight (1 Tim. 6:12). Like David, we should rest assured that our enemy, Satan and his demonic forces have already been defeated by Jesus through His shed blood and resurrection. The enemy has been given into our

hands. He is defeated. Like David, we must speak *the language of faith* by using our *saying power*.

The Real War

How is Joshua and David's victories through *saying power* relevant to our warfare today with Satan? What a lot of us miss when reading these wonderful stories is a powerful truth revealed in Scripture. In the background of Israel's "holy wars" was actually a spiritual warfare going on in the heavenlies between God's forces of good and Satan's forces of evil. This is partially revealed in Judges Chapters 4 and 5 when Deborah and Barak were called by God to deliver Israel from one of their enemies named Sisera.

Deborah told Barak, "*Up; for this is the day in which the Lord hath delivered Sisera into thine hand: is not the Lord gone out before thee?*" (Judges 4:14) Deborah was telling Barak that he was to claim the victory *before* he went into the battle. Deborah was speaking the *language of faith* and using her God-given *saying power*. Deborah's statements to Barak only make sense to the one who understands how faith works (see Mark 11:24; Heb. 11:1; 2 Cor. 5:7; 1 John 5:14-15). God sees *future victories* as *present facts* and wants Barak (and us) to see them that way. He gives Barak His Word in this respect as He does for us today.

After Deborah and Barak saw the victory that the Lord had given them, God inspired a song in Deborah's heart that contained a kernel of truth that would be expanded upon some centuries later. In her song, Deborah says, "*They fought from heaven; the stars in their courses fought against Sisera*" (Rev. 5:20). In this song, God gives Deborah and Barak a glimpse of what is really going on in the warfare.

We have already learned in previous chapters that in the Bible *stars* can sometimes be a metaphor for angelic beings both good and evil. (Job 38:7; Rev. 1:16, 20; Rev 12:3-4, 7-9). Therefore, when Deborah sings of the stars fighting against Sisera, she is singing about a spiritual warfare that was going on in the background. She was singing about the forces of God defeating the forces of evil.

God gave only a small hint to Barak and Deborah about what was really going on behind the scenes. It is possible that the Old Testament saints could not handle a full revelation of the actual

warfare. Jesus had not yet incarnated, died, and rose in victory over Satan and his fallen angelic forces, thus leaving us with authority and the Holy Spirit who would enable us to walk as victors over demonic forces. What Barak and Deborah were only given a hint of, we as New Testament believers get a full revelation:

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. 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. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. (Eph. 6:10-13)

Notice that our real fight is not against “flesh and blood”. Neither was Barak’s, nor Joshua’s or David’s for that matter. Certainly Sisera and Goliath were physical enemies but Barak and David put their complete reliance upon an invisible God to bring them victory. For example, when Deborah tells Barak, “...*the Lord hath delivered Sisera into thine hand*” long before any actual physical fighting began, it is to be understood that the real enemy behind the physical forces that Barak and his army were about to confront have already been defeated. In this we see the principle of *saying power* in action.

Once the power behind Sisera, Satan himself, was dealt with by God and His warrior angels then it was simply a matter of Barak believing the Word of God as having come through Deborah, speaking the language of faith, acting on that Word, and claiming the victory that already belonged to him. The stars had already fought against Sisera so Barak’s part was simply a “mop-up job”.

Understanding Old Testament Holy Wars

Many people are troubled by the numerous references to war in the Old Testament. Some are most troubled by the fact that God even commanded the Israelites to fight. Atheists use the Old Testament

Biblical “holy wars” to paint a false picture of a cruel deity that they can hate and excuse themselves from worshipping. However, many sincere Christians are troubled by all of the physical violence in the Old Testament. They have a difficult time reconciling this with the picture of God given to us by our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Messiah, in the New Testament.

It is not within the scope of this book to deal with this problem exhaustively. It certainly is not the purpose of this book to answer the objections of rabid atheists. However, many things that trouble God’s people can be resolved when they understand that there is an ongoing spiritual battle in the heavenlies that has spilled over into our world. Whether we like it or not, we are involved in this war. During the time in which the Old Testament was written, many things were resolved by physical warfare.

Satan is the true source and originator of violence (Ezekiel 28:14-16; John 8:44). It is Satan that moves men to kill each other and he is the one behind the nations that oppressed Israel during Old Testament times. While God abhors violence He is not a wimpy God that can just let violent beings go about their merry way destroying things. God wars to protect and defend the subjects of His Kingdom. But He does not do this alone. He enlists our help.

When the Israelites served God then they had protection and peace because He kept at bay the forces that Satan controlled. When the Israelites began to worship the gods of the other nations, not realizing that by doing this they were worshipping Satan and fallen angels, God allowed them to have their way (Psalm 81:10-16).

While most of us do not engage in the type of fighting that Israel had to do, we must learn from the Old Testament how warfare in the spirit realm is conducted. I am sure that this will not resolve all of our troubled tensions with Old Testament holy war, but it will lessen these tensions by a great degree if we begin to see that these were not only physical wars but a “spill over” from the cosmic warfare taking place in the heavenly realms between God’s forces and those of Satan

Applying the Old Testament Saying Power Principles

As we look at these Old Testament histories and see how Joshua, David, Deborah, Barak, and many more Old Testament heroes

spoke the victory into existence *before* it happened then we can see how we are to war against our already defeated enemy by using the language of faith and applying the *saying power* that has been delegated to us.

While we may not be engaged in physical holy wars today as Israel had to deal with, we are still in a battle with demonic force that attack through physical means in other ways, one of them being sickness and disease. What is worse is how these demonic forces will lie to get us to accept these things without a battle by claiming that they are sent by God and are His will. Nevertheless, God's Word is clear that sickness is not the will of God for us but an agent of demonic forces. In Psalm 91, we are given this promise of authority concerning the devil and sickness:

Because you have said, I am in the hands of the Lord, the Most High is my safe resting-place; No evil will come on you, and no disease will come near your tent. For he will give you into the care of his angels to keep you wherever you go. In their hands they will keep you up, so that your foot may not be crushed against a stone. You will put your foot on the lion and the snake; the young lion and the great snake will be crushed under your feet (Psalm 91:9-13; Bible in Basic English)

Satan is seen in the Bible as both a lion (1 Peter 5:8, 9) and a snake (Isa. 27:1; Rev. 12:9; 20:2). We read in Luke 10:19 that we are promised “*power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy.*” We are united and enthroned with Jesus in heavenly places where all things are under our feet.

We receive the results of this promise by our positive affirmation of it, or rather, using our *saying power*: “*Because you have said, I am in the hands of the Lord, the Most High is my safe resting-place.*” We must learn to positively verbalize our confidence in God's promises even when we are in the midst of negative circumstances.

The reality of this truth has been evident in my own life. Years ago while I was at work I was impressed in my spirit to call my wife at

her job. When I called one of her coworkers answered the phone and told me that my oldest daughter, Tricia, had become ill. She became dehydrated and could not breathe. My wife called an ambulance for her. My wife and her mother rode with Tricia to the hospital.

I grabbed a Bible that I usually kept on my desk at work. I was working late and there was no one else in the building so I shut the door and began to pray in the Spirit. As I was praying the Holy Spirit reminded me of Psalms 91. I began to use my *saying power* and claim this promise before God. I told Him, “Father, you told me that because I have made you my refuge and my dwelling place (Ps. 91:1; KJV) then sickness would not come near my dwelling. Well Tricia is in my dwelling place and so according to your promise I do not have to receive this and I will not.”

Afterwards I addressed the devil with a rebuke. I commanded, “DEVIL! The plague is not to come nigh my dwelling, SO GET YOUR FILTHY DIRTY HANDS OFF OF MY DAUGHTER IN THE NAME OF JESUS!” (Yes, I did get a little emotional but my daughter’s life was in danger.) After that I went home. My wife called me about an hour after I got home and she was so full of praise on the phone. She said, “Honey, they had Tricia in an IV and they expected to have to keep her overnight, but for some reason she’s okay now. And she’s HUNGRY too. So the doctor is going to release her and we’re going to stop and get something to eat.”

I was certainly relieved and began to praise God. His word truly worked. However, I found out that same night that Satan doesn’t give up very easy. Later that night she began to have pain in her stomach and serious breathing problems. I immediately grabbed my Bible and once again turned to Psalms 91:10. I reminded God of His promise and I again used the *saying power* that God has given us and I commanded Satan to get his hands off of my daughter in the name of Jesus. I began to pace the floor praying in the Spirit and engaging in warfare for my daughter. I did this for a couple of hours until the heavy breathing stopped and she went to sleep. The next day she was completely healed.

Satan may bring sickness but His attacks are subject to the Word of Almighty God. Christians must learn God’s Word so that they can use it as the basis of their authority over satanic forces. If we do not know what God has said is ours, we will not be able to confidently rebuke Satan and evil spirits in these areas.

Conclusion

Jesus' defeat of Satan and his demonic forces has given us commanding power over the enemy. We can expect changes to our circumstances by speaking in consistency with God's Word. God puts a high premium on words, especially when it comes to what we say about Him in relation to who He says He is and what He has promised to do. God will honor your faith as you boldly declare what you believe. Many people do not see this principle of faith to be important. Some outright speak against it. Yet, SCRIPTURE is clear that the reason many (not all) people lack God's rest, peace, and presence, suffer sickness, and have no sense of His protection is due to words spoken that are contrary to what God says about Himself and His promises. Begin to say what God says and see changes in your life.

Satan's defeat is not made real in our lives by wishing it, thinking it, or even using prayer alone (though the latter is of utmost importance). No commander exercises his authority by mental telepathy. One must actually *say* and *command* action. One must use their "saying power". God has delegated His authority to His people to whom He died and rose from the dead for. This authority can only work through *saying something* in line with God's authoritative Word. We must learn to speak God's Word against the devil.

This is a verbal warfare. It is Satan's lies against God's truth. It is Satan's darkness and death against God's Word of light and life. This is a verbal confrontation, but if we are on God's side then we have the power of His Word to easily crush this defeated foe. Take your stand on God's Word and *say it*. You will get results because the enemy has to yield to the power of God's Word. After all, ***God's Word is devil destruction power.***

Chapter Nine

Using God's Word to Destroy Satanic Attacks (Part 1)

*Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon him; **for he careth for you.** 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 (1 Pet. 5:6-9)*

In the next two chapters we will briefly look at some of the major areas in which Satan attacks and we will see how we are able to utilize God's Word in overcoming them in this life.

Your Victory-Position over Sin

We will not be able to conquer Satan in any other area until we have first defeated him in the area of temptation and sin. Satan and sin are interconnected (1 John 3:8). Satan is the father and author of sin (John 8:44; Acts 13:10) and is the tempter (Matt. 4:1-3; Luke 4:1-14; Gen. 3:1-13). God has nothing whatsoever to do with sin and temptation (James 1:13-14). Sin is actually a disconnect from God (Isa. 59:1-2; Eph. 2:1-5). Sin makes one a servant to Satan and it withholds all blessings that God desires to bestow upon us (Jer. 5:25; Psalm 66:18). Walking in victory over satanic forces is necessary and very much dependent on knowledge of God's Word (Rom. 6:6-7).

Some claim that we will never overcome sin in this life. They tell us that we must see ourselves merely as "sinners saved by grace". The teaching of the Bible is completely different but ignorance of its contents has kept us in bondage to Satan. The Bible tells us that we are to know what Christ has done and recognize how it affects us:

Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For

in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. (Rom. 6:9-12)

Your *knowledge* will determine your *ability*. Because of what Christ has done on our behalf you are free from sin's authority and its consequences. We are told to *let not sin reign in us*. Christ has provided the freedom, now the choice is ours to walk in it. This cannot happen apart from knowing God's Word. 2 Cor. 10:5 tells us to submit satanic enticements to sin to *the knowledge of God*. Before declaring our already present victory over sin (thus synonymously it is victory over Satan himself), we must have knowledge of it and get this knowledge grounded into our hearts.

John, to his young disciples, writes, "...young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one" (1 John 2:14). Sin, Satan, and temptation can be conquered in our lives as we gain knowledge of God's Word and allow it to become grounded in our hearts. Notice the two underlined phrases in the passage above: "young men" and "the word of God abideth in you." Now, as we look at Psalm 119 we begin to see some similarities:

Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word. With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments. Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee. (Psalm 119:9-11)

Both passages address "young men" and both deal with the effects of God's Word *in us*. The differences are found in that the Word of God abiding in the young men in 1 John 2:14 enables them to overcome *the wicked one* but in Psalm 119 it enables the psalmist to overcome *sin*. In the New Testament we learn that sin and Satan are basically one and the same. The Old Testament did not make this truth

as abundantly clear as the New Testament writers do (For example, compare Gen. 4:6-7 with 1 John 3:8-12).

When you have God's Word in you, you are able to cast down satanic lies of temptation (2 Cor. 10:3-5) and confront Satan with the Word just as Jesus did in His wilderness experience. God's Word *in you* will break the power of sin *over you*. But you must know God's Word and see yourself as the overcomer that Jesus made you in order to walk in the victory over sin that belongs to you.

Hindering Effective Evangelism

Satan hates mankind and is committed to its destruction. Satan knows his own destiny and is determined to take as many people with him as possible (Matt. 25:41; Rev. 20:7-15). God, on the other hand, wants no one to follow Satan to their doom and is committed to rescuing them (1 Tim. 2:4-6; 2 Pet. 3:8-9; Eze. 18:32; John 3:16; Heb. 2:4). It is Satan, not God, who seeks to damn souls to hell. One Baptist preacher wrote:

First of all, *who does the devil seek to damn?* Perhaps saying, "Mr. Greene, the *devil* does not damn us—it is God who sends people to hell." Careful study of the Scripture will reveal that *God has never sent anyone to hell*. It is not God's will that any perish, but that all come to repentance (II Peter 3:9). Every soul that drops into hell goes there because of their own stubborn will, not because of God's willThe devil is the deceiver, the liar, the murderer and the damner of souls—but who does he damn? He certainly does not damn born again believers, for every person covered by the blood of Jesus will enter heaven. It is those who are not born again who will be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, to be tormented forever and ever, day and night.¹

Some denominations and cultic groups teach a false doctrine called *annihilation* in which they deny the immortality of man's spirit and soul as well as the literal flames, torment and eternity of hell. Yet they are denying what the Bible says about these things (Luke 16:19-31; Rev. 14:9-12; 21:7-8).²

If we keep in mind that God did not prepare hell for humans (Matt. 25:41), that He is not the One who sends them there, He is not the One in hell doing the tormenting, and that He has done everything

He possibly can do to keep men out of there, then there is no need to deny the truth about hell's existence and eternity in order to vindicate God's good and loving character.

Unsaved mankind is under *Satan's* authority, not God's, because of Adam's treason (Luke 4:4; John 12:30-32; 14:30). Satan had a right to them. However, since Jesus Christ shed His precious blood for the redemption of mankind, he has taken away any rights that Satan had over the human race. The Father promised Jesus, "*Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance*" (Ps. 2:8). Jesus now has a right to the heathen because He paid the price for them. Satan no longer legally holds this right over the human race.

Sadly, the majority of the world still rejects Jesus, who is the only means of salvation because Satan continues to work diligently to keep men blinded to the truth:

"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." (2 Cor. 4:3-4)

Satan keeps people from seeing their need for Christ. He has multiple ways in which he blinds people. However, God has given His people a weapon that can thwart the enemy's blinding power over the sinner. This weapon is God's Word—His gospel. Paul says, "*...lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.*" The gospel is "good news". It is God's Word which in its very essence is the power of God unto salvation to *everyone who believes* (Rom. 1:16).

It is the news that God is every bit like Jesus and longs for our salvation. It is news that informs us that the evil works of Satan no longer need to have dominion over us. In the Bible, the preaching of the gospel/good news is always accompanied by healings and deliverance from demonic oppression (Matt. 4:23; 9:35; Mark 16:15-20; Luke 4:18; Acts 8:4-8; 14:7-10; Rom. 15:19; 1 Thess. 1:5). This gospel/good news that miraculously destroys the works of the devil is

“the gospel of God’s kingdom” (Matt. 10:1-8; Luke 9:1, 2; 10:8, 9). As the late missionary and scholar, Ralph D. Winter stated:

To destroy the works of the devil is one major way in which our testimony of word and deed can glorify the true nature of our living God, our heavenly father. It is not an alternative to evangelism, it will make our evangelism more credible. It is to rectify our God’s damaged reputation. It is to avoid extending the implicit and embarrassing policy of almost constantly misrepresenting Him in our work around the world.³

God is fully dependent upon His redeemed children to stand against the forces of darkness that are keeping sinners blinded to the truth and populating that horrible place called hell. For this, we need weaponry that is superior to Satan’s. We need the gospel—the “good news!” God tells Paul in Acts 26:18:

“To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.” (Acts 26:18)

Paul was told by God that he was to open their eyes. Why? Because Satan has blinded sinners to the truth. Paul was also to turn them from the power of Satan unto God. That word power in this Scripture is speaking of Satan’s authority over people. We are to release them from satanic authority and bring them into the kingdom of God (Col. 1:13-14). God gave Paul the responsibility of “turning them” and He has given us that responsibility as well.

God has given every man a free will. They must accept the freedom from Satan’s authority that has been made available to them. He will not force anyone to do this. That is why it is vital that you and I make sure that the sinner receives this most important information. They must come to know that God is not mad or angry with them. They must know that He has made salvation available to them. They must learn that they can be made free from Satan’s dominion.

Satan may attack our efforts to evangelize but we have the victory over him. If we desire to be effective witnesses, missionaries, and ministers of the gospel, we must first realize the forces that would oppose us and come against us are defeated and we have victory and authority over them in the name of Jesus. We will find that when we have learned to deal with our enemy through interceding on behalf of the lost and breaking Satan's power over them, we will begin to see more of the lost come to Christ.

Satan's Attacks on our Finances

While it is difficult for many in Christian circles to accept this truth, Jesus actually did die to free us from the curse of financial poverty as well as every other curse brought upon man when he subjected himself to satanic rulership. Notice some of the truths expressed in the worship of Christ in the book of Revelation:

*And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: **for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; Saying with a loud voice, **Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing**** (Rev. 5:9-12)*

The worship of our Lord is centered around the unselfish love-filled sacrifice that He made on our behalf. First we see that Jesus was slain to redeem us to God. Notice also that the lamb was slain to receive *riches*. These riches that belong to Christ are distributed for the needs of His obedient children: "*But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus*" (Phil. 4:19).

Further evidence that Jesus' redemptive work includes deliverance from satanic financial oppression is found Paul's 2nd letter to the Corinthians: "*For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich*" (2 Cor. 8:9). Read the surrounding context of this passage very carefully. This is not in reference to "spiritual" poverty or "spiritual" riches. The context is in reference to *finances*. The redemptive work of Christ covers our financial distress as well as any other area that we suffered while under satanic rule.

We were redeemed from both the "power of darkness" (Col. 1:12-14) and the "curse of the law" (Gal. 3:13). The curse of the law, as found in Deut. 28 included extreme poverty. Our redemption was a transfer from Satan's kingdom of darkness, hatred and deprivation to God's wonderful kingdom of light, love and provision. If we obey God and seek His kingdom, then we receive protection in every area of our life from the attacks of the devil, to include the area of our finances (Matt. 6:25-31). As Charles Usher so well states, we must submit our finances to the proper kingdom:

He who recognizes himself as God's steward should lift his monetary affairs out of Satan's realm and place them by faith in the kingdom and reign of Christ. From that place of vantage, he should defend from the power and dominion of Satan that which God has entrusted him. The enemy's hold on his money should be broken as the believer claims Calvary's victory over the devil, and his money should be liberated for God's use.⁴

When all that Job possessed fell into Satan's hands, one of the first things that he did was to destroy Job financially (Job 1:12, 14-17). While Job was an innocent man, his story still teaches us what can happen to us financially when we have not, as Usher states, placed our finances by faith in the kingdom and reign of Christ.

If we desire to have Christ's protection and provision that comes as the result of His redemptive work, we must obey Him in handling it the way that He has taught us in His Word. Our tithes and giving is one of those ways. In Malachi 3:8-12, God promises financial blessings when we bring our tithes and offerings. Knowing that Satan is a thief who comes to steal God's blessing from His people, the Lord says:

*Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. **And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes**, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts (Mal. 3:10, 11)*

God is concerned about our financial needs and desires to bless us. On the other hand, we have an enemy whose desire is to see God's children go destitute. Peter describes him as a devourer when he writes that the devil, "*walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.*" Peter then exhorts us to *resist him steadfast in our faith* (1 Pet. 5:8, 9). As we faithfully give to the work of God, we can stand on this passages and many others in confronting the demonic forces that attempt to work against us financially (Luke 6:38; 2 Cor. 9:6-12). When we rebuke the devourer using the Word of God, it is God doing the work through us (1 John 4:4).

Satan's Attacks on Our Health

Another area in which the enemy attacks is our health. Satan is the primary agent behind sickness. In the book of Job we see that he is totally responsible for the sickness that came upon Job:

So went Satan forth from the presence of the LORD, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown. (Job 2:7)

In chapter one we explained that in the Old Testament God was often credited with the misery that people suffered. The last chapter in Job says that his family and friends, "*...comforted him over all **the evil that the Lord had brought upon him***" (Job 42:11b). This is why we must always interpret Scripture in light of its contexts, with the

whole of Scripture, the culture and language of the time in which Scripture was written, and especially in light of the loving character of God.

The question one must ask in the light of God's character is, "does the Lord do *evil*?" The answer is found in Job 2:7. God is only said to have done evil to Job in that He did not protect Job from Satan's attacks on his body. However, the Lord is not the One who inflicted Job.⁵ God Himself does no evil so therefore He does not inflict sickness. However, He will *leave* people with their sickness if they choose to work against Him: "*The Lord will remove all sickness from you; he will not afflict you with any of the malignant diseases that you know from Egypt, but will leave them with all those who hate you*" (New American Revised Edition).

The King James Version uses the word "evil" to describe the diseases that were in Egypt. This alone separates God from being their originator.

God will save you from the hunter's trap and from deadly sickness. God will protect you with his pinions; you'll find refuge under his wings. His faithfulness is a protective shield. Don't be afraid of terrors at night, arrows that fly in daylight, or sickness that prowls in the dark, destruction that ravages at noontime. Even if one thousand people fall dead next to you, ten thousand right beside you—it won't happen to you. Just look with your eyes, and you will see the wicked punished. Because you've made the Lord my refuge, the Most High, your place of residence—no evil will happen to you; no disease will come close to your tent (Psalm 91:3-10; Common English Bible)

God's Word clearly states that diseases and plagues are *evil*. Therefore, God is not their source since He is the source of only good gifts (James 1:17). We learn who the source of sickness and disease is when we read in Psalm 91 that "*God will save you from the hunter's trap and from deadly sickness.*" The "hunter" is none other than that thief who comes to *kill, steal, and destroy*—Satan! (John 10:10; 8:44) God is the One who saves us from the hunter's trap which is sickness.

Sickness is Satan's way of trapping people. The only part that God plays in sickness is to remove His protection from those who reject Him and His Word.

The Common English Bible translates verse 6 to say, “....*sickness that prowls in the dark, destruction that ravages at noontime.*” The Septuagint (The Old Testament which was translated into the Greek language some years before the incarnation of Christ) renders verse 6: “....*nor of the evil thing that walks in darkness; nor of calamity, and the evil spirit at noon-day*” (Brenton English Septuagint Translation). The Jews saw a connection between the sickness that brings destruction and evil spirits.

In the New Testament demons are affirmatively revealed as the source of sickness and disease (Matt 10:1-8; 17:14-18; Luke 10:9, 17-20; 13:11-16; Acts 5:16; 8:7; 19:11-12). Also in the New Testament we learn that the redemptive work of Christ on our behalf deals with the evil spirits and the sicknesses that they bring:

When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses (Matt. 8:16-17).

So we see that the New Testament gives greater revelation showing us that God is not the agent behind sickness. On the contrary, *He is at war with it.* While He was on earth Jesus “....*who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil*” (Acts 10:38b). God hates sickness as much as He hates sin since sickness is the product of sin and is an inevitable outcome of separation from Him who is the source of life. He hates it so much that Jesus died to redeem us from its power. Anything that has its source and origin in Satan has been dealt with by our Lord.

While some traditionalists claim that sickness is good and some cessationists who no longer believe that God works miraculously today will tell you that any supernatural healing comes from the devil, God says just the opposite. Sickness is *satanic oppression and healing*

is good. Healing is the result of a good God sending His Word to overcome evil sickness and disease:

“He sent his word and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions. Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and his wonderful works to the children of men.” (Ps. 107:20-21)

Again Psalm 91 talks about the “...*sickness that prowls in the dark, destruction that ravages at noontime.*” Contrary to what some have taught, sickness is not a blessing. Sickness is designed to *destroy you* (an avid description of Satan’s work (John 10:10; 1 Pet. 5:8)). God does not send sickness to *bless* you, He sends His Word to *heal* you. God’s Word has been sent to deliver us from the destruction that sickness brings. But it will only work when we know it and take our stand on it against satanic attacks.

We should take the time to memorize God’s promises for divine healing and use them authoritatively against Satan when He attacks us, our family members, and our friends with sickness and disease. God is still a Healer today and the redemptive work of Christ guarantees healing for our bodies. Satan is still a sickness inflictor today but the redemptive work of Christ has destroyed his rights to inflict us. Furthermore, God’s power to heal is far greater than Satan’s power to afflict. Believing God’s promises of healing and standing on His Word against satanic attacks of sickness will determine which power is manifested in your life.

Satan’s Attacks upon Marriages and Families

Satan has a strong hatred for families because they represent the heart of God and His longings for family (Gen. 3:14-15). Today divorce is rampant in our society and the church has not done much better in keeping marriages intact. On the contrary, some statistics state that divorce in the church is worse than in secular society. So-called “gay” marriage is on the rise. There is rampant fornication which has produced numerous single parent homes without a father present. Many fathers are leaving homes abandoning their wife and children. Children are embracing much of the world’s philosophy and

rejecting Biblical truth. Finally, there is the massive murdering of innocent unborn children for the sake of convenience.

These are just some of the ways that Satan is attacking marriages and families. Our families needlessly suffer destruction that we can prevent by taking our stand upon God's Word based on the redemptive sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ. In Exodus 23 we see through type and shadow how one can receive God's protection for themselves and their families when they comply with His Word:

Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and said unto them, Draw out and take you a lamb according to your families, and kill the passover. And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the bason, and strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood that is in the bason; and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning. For the Lord will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, the Lord will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you. And ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons for ever. And it shall come to pass, when ye be come to the land which the Lord will give you, according as he hath promised, that ye shall keep this service. And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? That ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And the people bowed the head and worshipped (Exodus 23:21-27)

Verse 27 says that God did the smiting, which is true as far as the permissive idiom of the Hebrews is concerned (see chapter one where we explain this in much more detail). For us Westerners, we must remember that we are to always interpret Scripture within its context and as well as in comparison with other Scriptures. Verse 23 of the passage says that it was the destroyer who did the actually

smiting. The Psalmist tells us that “the destroyer” were evil angels who brought a pestilence that God gave the Egyptians over to (Psalm 78:49-51). In other words, God “smote them (as Psalm 78:49-51 clearly shows) by removing his hand of protection and allowing Satan’s evil forces to do what they do best—destroy!

However, as we also learned in chapter one, the Passover has nothing to do with the traditional idea of God *skipping houses*. The proper interpretation of the Passover is the fact that God hovered over the houses of the obedient Israelites and kept the destroyer from entering into their home (Isaiah 31:5).

This is important to note because it was the obedience to God’s Word that allowed God to offer His personal protection against the satanic destruction that the disobedient Egyptians suffered. God’s Word to His people was to take a lamb, take its blood, and put it on the door. This all pointed to Jesus the Christ, the Lamb of God who would be slain on our behalf (John 1:29, 36; Acts 8:32; 1 Pet. 1:19; Rev. 5:6, 8, 12, 13; 6:1, 16; 7:9, 10, 14, 17; 12:11; 13:11; 14:1, 4, 10; 15:3; 17:14; 19:7, 9; 21:22, 23; 22:1, 3).

This is an example of how we can use the Word of God today in order to counter every onslaught of the enemy against our marriages and families. As Charles Usher writes:

Our homes must not be places of defeat but of victory. How many of God’s children fail here. If Satan gains in our homes, how do we expect to overcome him in the outside world?The heads of every home should learn to recognize their responsibility Godward for the controlling of their home affairs in such a way as to bring glory to His name, applying the victory of the cross to all Satan’s hold and control, and claiming that he has been conquered by Christ at Calvary in order that he might legitimately be cast out.⁶

Let us learn to stand on God’s Word in light of the victory that Jesus has already wrought on our behalf in every area of our natural and spiritual existence. This victory includes household salvation (Acts 16:30-31). The world needs to see that Christ is a strong factor in determining the success of a marriage and a healthy family. Dealing with the enemy’s attacks on our families by the agency of God’s Word will give us that opportunity to let our God shine in the face of the disintegration of marriages and families in the world.

Satan's Attacks on Your Prayer Life

In his Holy Spirit inspired instructions on how to engage and defeat the devil and his demonic forces, Paul wrote, “*God's Word is an indispensable weapon. In the same way, prayer is essential in this ongoing warfare. Pray hard and long. Pray for your brothers and sisters. Keep your eyes open*” (Eph. 6:17b, 18a; The Message). The Word of God and prayer combined is a powerful weapon in destroying the enemy's influence in our lives. Therefore it should not be a surprise to the believer that Satan would attempt to hinder answers to prayer.

Satan's war against the Word of God is seen in the book of Daniel. Daniel had been praying for God to give him further understanding of a vision that he had received while studying the book of Jeremiah and praying. An angel was finally sent to him. The angel came for a specific purpose, which was to reveal to Daniel that which was in the Scripture of Truth:

Then said he, Knowest thou wherefore I come unto thee? and now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia: and when I am gone forth, lo, the prince of Grecia shall come. But I will shew thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth: and there is none that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your prince (Dan. 10:20, 21).

Notice that the angel tells Daniel that when his mission is complete, which is to show Daniel that which is noted in the Word of God, he would have to engage in warfare with two satanic regional princes. As we read from an earlier portion of this chapter, this angel had to go to war with a satanic entity while making his way to bring the revelation to Daniel:

“Then said he unto me, fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words. But the prince of

the king of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia.”
(Dan. 10:12-13)

It is obvious that this “prince” was attempting to keep the angel from bringing God’s answer to Daniel’s prayer which was to receive further understanding of the Scripture of Truth. Satan is at war against the Word of God and wants to be sure that we do not understand it (Mat. 13:19). Not only do we see Satan waging all-out war against God’s Word, but Daniel reveals to us that Satan goes to war against prayer itself and makes every attempt to hinder the answers to our prayers from coming forth.

Many of God’s people probably do not see how Satan’s defeat at the hands of our Lord applies to prayer. Yet, since we see that Satan, with assistance from his evil forces, have often fought against God’s efforts to respond to our petitions, we must recognize this opposition but also recognize that Satan has been defeated even in this area. Explaining exactly what he believes that prayer is, S. D. Gordon writes:

Now prayer is this: A man, one of the original trustee class, who received the earth in trust from God, and who gave its control over to satan; a man, on the earth, the poor old satan-stolen, sin-slimed, sin-cursed, contested earth; a man, on the earth, with his life in full touch with the Victor, and sheer out of touch with the pretender-prince, insisently claiming that satan shall yield before Jesus’ victory, step by step, life after life. Jesus is the victor. Satan knows it, and fears Him. He must yield before His advance, and he must yield before this man who stands for Jesus down on the earth.⁷

If what Gordon says concerning prayer is true—and I believe that it is—then it will do us well to follow some wisdom from Charles Usher who says that, “The basis of all successful prayer warfare lies in a clear appropriation, by faith, of the victory of our Lord Jesus Christ on Calvary.”⁸ God is not the One hindering our petitions when they are based upon His Word. God hears our prayers the moment we pray. John tells us, “*and if we know that hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.*” God delights

in answering prayer. Therefore, if we have based our prayer on God's promises and met His conditions we can rest assured that He desires to answer it.

God does not deny us answers to prayer that are prayed in faith in line with His Word. God was not denying Daniel the answer to his prayer those three weeks. The answer was heard and sent *the first day*. But Satan knew the impact that the answer would bring. He knew the damage that this would do to his plans. Therefore he sent one of his ruling spirits to fight against the angel that was delivering the answer.

God wants to answer prayer and Satan wants to hinder it. Once you begin to realize this then perhaps you will learn to stand on what God's Word says concerning your victory in Christ and persevere until you get the answer to your prayer.

Chapter Ten

Using God's Word to Destroy Satanic Attacks (Part 2)

*Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon him; **for he careth for you.** 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 (1 Pet. 5:6-9)*

In this chapter we will continue to briefly look at some of the major areas in which Satan attacks and we will see how we are able to utilize God's Word in overcoming them in this life.

Satan's Attacks on Relationships

God is very relationship oriented. God prefers to govern His people based on love-relationships rather than dictatorship. God is an others-centered God who is always looking to see what He can do for others rather than looking for what can be done for Him. God wanted His creatures to emulate Him in this respect (Matt. 5:43-48; John 13:35; Eph. 5:1-2).

Satan is the exact opposite. He is very *anti-relationship*. The only types of relationships that Satan supports are the kind in which one is only in it for selfish gain. Once the relationship no longer proves beneficial then the rule of thumb is to discard the useless individual. This is the selfish unloving antithesis to how God created man to relate to Him and to each other. The first consequence of man falling and taking on a satanic nature in the Garden of Eden was the severing of relationship with God and with one another:

And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD

God amongst the trees of the garden. And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself (Gen. 3:8-10)

Prior to this Adam and God enjoyed great fellowship with one another. Adam had no fear (was not afraid) of God. However, Satan painted a nasty picture of God to Eve and she bought into it. She rebelled and her husband followed her into her rebellion against God (Gen. 3:1-7). One lie from Satan was enough to sever the relationship between Adam, Eve and God.

How does God deal with the severing of this relationship? He promises to personally come as a man to redeem mankind and put us back into right relationship with Him through His own death. This is the unselfish truth about God that was the exact opposite of the selfish egotistical deity that Satan fed to Eve.

Satan continues to use similar tactics in keeping men from a right loving relationship with God and from loving relationships with one another. He brings strife in marriages, families, work relationships, church relationships, communities, politics, nations and everywhere else that he can possibly work this evil. The major problem with our world today—the wars, slavery, massive murdering, etc.—is due to the inability of mankind to have unselfish loving relationships with one another. This root of the whole problem is that the majority of mankind is not in right relationship with God Himself. Satan success in severing man from God has led to hatred of one another. God’s Word tells us that hatred of others is a mark of extreme satanic influence:

*“In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the **devil**: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, **neither he that loveth not his brother**. For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.”* (1 John 3:10-11)

Earlier in his epistle John tells us that hatred towards others means that we are walking in darkness (1 John 2:9-11). When we are walking in darkness, we are walking under the authority of Satan's kingdom (Col. 1:12-14; Acts 26:18; 2 Cor. 4:4). The kingdom and government of God is all about love towards one another—the kind that looks for what he or she can do to be a blessing without any expectation of reciprocation.

While the majority of the world will continue to be steeped in satanic selfishness until the second coming of Jesus (and all signs are pointing to this happening very soon), God's own people can resist the devil's influence in our relationships and be an example to the lost world by reflecting what it is really like to be in God's kingdom:

From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts. Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy? But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you (James 4:1-7).

Take note that the selfishness and infighting of the people during the time that James wrote this hindered God's people from receiving answers to prayer. The mistreatment of one another is a major factor in our prayers being hindered (1 Pet. 3:7). We have already seen that Satan attacks prayer because every answered prayer is a defeat to his kingdom and a hindrance to his own evil plans. Therefore, it behooves him to attack relationships and cause division and strife to keep us from praying which then hinders God's intervention in our lives and circumstances.

When God's people are in unity we have great power that is able to easily overcome satanic forces (Gen. 11:6; Lev. 26:8; Deut. 32:30; Matt. 18:18-20). Satan knows that a unified body of Christ is one of his biggest threats so he works hard to keep us divided. He uses denominational pride, doctrine, power, position, and even the color of the carpet in a church (seriously, churches have split over these types of things) to keep God's people divided.

Nevertheless, Satan has been defeated in this area. Let us take our stand on God's Word together, remain in love with God and each other, and resist Satan based on the fact that he has already been defeated.

Crime and Violence

Jesus, in contrasting Himself with Satan, said, "*The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly*" (John 10:10). "Steal, kill, and destroy?" This sums up rape, murder, robbery and every other crime ever committed. A crime usually deprives someone of their property, their life, their physical health and worse of all, their peace of mind. All of this is covered under stealing, killing, and destroying. Earlier in John's gospel Jesus said this about the religious leaders:

Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it (John 8:44)

Jesus said that the one influencing the religious leaders of his time to commit the criminal act of killing our Lord was the devil. A number of testimonies from some convicts state that they did not even know what came over them when they committed certain acts. It was like they lost control and became another person. A lot of crimes are committed by Satanists who perform these things as worship to their dark lord. Satan is indeed the definite influence behind such things.

Jesus said that Satan was a murderer *from the beginning*. Satan's downfall came as God discovered criminal violence within him (Eze. 28:15-16). Satan was the first creature ever to become a criminal. He then led numerous other angels to follow him in his criminal acts and since the fall of man he has been able to influence men to become criminals like himself. Almost from the beginning of mankind's history he was able to move Cain to commit an act of violence against his brother Abel. In Genesis 4 we read:

If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him. And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him (Gen. 4:7-8).

Cain was upset because God accepted Abel's sacrifices and rejected Cain's. God told Cain that he could do well if he would only make up his mind to do it. This means that Cain knew the right way to worship God but decided to do it his own way. What a loving God who would even take the time out to talk to Cain and tell him where he was going wrong. God loved Cain and wanted to see him do well but He simply cannot lower His standards to make that happen. It would not have helped Cain one bit for God to have done so. God warned Cain of the danger of an impending enemy. He told Cain, "*sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.*" Cain could have ruled over sin but he chose to yield to it. It was sin that then influenced him to commit the first criminal act of murder:

*"In this the children of God are manifest, and **the children of the devil**: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither **he that loveth not his brother**. For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, **that we should love one another. Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother**. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous." (1 John 3:10-12)*

Here we see that *Satan* and *Sin* are synonymous. They are the same entity. Satan is the inventor of sin and so it is very much associated with him. Satan was the first criminal and he inspired the first criminal act. This should remind us to never take sin lightly. We saw earlier that God has given us the victory over sin, which means that we have victory over Satan Himself. However, we also need to stand on His Word so that we do not become victims of satanic criminal acts.

No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord (Isa. 54:17)

He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust. Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day (Psalm 91:1-5)

Testimonies abound concerning people who have stood on God's promises in the midst of danger. Many have been rescued from robberies, near rapes, death and numerous other dangers because they knew God's promises of protection. This again is the reason why we must know the truth about God's character if we are to trust Him. Many people have blamed God for the criminal acts that happened to themselves or to their loved ones. They either believe that God allows some of these things for mysterious purposes or He actually energized the criminal to do their dirty deed. It is Satan and not God who energizes criminals (Eph. 2:1-5). So many people are bitter against

God because they were told that some rapist who brutally raped and murdered their child was allowed to do so by a sovereign God for purposes only He has known.

Do not accept Satan's lies even if they come from a "Christian" pulpit. God is on your side. He is not ordaining bad people to hurt you. He loves you and offers you His protection. Learn to memorize His promises of protection in this crazy and insane world where crime is running rampant.

Natural Disasters

The bad weather patterns that steal, kill, and destroy such as hurricanes, tornadoes, tsunamis, earthquakes, lightning strikes, floods, volcano eruptions and other deadly disasters are called "acts of God" by many of our insurance companies. However we forgive the ignorance of these companies as well as the many ministers and theologians from which the insurance companies and media outlets received this mischaracterization of our loving heavenly Father.

Jesus repudiated this idea when He was once asked permission by His disciples to destroy a village that rejected Him (Luke 9:51-56). Jesus is *not* the destroyer. He did not want His Name or that of His Father's associated with destruction. The one who brings down fire upon people and subsequently blames it on God is Satan (see Job 1:12, 16 in which a natural disaster that was caused by Satan was attributed to God).

Even today some blame God for doing such things for "benevolent purposes" or "judgment upon sinners". Both ideas are erroneous. Jesus rebuked such notions (Luke 13:4-5). When God completed the creation of the earth He pronounced everything as *good* (Gen. 1:31). Before the fall, there would never have been any natural disasters, but after the fall, this changed. God said, "*cursed is the ground for thy sake*" Adam was given dominion and his actions effected the earth (Gen. 1:26-28). By yielding to satanic influences and rejecting God (the only one able to sustain life) Adam himself caused the earth to be cursed. Adam's sin rather than an arbitrary act of God brought death and its consequences into the world (Rom. 5:12-14). Because of man's interconnection with the earth sin has an automatic but devastating effect upon it (Gen. 4:10-12; Lev. 18:24-28; 20:22; Hosea 2-3; Isa. 24:4-5; Rom. 8:18-22). As William Matson writes:

We have seen that Satan was the cause of the sin that is in the world. But sorrow and suffering are the consequence of sin, as are all the disorders of Nature. They are no part of the original plan and purpose. Search creation through, and you will find every creature and every part and organ of the creature made to subserve the purposes of use and happiness. You cannot find in the whole expanse of creation one being or part or organ or atom, even, that was created for the sole purpose of giving pain or producing sorrow. There are pain and sorrow in abundance, but nothing was ever created for the purpose of producing suffering. These, then, are the proofs of disorder,—a perversion, a distorting of what was made with some benevolent design.¹

Sins such as the shedding of innocent blood, which abortion plays a major role, rampant sexual immorality (including the promotion of homosexual marriage), oppression, dishonesty, the spread of Darwinism (which has led to extreme atheism), the removing of God’s laws from our courts and prayer from schools, the rejection of any Christian symbols publicly displayed and and numerous other factors, are having a negative effect on the earth and is the reason for so many “natural” disasters. Man is destroying the earth and then wondering why it is reacting in the way that it is.²

Though we still live in a world that is full of sin and death continues to reign, the child of God has authority over the evil in this world due to the finished work of Christ. Natural disasters and accidents will continue until God has brought the manifestation of His full redemption of His children (Rom. 8:20-25), but faith enables God’s people to handle storms today as Jesus did:

And when he was entered into a ship, his disciples followed him. And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep. And his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish. And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm (Matt. 8:23-26)

God had nothing to do with the storm that almost killed Jesus and His disciples. Satan whipped up a storm with the intent to kill the Lord. S. D. Gordon offers more insight:

The usual reading is He “rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace be still.” The more literal reading is immensely suggestive and helpful. “He said to the sea, Lie down, be muzzled.” It is the sort of language one uses in speaking to a dog that is misbehaving. If the word be repeated in the sharp peremptory tone of command, in which one speaks to his dog, it makes the sense yet more intense and real;—“down sir! lie down!” The whole passage is significant. It is not the sort of language to be used in talking merely to wind and wave, especially by as even-poised a man as our Lord was. There is at once the recognition of an evil spirit, or a group of them, who had aroused the unusually violent storm. The very language used is a recognition of personality. There was some one at work through wind and water. He is ordered down. He obeys. There was a great calm. But the point to mark just now is that his sphere of action includes wind and water as well as the earth. Mark keenly why this is the sphere of his activity—because we are here. It is us he is after, and through us the dominion of this realm.³

The evidence strongly points to that Satan and wicked spirits are behind this storm. But does this mean that God’s people today have the authority to rebuke storms as Jesus did? Jesus did say that the failure of the disciples to deal with the storms was a lack of faith: “*Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea;*” Jesus made it abundantly clear that we can do the same things He did when He was here on the earth if we would just believe (John 14:12; Matt. 21:19-21). If it was not the Lord’s intention that we exercise dominion over natural disasters then His words are meaningless. Our Lord never spoke meaningless words.

Part of Jesus’ redemptive work was to give us back the authority that Adam lost (Matt. 28:18). We have authority over all of the works of the devil in Jesus’ Name (Luke 10:17-20; Matt. 18:18-20). This includes Satan’s works in natural disasters. Those in union with Christ can exercise His authority (Eph. 1:18-23; 2:6). If God’s people would stop blaming Him for these disasters, stop submitting to them, and begin to work with God in exercising our victory over satanic works, then we would see more results in this area.

Guilt and Condemnation for Past Sins

Satan loves to bring up our past and remind us of the rotten things we did. However, if we have confessed these sins, repented of them and received cleansing through the blood of Jesus then we have no business beating ourselves up about them. God is not the source of such condemnation. This is totally the work of Satan. The Bible refers to him as the accuser of the brethren:

*And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for **the accuser of our brethren is cast down**, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death (Rev. 12:10-11).*

Satan's work as an accuser is to continually point out a person's faults and sins to prove that the person being accused is deserving of nothing but punishment and eternal damnation. He did this to both God and Job (see Job 1-2), to Peter (Luke 22:31-32), to Joshua the high priest (Zech. 3:1-4), and to Jesus (John 14:30).

Revelation 12 says that, "*the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb....*" Satan, the accuser has been cast down – he is a defeated enemy. The blood of Jesus has cleansed us from all our past sins and removed any legal access by which Satan had to accuse us and condemn us.

When you and I received Christ as our personal Lord and Savior and were born again by the precious Spirit of God we became new creations in Christ Jesus. We are told that old things passed away and all things *have become new* (2 Cor. 5:17). In other words, God is not keeping any records of past sins. On the contrary God wipes away *all* record of our sins when He forgives (Isa. 43:25; 44:22; Jer. 31:34; 50:20; Micah 7:19; Heb. 8:12; 10:15-18). If there is no record of our sins then Satan will not be able to accuse us before God. Furthermore, we can have a clear conscience before God and man and will have

confidence in God to answer our prayers (Rom. 8:1-2; 1 John 3:19-22). If we sin after we have been born again, God has made provision for that as well through the blood of Jesus. When we confess and forsake our sins we receive His cleansing (1 John 1:7-9).

When feelings of condemnation and guilt overwhelm us due to past sins we must remember these promises:

*Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame: **for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more** (Isa. 54:4)*

*Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, **forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus** (Phil. 3:13-14).*

God has said that He will not remember our sins. If He forgets them and we are still being reminded and condemned by them then it is the accuser of the brethren that is bringing up our past. We are to reject and refuse his taunts and remind him that Jesus has defeated him and that we are now connected to Jesus.

While the Holy Spirit does convict us when we sin, this is in order to lead us to repentance and restoration. He does not beat us down for sins in the past nor does He bring them up in order to shame us. The Holy Spirit desires to be your friend and companion, sharing with you the sweet fellowship of the Father and Son. Throwing your sin in your face is not His modus operandi. He desires to remove your shame and not to keep you in it.

Therefore, live free from your past and begin to walk in the future blessings that Christ has for you. When the devil brings up past regrets bring to Him God's Word about the fact that God has forgotten your sin and that it has been cleansed by the same blood that brought his defeat.

Lack of Fruitfulness or Success

Whether you are concerned about your career, ministry, education, business or whatever area in your life that you feel called to, God is very much for your success. Satan, on the other hand, works to hinder our fruitfulness. Remember these two simple truths: God is looking for us to succeed and Satan is looking for us to fail.

This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success (Joshua 1:8).

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper (Psalm 1:1-3).

No matter what anyone else tells you, God is all for our success and prosperity. He has laid out principles in His Word to help us obtain this. For His faithful children Jesus said, “*I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it*” (Rev. 3:8b). Jesus is more than willing to give us favor with the right people and open the right doors for us as we endeavor to serve Him through godly pursuits. We must learn to meditate on the Word, have an intimate relationship with the Lord, listen to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and follow His directions and we are guaranteed success.

However, since we are in this world where Satan is still prince we are guaranteed to have obstacles and opposition as well. We must be very careful not to do as many Christians do by believing that the difficulties of reaching our goals are an indicator that we are not in God’s will and that He is personally keeping us from success. When

Paul tried to meet with the Corinthian church he faced *satanic* opposition: “*Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us*” (1 Thess. 2:18).

There is no doubt that God wanted Paul to have a successful ministry to the Corinthians. Yet there was something about that which Satan feared. Certainly he saw that Paul, who had already done much hurt to Satan’s kingdom, was about to do more damage to him through his ministry to the Corinthians. Therefore he worked hard to hinder Paul. Thankfully, Paul recognized the opposition for what it was. Paul was still successful since he wrote the Thessalonians a letter that was inspired by the Spirit of God. His letter not only ministered to this church, but has ministered to billions of Christians since unto this very day. Satan so often unwittingly undoes himself.

We must learn to speak God’s Word of success with confidence as it pertains to our jobs, ministries, careers, school, home-life and all other godly areas in which we desire to be fruitful and have great success (see Neh. 2:19-20). We must also learn to pray and invite our Heavenly Father to help us to deal with all satan-inspired opposition that would hinder us from fulfilling the call of God upon our lives (Neh. 4:6-9). If we are to succeed in any endeavor we must be in prayer with God but more than anything else we must be determined to succeed.

God wants His people to dream and to dream big. He wants them to believe Him for great things. Most importantly, He does not want quitters who easily give up because things are rough. While it was never God’s will that Satan usurp the earth and cause so much hardship for His children, the problem is there and so He expects us to stand against it and not give in. Whatever your dream, desire, or goal is, do not give up on it. Fight for it by standing on God’s promises for success against any obstacles that Satan may put in your path. We have been given authority to command mountains to move. Let us utilize that authority against the devil and his works against us.

Voodoo, Witchcraft, and Curses

Occasionally I have prayed with those who have had to deal with witchcraft and voodoo in their midst. While the problem does not appear to be as prevalent in the United States as it is in other parts of

the world, it is indeed here and it is probably much more prevalent than we might think.

Our increasingly secularized society causes so many to deny the supernatural. Many in our modern world dismiss the fact that there is a spiritual realm with both good and bad spirits who effect much of what is done on earth. Due to this denial so many people take the ideas of witchcraft and voodoo as a joke. Much of the cessationist theology prevalent in many of our churches has also had an effect on how the church is able to combat these ever so real forces.

Voodoo and witchcraft are being promoted through Hollywood movies and television. Sadly, Christians have joined the world in watching these shows and enjoying them. Christian are also attending these movies where Satan is spreading his doctrine of witchcraft. Movies and television have made satanic power look clean and fun. The sad result of this is that churches have become insensitive to the fact that there are actually witches, warlocks, practitioners of voodoo and other black magic arts all around us. These people are agents of Satan looking to destroy the church and the rest of society whenever they are able. It seems that they are doing a good job at both even though it shouldn't be so. After all, how is it that a defeated enemy is able to launch successful warfare campaigns against the people of the Victor? The problem is with the ignorance of the Victor's people (Hosea 4:6).

From a personal level, God's people need not fear voodoo, witchcraft or any other demonic magical force. We have no need to fear someone putting a curse on us or attacking us with voodoo—that is if we know God's Word, are familiar with His promises, and have recognized our authority in Christ Jesus. Remember these important promises when someone wants to curse you or attack you with some type of black magic:

No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord (Isa. 54:17)

And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven (Luke 10:17-20).

Every tongue, including the ones that attempt to curse you and cast spells over you, can be condemned by you. This is your heritage as a servant of Christ. You have authority over all of the demonic forces of magic. They cannot hurt a child of God who is living obediently for his or her Master.

Jesus uses two words for power in Luke 10. One is in reference to His authority that He delegates to us and the other is in reference to the enemy's miraculous power. No doubt that Satan has miraculous power and that is what draws so many of these witches and warlocks to him. However, we have been given authority over all the miraculous power of Satan. There is nothing that he can do to harm us through witchcraft, cursing, black magic or voodoo. He is a defeated enemy and his power is useless against the body of Christ if we would but take our stand on God's Word.

God's people who stay with His Word and His promises can walk in His power against evil spirits and not fear the witch doctor next door or the voodoo priest down the hall. On the contrary show them God's love but also let them see God's power displayed through you as you walk in confidence. You can win many of them over when they see that their dark miracle power can by no means hurt you.

Conclusion

Many of our teachings within Christianity have had a tendency to blame God for all of the ills that we face in this life. There have been various reasons for making God culpable for our problems ("God is punishing you for your sin," "God is testing you," "God is sending the trial to make you stronger," "God has a better purpose for you,"

etc.). It is no wonder that many sinners want nothing to do with God while many Christians live defeated lives.

In this book we have endeavored to show you that God is truly on your side. Paul wrote, “*What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?*” (Rom. 8:31) God is *for* you. He is not the One causing you problems. He loves you and cares for you deeply. The one causing you and me problems is the one that Peter refers to as our *adversary*. *Adversity* comes from an *adversary*, not from the One who cares about us.

The Bible teaches us that the devil, and not God, is our true enemy (see Matt. 13:24-25, 36-39; Luke 10:17-19). Thankfully, as we have already learned, Jesus has already defeated this enemy through His redemptive work on the cross (Col. 1:12-14; 2:14-15; Rev. 12:9-11). This victory that we have been given can be applied to every area of our lives when we stand on God’s Word. The weapon of God’s Word is able to confront and overcome every satanic attack thanks to the blood of Jesus.

Appendix A

What Scriptures to Use When Satan Attacks

The scriptures that I am quoting below will cover many areas that Satan usually attacks in. However, everyone has unique situations so you may need to search the Bible for yourself. However, no matter what situations come up, God has it already covered in His Word and His Word is all that you need to overcome Satan.

1. When Satan brings up the sins of your past to condemn you then remind him of these scriptures:

*Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: **old things are passed away**; behold, all things are become new. (2 Cor. 5:17)*

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. (Rom. 8:1)

2. When Satan brings condemnation for post-salvation sins:

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:7-9)

*And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and **I will remember their sin no more**. (Jer. 31:34)*

3. When Satan tries to tell you that you are not saved:

These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God. (1 John 5:13)

But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name. (John 20:31)

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: (Rom. 8:16)

He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. (1 John 5:10-11)

4. When Satan says that you have lost your salvation or that you have committed the unpardonable sin:

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one. (John 10:27-30)

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor

principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Rom. 8:35-39)

Who forgiveth ALL thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; (Ps. 103:3)

He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. (Ps. 103:10-12)

5. When Satan attacks you or your loved ones with sickness:

For the LORD will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, the LORD will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you. (Ex. 12:23)

And ye shall serve the LORD your God, and he shall bless thy bread, and thy water; and I will take sickness away from the midst of thee. (Ex. 23:25)

You, O Lord, are my refuge! You have made the Most High your home. No harm will come to you. No sickness will come near your home. (Psalm 91:9-10; GOD'S WORD Translation)

6. When Satan tempts you to worry, use these:

He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him. (Ps. 91:15)

Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. (Phil. 4:6-7)

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. (Isa. 26:3)

7. When Satan tells you that God will not answer your prayers:

And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them. (Mark 11:22-24)

Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: (Matt. 7:7)

And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it. (John 14:13-14)

8. When Satan tells you that he will kill you and/or your family:

*Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and **nothing shall by any means hurt you.** (Luke 10:19)*

We know that no children of God keep on sinning, for the Son of God keeps them safe, and the Evil One cannot harm them. (1 John 5:18; TEV)

Whoever goes to the Lord for safety, whoever remains under the protection of the almighty, can say to him, "You are my defender and protector. You are my God; in you I trust." He will keep you safe from all hidden dangers and from all deadly diseases. He will cover you with his wings; you will be safe in his care; his faithfulness will protect and defend you. You need not fear any dangers at night or sudden attacks during the day or plagues that strike in the dark or the evil that kills in the daylight. A thousand may fall dead beside you, ten thousand all around you, but you will not be harmed. You will look and see how the wicked are punished. You have made the Lord your defender, the most high your protector, and so no disaster will strike you, no violence will come near your home. God will put his angels in charge of you to protect you wherever you go. (Psalm 91:1-11; TEV)

9. When Satan attacks your finances then read these to him:

Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again. (Luke 6:38)

But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work: (2 Cor. 9:6-8)

Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that

there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts. (Mal. 3:8-11)

10. When Satan tries to attack your marriage then use these:

And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him. (Gen. 2:18)

And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. (Gen. 2:23-24)

And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. (Matt. 19:5-6)

Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the LORD. (Prov. 18:22)

11. When Satan says that your children will grow up to be no good:

Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it. (Prov. 22:6)

Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him. (Prov. 22:15)

And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. (Acts 16:31)

12. When Satan would try to cause you to doubt or disbelieve anything in God's Word then tell him this:

God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good? (Num. 23:19)

*In hope of eternal life, which **God, that cannot lie**, promised before the world began; (Titus 1:2)*

*That by two immutable things, in which it was **impossible for God to lie**, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: (Heb. 6:18)*

13. When Satan tries to get you to be afraid you tell him this:

For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. (1 Tim. 1:7)

There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. We love him, because he first loved us. (1 John 4:18-19)

Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. (Heb. 2:14-15)

14. When Satan tries to tell you that a certain promise in the Bible (Old or New Testament) is not for you then tell him this:

ALL Scripture is given by God and is useful for teaching and for showing people what is wrong in their lives. It is useful for correcting faults and teaching how to live right. Using the Scriptures, the person who serves God will be ready and will have everything he needs to do every good work. (2 Tim. 3:16-17; The Everyday Bible)

*Now God has left us a promise that we may enter and have his rest. Let us be very careful, then, so that none of you will fail to get the rest. **The Good News was preached to us just as it was preached to them.** But the teaching did not help them. They heard it but did not accept it with faith. **We who have believed are able to enter and have God's rest.** (Heb. 4:1-3; The Everyday Bible)*

*For **ALL** the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us. (2 Cor. 1:20)*

15. When Satan wants to make you give up and quit tell him this:

Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to teach them that they should always pray and never become discouraged. (Luke 18:1; TEV)

Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest. (Josh 1:7)

16. When Satan calls you a failure then you tell him this:

This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success. (Josh. 1:8)

And the LORD shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the LORD thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do them: (Deut. 28:13)

*Happy are those who reject the advice of evil people, who do not follow the example of sinners or join those who have no use for God. Instead, they find joy in obeying the Law of the Lord, and they study it day and night. They are like trees that grow beside a stream, that bear fruit at the right time, and whose leaves do not dry up. They succeed in **everything** they do. (Psalm 1:1-3; TEV)*

17. When Satan would tempt you to sin then you tell him this:

And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him. Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. (1 John 3:5-9)

***Being then made free from sin**, ye became the servants of righteousness. (Rom. 6:18)*

*Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, **being dead to sins**, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. (1 Pet. 2:24)*

18. When Satan would lead you to be angry with those who hurt you:

Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: Neither give place to the devil. (Eph. 4:26-27)

Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour. (Eph. 4:31-32; 5:1-2)

Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all sins. (Prov. 10:12)

19. When Satan tries to use others to oppress you remind him of this:

When a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him. (Prov. 16:7)

So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me. (Heb. 13:6)

20. When the devil tells you that God is no longer with you:

Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. (Heb. 13:5)

Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen. (Matt. 28:20)

Appendix B

Why Job Was Unable To Do Anything About The Devil

And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face. And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord (Job 1:8-12)

Whenever I have attempted to teach the truths laid out in this book to people I am ministering to, one of the objections I am confronted with is how Satan was allowed to do so many terrible things to Job. Due to the misapplication of Job's plight many have settled into the idea that they are modern day Jobs. We have other books in which we will deal with Job in more detail but let us briefly share why Job could not apply the principles that we have expounded upon in this book and why that is *not* true of *you* today.

God's Character

One of the problems with the pessimistic interpretations of Job is how God is often misrepresented by expositors of this book. For example, some claim that God brought Job to Satan's attention for the specific purpose of testing him. If we look further into this we will find just the opposite. When God is meeting with His council of angels Satan joins them. God asks him where he came from. God does not

necessarily ask questions because of a lack of knowledge but because He is often trying to extract a confession from the one being questioned, especially one who is scheming to do some mischief.

Satan knows that he cannot lie to God and responds, “*From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it*” (Job 1:7b). Connecting this to 1 Pet. 5:8 we can see exactly what Satan was up to:

*Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, **walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.***

God knew that Satan’s activities were malicious. He was seeking to steal, kill and destroy and wanted Satan to voice this truth in front of the whole council. Due to their failure of to connect this fact to Satan’s confession, many interpreters of the book of Job have unintentionally maligned God’s character. Failure to connect the two statements has blinded many to the fact that God is exposing Satan’s malicious designs against mankind in general and Job in particular.

God asks Satan another question, “*Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth.*” Sadly, many ministers have interpreted this statement to mean that God was bringing Job to Satan’s attention. They claim that God wanted to use Satan to test Job. According to their misinterpretation, God had a higher purpose for Job and needed Satan’s help.

How sad that, according to the theology of some, God has run out of His own resources and must rely on Satan. Our theologians have failed to recognize that God and Satan are not working together and Satan is no servant of God. These two are at war with each other (Matt. 12:25-30; John 10:10; Acts 26:18; 1 John 3:8). God calls Job His servant but never, ever refers to Satan as one. The name Satan means “adversary” and that is what he is acting like at this very moment with God.

Again, God is not asking questions because He lacks information. *This is an interrogation by the King of the universe to an enemy intruder*, not a casual conversation between two friends. The Young’s Literal Translation makes this clear: “*And Jehovah saith unto*

the Adversary, ‘*Hast thou set thy heart against My servant.*’ Satan, who is an adversary of God, was already seeking to devour God’s servant Job. In his Bible commentary, Albert Barnes elaborates further:

Schultens remarks on this, that it means more than merely to observe or to look at - since it is abundantly manifest from the following verses that Satan “had” attentively considered Job, and had been desirous of injuring him. It means, according to him, to set himself against Job, to fix the heart on him with an intention to injure him, and Yahweh means to ask whether Satan had done this.¹

Satan is caught. The jig is up and his schemes against one of God’s servants are exposed. God allows the angelic council to see Satan for the malicious evil being that he is. However, Satan is a quick thinker and finds a way to turn this exposure to his advantage. Since he knows that he has been exposed he thinks that he can turn the tables on God by embarrassing Him in front of the angelic council.

Satan began to accuse both God and Job of selfish motives. Satan accused God of bribery; buying Job’s devotion and servitude with the many blessings that He had bestowed upon him. He also accused Job of serving God only for the blessings that he received. Satan was trying to convince the angelic council that God is not governing the universe properly and that he could do a better job. He attempts to prove it at Job’s expense. The challenge to God in front of all the angels was that God take away everything and He would see a different Job, one that will curse Him.

Basically Satan was attempting to use the same method that he successfully used to get a third of the angels to follow him in rebellion against God. This method is called *slander* (Eze. 28:16-18; Matt. 25:41; Rev. 12:3-4, 7-9). After all, another pseudonym for Satan is *devil* which means *slanderer*. There is no indication that God set this up or wanted it to happen. On the contrary, after Satan’s first attack on Job, God says to Satan:

And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a

perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause (Job 2:3)

Who did the inciting? Satan did. God did not instigate this attack on Job. This was completely Satan's idea. He desired to hurt Job and ultimately hurt God. What purpose did God have in all of this? None. God, who cannot lie, says that all of this was "without cause" or "for no good reason". Despite what so many claim about Job, there is no divine purpose behind Job's sufferings. The whole book is about Satan's hatred for God and man and how God has to sometimes deal with His adversary.

One may ask, "Well, if God did not want this to happen then why didn't He just deal with Satan? After all, He is more powerful." For the sake of his and Job's integrity and for the sake of the entire universe God could not allow Satan's challenge to go unmet. The issue is not a matter of *power*, but of *trust*. If God would have overpowered Satan (something He could have easily done) He may have been rid of an evil nuisance but this would not have solved the problems of trust and righteousness. As Forster and Marston so well state it:

Why God didn't God immediately destroy Satan when challenged concerning Job: "We must be clear exactly what we mean if we say that God 'could have stopped' Job's suffering. We may indeed accept that he had the sheer power to stop or even destroy Satan. The problem is that in this case, even as Satan sank under God's wrath and destruction, he would have gone down with a sneer on his lips as though to say, 'I told you so.' Such a 'solution' would have left forever unanswered Satan's accusation that God's kingdom was based (like his own) on force and expediency. It was not lack of power that prevented God from crushing Satan – it was a matter of principle.... Satan's accusations must be answered, and they cannot be truly answered by a force that simply crushes the accuser."²

Satan had used these tactics before and launched a somewhat successful rebellion against God, though the only fruit from it was to be booted from God's presence. However, God did not want to lose

anymore angels due to lack of trust. This is the primary reason behind Job's suffering.

When God and Job are vindicated in the end, God released Job from his satanic captivity and restored to him twice as much as he had before (Job 42:10-12). If some are going to claim to be modern day Jobs then they must believe God for an eventual deliverance and restoration of all that the devil stole from them. After all, this is the part of Job that the New Testament commands us to focus on (James 5:11).

Why Job is Different from Us

Some go overboard with dispensational teachings and claim that Old Testament situations cannot be applied today. Many seem to believe that the Old Testament is irrelevant in our present dispensation. We reject this is utterly false teaching. Nonetheless, while we consider the Old Testament to be relevant for Christians today, we must be careful to interpret all Old Testament Scripture in light of the New Testament. Some Old Testament situations must be studied in the light of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. It is from that perspective that we apply Old Testament teaching to our lives.

For example, Job had no knowledge of a being called Satan. Nowhere does Job acknowledge Satan's existence nor does God even tell him about Satan. Reasons for this are the subject for another book. Regardless, New Testament believers have been given full knowledge of this enemy. During Job's time Jesus had not yet died and rose from the dead, thus issuing Satan a crushing legal defeat. Under the new covenant, Jesus has defeated Satan and has delegated His authority over the devil to the church. Whatever power Satan had during Job's has now been placed under our authority. Compare the following:

*And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, **all that he hath is in thy power**; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD (Job 1:12)*

And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you (Luke 10:18-19)

We have an advantage that Job never had due to the coming of Jesus to the earth. Job's tragedy came through Satan's power but we have been given authority over *all his power*. There is no more reason to suffer needlessly and in ignorance as Job had to. We are now told in a number of places in the Bible to exercise authority over him and his demons, to stand against him, to resist him and to give him no place (Luke 10:17-20; Mark 16:15-20; Eph. 4:27; 6:10-18; James 4:7; 1 Pet. 5:8-9). In Job Satan told God that he was "*going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it*". He still does that under the New Testament, but unlike Job we have been taught to "*resist [the devil] stedfast in the faith*" (1 Pet. 5:9a). We have authority and instructions that Job did not have at the time of his ordeal.

Job is a real historical person (Ezek. 14:14, 20; James 5:11) whose book is inspired by God and is therefore profitable for teaching (2 Tim. 3:16). He was a great man of faith and integrity who trusted God based on the amount of information he had at the time. However, the Bible is progressive revelation and New Testament believers have been privileged with much more information and advantage over our enemy.

There is much to learn from the wonderful book of Job just as there is with any other portion of God's Word. But just like other Scripture, Job can be twisted and abused. Job was not placed in our Bibles to teach us that God sics the devil on us and that we must "sit there and take the abuse". Job must be read and taught in light of the finished work of Christ and Satan's defeat. Job gives us insight into how the evil one works, but it is not there to teach New Testament believers that they have no authority over him. Jesus has dealt with the devil. We are now victors over him and have the right to resist him, something Job did not have.

Appendix C

Paul's Victory over a Thorny Issue

And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure (1 Cor. 12:7)

In light of all that we have taught in this book so far concerning the power of God's Word to destroy the works of the enemy in our lives, we will sometimes, as we have seen with Job, also encounter the question, "Well, what about Paul's thorn in the flesh. Didn't God send that to Paul and denied his request to have it removed?"

It is always difficult to refute centuries of traditional, non-biblical interpretation. This is especially true when these ideas are propagated from our great halls of higher learning. Nevertheless, many will fail to achieve the victory that God promises unless we do so. Satan has used the false understanding of "Paul's thorn in the flesh" to keep his strongholds over people's lives. As long as Satan can deceive people into believing that he is merely doing God's bidding when he attacks then we will not stand against him.

The Thorn was NOT Sent by God

Not once is God mentioned in 2 Cor. 12:7. Again Paul says, "...there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, **the messenger of Satan.**" Yet sadly most people add God into the passage by reading it this way: "...there was given to me **by God** a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan." This addition is the very violation of His Word that God condemns (Deut. 4:2; Prov. 30:6; Rev. 22:16).

How can we say that this thorn was sent by God and then in the same sentence call it a messenger of Satan? As we learned concerning Job, God and Satan have plans for men that are in direct contrast with each other's (John 10:10; Acts 26:18; 1 John 3:8). God wants to save,

bless and help man while Satan wants to cause misery, pain, and damnation to us. God and Satan are not working together. The thorn was sent to Paul as an attack on him and *not* to help him.

The Thorn was sent to DESTROY Paul

God does not send demons to humble His servants using Satan's messengers and Satan is *not* in the business of helping God's servants to be "humble". However, Satan does want to keep God's servants from exaltation. *There is a large and vast difference between pride and godly exaltation.* God wants to exalt His servants and Satan fights hard against it:

*Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. **Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time*** (1 Pet. 5:5-6; see also Matt. 23:12; Luke 14:11; 18:14).

Contrary to popular theology ***God actually wants to exalt His servants.*** When God exalts His servant there is no pride involved, but the servant must *humble himself*. Contrast what Paul says about exaltation and what James says about it:

*"Not a novice, lest being **lifted up with pride** he fall into the condemnation of the devil"* (1 Tim. 3:6; see also Eze. 28:17)

*Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and **he shall lift you up*** (James 4:10)

One can be self-exalted through pride which is arrogant and ungodly. However, there is a godly exaltation that comes from self-abasement. This puts a whole new light on Paul statement "...*the*

messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.” Paul was not struggling with pride so that is not the issue being dealt with in 2 Cor. 12. Satan sent his own messenger to keep Paul from receiving God’s exaltation in order to prevent him from sharing the abundance of revelations that God had given him with the church and the world. Obviously these God-given revelations that Paul received were meant to do even more damage to Satan’s kingdom. Satan was afraid of having these revelations shared with the rest of the body of Christ and the world at large so he attacked Paul.

The “Thorn” was NOT a Sickness

Again we read, “...*a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me.*” To “buffet” someone has nothing whatsoever to do with sickness, disease or handicaps. When Jesus was being persecuted by the religious leaders of His day we read, “*Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote him with the palms of their hands*” (Matt. 26:67).

The “buffeting” that Paul says that he suffered is seen as persecution rather than sickness in Scripture. This is what the “thorn in the flesh” sent by Satan was doing to Paul. Throughout the Bible, thorns usually represent *people* and *persecution* (Joshua 23:13; Numbers 33:55; Judges 2:3; Ezekiel 2:6; 28:24; Luke 6:44; Hebrews 6:8-9). Paul himself makes this clear in 2 Cor. 12:10 where he writes, “*Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.*”

Some people get fixated on the word “infirmities” in this passage and automatically think of sickness. Therefore when they are sick they see no need to resist. They believe that they are either a modern day Job or they have a thorn like Paul. Yet in 2 Cor. 11:23-30, we receive a list of Paul’s “infirmities” and sickness is not mentioned one time. *Astheneia*, the same Greek word translated “infirmities” in 2 Cor. 12:9-10 is used here to describe all of the persecution, trials and tribulations that Paul suffered. Not one time is sickness listed among any of them. Furthermore, there are a number of places in the New Testament where *astheneia* is used by Paul simply to represent a moral or social weakness rather than sickness (2 Cor. 13:3-4; Romans 8:26; Heb. 4:15; 11:34).

Nevertheless, if the thorn was actually a sickness, those who teach that God denied Paul any healing are still lacking any Biblical foundation for this ridiculous assertion. Paul said, “*Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, **that the power of Christ may rest upon me***” (2 Cor. 12:9b).

The word “power” is from the Greek word “*dunamis*”. We discussed this word at length in a previous chapter but some repetition is needed here as well. It means, “*power for performing miracles.*” Everywhere this *dunamis* is used in Scripture we are shown that healing was manifested (Luke 5:17; Luke 6:19; Luke 9:1; Acts 10:38; Mark 5:28-30). The primary purpose of God’s *dunamis-miracle power* is to heal the sick. When you examine this *dunamis* in relation to Paul you find something very fascinating:

*And God wrought special **miracles** by the hands of Paul: So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and **the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them*** (Acts 19:11-12)

The word for “miracles” in this passage is “*dunamis*”. This *dunamis* so rested on Paul that he was able to take handkerchiefs from his own body to heal others from diseases. Yet, we are told that this *dunamis* that rested on Paul was there to keep him sick? What a castigation of God’s character that many unbelieving theologians and ministers present to us when they say that Paul’s thorn was a sickness and then to say that the same *dunamis* that healed so many others had rested on Paul but he was denied healing. ***How utterly absurd!!!***

Paul’s Request was NOT Denied

Paul said, “*For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.*” According to so many who erroneously teach it, God let Paul ask three times before He finally told him, “no”. This puts a serious damper on Jesus’ promises where He says, “*So I say to you, Ask and keep on asking and it shall be given youFor everyone who asks and keeps on asking receives*” (Luke 11:9-10a; The

Amplified Bible). Did God make an exception in Paul's case? Let's look again at His answer to Paul:

*And he said unto me, **My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.** Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, **that the power of Christ may rest upon me** (2 Cor. 12:8-9)*

Many faithless advocates of “defeat theology” fail to realize that God answers prayer by having us stand on His Word. He gives solid promises of victory and it is through His Word to us that we are strengthened and able to confront and defeat negative circumstances such as the ones Paul faced on a continuous basis.

Notice the present tense of this promise. God told Paul, “My grace *is* sufficient for thee: for my strength *is* made perfect in weakness.” During one of his shipwrecks, which he refers to as an “infirmity,” Paul received a promise from God that he would stand before Caesar and that there would be no loss of life aboard the ship (Acts 27:21-25). The Lord told Paul, “*God hath given thee all them that sail with thee.*” This statement was made long before the storm had abated. Paul received and stood on this promise by faith.

Paul is an example of a man who prayed, received promises in answer to prayer, stood on them, and got results. God answers prayer prayed in line with His Word. In the case of God's response to Paul in 2 Cor. 12:8-9, James gives us a perspective on God's grace that is different than what our defeat advocates try to sell us:

***But he giveth more grace.** Wherefore he saith, **God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.** Submit yourselves therefore to God. **Resist the devil, and he will flee from you** (James 4:6-7)*

James says, “*Submit yourselves **therefore** to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*” A man once said that when you see a “therefore” in the Bible, you need to read further to find out what it is

there for. James uses the word “therefore” to connect his previous statement about God giving His grace to us when we humble ourselves without coercion and willingly submit to Him. When we do this we can exercise authority over Satan and watch this defeated enemy flee from us. Peter makes the exact same statement when he writes, “...*for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble*” (1 Pet. 5:5b). Afterwards, Peter would tell his readers how the power of grace enables them to stand against satanic opposition (1 Pet. 5:8-10).

Finally, some of the ideas that people have taught concerning Paul’s thorn contradict the things Paul himself has taught on the subject of our warfare with Satan. In Ephesians 6 for example Paul writes:

*Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. 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. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, **that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand** (Eph. 6:10-13)*

Paul says, “...*there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me*” (2 Cor. 12:7b). If the grace God had given Paul was to merely tolerate the work of Satan in buffeting him it certainly does not reflect in his teachings here in Ephesians 6. He taught us to aggressively stand against Satan and demonic forces (2 Cor. 10:3-5). Paul was a living example of this when he withstood the demon filled Simon the sorcerer (Acts 13:7-12). Paul walked in authority and power over the devil and the spirit realm and the devils knew him (Acts 16:18; 19:11-18). A demon-destroyer like Paul is unlikely to have tolerated the things that many claim that he did. Therefore, 2 Cor. 12:7-10 does not teach us to take a passive stance concerning the devil.

Notes

Chapter One

1. www.studylight.org
2. Strong's Concordance of the Bible
3. Benner, Jeff A. Exodus 20:7, http://www.ancient-hebrew.org/40_exodus1.html (Last accessed: May 6, 2014)
4. Usher, Charles H. **Satan: A Defeated Foe** (Fort Washington, PA: Christian Literature Crusade, 1964, 1982, 1988), p. 11
5. Dathe, translation of the Historical Books, Hals, 1784, 8vo. As quoted in Twopeny, Richard **Dissertations on Some Parts of the Old and New Testaments which have been Supposed Unsuitable to the Divine Attributes** (London: C & J Riverton, 1824), p. 84
6. "One peculiarity of the Hebrew tongue is that it abounds in figures of speech that must necessarily be understood, to gain its intended meaning. The simple mode of life in which the earliest Israelites lived, doubtless made them great observers of nature; any reference to which, from their familiarity with it, made them require no explanations. Our difficulty here is to reconcile this with our ideas and language; and the neglect of these idioms with our translators, where they have given a literal verbal translation, without the customary sense of the original, has led them into many errors." Murray, John Hale **A Help for English Readers to Understand Mis-translated Passages in Our Bible** (London: S. W. Partridge & Co., 1881), p. 2
7. Kaiser Jr., Walter C. **Recovering the Unity of the Bible** (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing, 2009), p. 91
8. Philip Melancthon, as quoted in "The Dark Side of Things: An Exposition" in **The Evangelical Repository: A Quarterly Magazine of Theological Literature (Vol. I)** (Glasgow: Lang, Adamson, 1863), p. 100
9. For example, Church father Irenaeus (125-202 AD) wrote, "Upon all those who separate themselves from Him, God inflicts the separation that they have chosen. Now separation from God is death; separation from light is darkness; separation from God means the loss of all good things that come from Him." Quoted by Faryna, Rev. Deacon Michael **The Theology of Illness and Death**, https://www.umanitoba.ca/colleges/st_andrews/profiles/MichaelFarynaArticle.html (Last accessed: Dec. 19, 2012).
10. Barrett, Richard A. F. **A Synopsis of Criticisms Upon Those Passages of the Old Testament: In which Modern Commentators Have Differed (Vol. I)**, ©1847, London: Brown, Green, and Longman's, p. 254
11. Pentecost, J. Dwight **Faith that Endures: The Book of Hebrews Applied to the Real Issues of Life** (Grand Rapids, MI: Discovery House, 1992), p. 201
12. Renn, Stephen D. **Expository Dictionary of Bible Words: Word Studies for Key English Bible Words Based on the Hebrew And Greek Texts** (Hendrickson Publishers, 2005), p. 26

13. Ogden, Graham S., Zogbo, Lynell **A Handbook on Ecclesiastes** (United Bible Societies, 1997), Page 290
14. Strong's Concordance of the Bible
15. Dunnam, Maxi D., Oglivie, Lloyd (Ed.) *The Communicator's Commentary: Exodus*, ©1987, Waco, TX: Word Books, p. 149
16. Usher, *Satan*, p. 12

Chapter Two

1. Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Bible
2. Larkin, Clarence **The Spirit World** (Mansfield Centre, CT: Martino Publishing, 2011), p. 14
3. Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words: With Topical Index (Thomas Nelson Inc, 1996)
4. Pember, G. H. **Earth's Earliest Ages** (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1876, 1975), p. 51
5. Bertoluci, Jose M. **The Son of the Morning and the Guardian Cherub in the Context of the Controversy Between Good and Evil** (Th.D. dissertation, Andrews University Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, 1985. Available from University Microfilms, University of Michigan, P.O. Box 1346, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346). I recommend this dissertation only for the one who is interested in the most thorough research I have seen to date concerning the history of interpretation in which Isa. 14 and Ezek. 28 are seen as references to Satan and how only within Reformed and modern day scholarship has this interpretation been disputed.
6. "Tertullian against Marcion" as cited in Roberts, Reverend Alexander **The Ante-Nicene Fathers: Volume III** (New York: Cosimo, Inc. 2007), p. 305
7. Derek Prince offers us an insightful commentary here: "Scripture confronts us with a deliberate contrast between Lucifer and Jesus. Lucifer was not in the form of God; he was a created being. He had no right to be equal with God. Yet he grasped at equality with God, and when he reached up, he slipped and fell. On the other hand, Jesus was divine by eternal nature and enjoyed equality with God. He did not need to grasp at it, but rather, He humbled Himself." Prince, Derek **War in Heaven: God's Epic Battle with Evil** (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen Books, 2003), p. 63
8. The word "devil" is Strong's Number #G1228 which means "false accuser, devil, slanderer." Thayer's Greek Definitions says that the word means "Prone to slander, slanderous, accusing falsely; a calumniator, false accuser, slanderer; metaphorically applied to a man who, by opposing the cause of God, may be said to act the part of the devil or to side with him."
9. Pember, *Earth's Earliest Ages*, p.52
10. Luginbill, Robert D. **The Satanic Rebellion: Background to the Tribulation Part 1**, <http://ichthys.com> (Last accessed: May 31, 2011)
11. The great Chinese preacher, Watchman Nee, adds, "Many angels were under his authority; they helped him to govern the world. But due to his position and glory, he became proud and rebellious. He wished to lift himself up to be equal with God. He was unhappy to be a created being and wished to be a creator. So he began to slander God before the preadamic race and to accuse the latter before God." See Nee,

Watchman **The Mystery of Creation** (New York: Christian Fellowship Publishers, Inc., 1981), p. 35

12. I agree with the late Charles Edward Fraser-Tyler who wrote, “As man reads the Apocalypse, limiting it to one event and one fulfilment, it is not a ‘sure light’ No two are agreed as to the event in which it is fulfilled, and God's "sure light" is extinguished by dense mists of doubt, controversy, and jangling. The biform nature of prophetic language might alone assure us that such limitation is erroneous. It is alike literal and symbolic; and besides, its prophetic burden has manifold applications to the church and world, as well as to every member thereof. This constant re-enacting of prophecy explains whence the vast number of remarkable historical parallels¹ with which history is replete. God is in them re-enacting prophecy, and by a striking reiteration of events inviting man to study his past dealings, that he may be prepared for those fearful ones yet in the future. In these parallels, then, or reiteration of events, we have farther proof that history, like Scripture, is cyclical, and that God's teaching is line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little.” Fraser-Tyler, Charles Edward **New View of the Apocalypse: or, The plagues of Egypt and of Europe Identical** (Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter, 1852), p. 48

13. Some Christians who advocate an ideology of strict pacifism and who translate this idea into one of “the nonviolent God” claim that the war between Michael and Lucifer is speaking specifically about “polemics” due to the translation of a Greek word in Rev. 12:7-9. However, since the Bible shows angels with swords in several places (Gen. 3:24; Num. 22:23, 31; 1 Chron. 21:12, 16, 27, 30; 32:21) I will have to strongly disagree with them. I will agree with them that violence is not in God's nature but Scripture shows that He will allow it to protect others against violence. He refers to the Roman soldier with the sword as His servant (Rom. 13:1-5).

Chapter Three

1. We *strongly* believe (though many also *strongly* disagree) that there is a “gap” between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2. The Concordant Literal translation renders Gen. 1:1-2 as follows: “*Created by the Elohim were the heavens and the earth. Yet the earth became a chaos and vacant, and darkness was on the surface of the submerged chaos. Yet the spirit of the Elohim is vibrating over the surface of the water.*” (Emphasis are mine) The earth became the way we find it in verse 2 after Satan was thrown out of Heaven to the earth where he had previously been allowed to rule. Absent from the life of God, Satan, being the destroyer that he is, more than likely caused much destruction out of anger and vengeance. We will explore this in more detail in my upcoming book “*God's War with Evil throughout the Ages*”.

2. Strong, New Exhaustive Concordance

3. Driver, Samuel R. *The Book of Genesis* (London: Methuen & Co., 1907), p. 16

4. The word “subdue” in Hebrew is *kavash*. According to one Hebrew scholar, “The verb *kavash* literally means to place your foot on the neck of your conquered enemy signifying a submission of the enemy to his defeater. Figuratively this verb means to bring a people or nation into submission (Num 32:29). This word can also mean to bring into control (Mic 7:19).” Benner, Jeff A. *Question of the Month – Subdue?* in **Biblical Hebrew E-Magazine Issue #027** (Ancient Hebrew Research Center, May, 2006), <http://www.ancient-hebrew.org/emagazine/> (Last Accessed: 19 January, 2013)

5. Pember, *Earth's Earliest Ages*, pp. 78, 79

6. One professor of theology wrote the following well over a century ago concerning why man was to guard the garden: "When man was transplanted into Paradise, with the purpose of dressing it and keeping it (Gen. ii. 15); and the secret meaning of these words — *ut custodiret* — soon became apparent from the fact that, by means of a magic spell, a brute becomes even in the midst of Paradise the instrument of speech of an evil spirit, who designed it for the ruin of the man who had been appointed to watch over Paradise — these things, even apart from the tree of knowledge with its deadly fruit are retrospective hints which give us to understand that there was a destructive power to which man was placed in opposition, that he might overcome it; and which, therefore, was older than the ruin which man's defeat introduced into the last creation. This destructive power is not human, and yet it is self-conscious; and therefore it is an angelic power, — a conclusion which the progressive development of Scripture entirely confirms to us." Delitzsch, Franz A **System of Biblical Psychology** (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1867), pp. 74-75

7. Nee, Watchman **The Glorious Church** (Anaheim, CA: Living Stream Ministry, 1968, 1993), P. 9

8. Murray, Andrew **With Christ in the School of Prayer** (Springdale, PA: Whitaker House, 1981), p. 133

Chapter Four

1. It is true that if one rejects Christ then God's wrath abides on him (John 3:36) but we must have a Biblical understanding of the wrath of God that is consistent with His love. Paul tells us in Romans 1 that God's wrath has been revealed and then goes on to explain exactly what *the wrath of God* is. He tells us that God's wrath is the forsaking of the sinner to the consequences of his or her sin (Rom. 1:26-28). This is consistent with many other passages of Scripture that speak about God's wrath or His anger (Deut. 31:17-18; 1 Kings 14:15-16; 2 Kings 17:17-20; 2 Chron. 29:6-8; Isa. 57:17; Jer. 33:5). It is our *sin* that separates us from God, removing us from under the umbrella of His protection and leaving us at the mercy of sin's consequences (Isa. 59:1-2; Eph. 2:1-5). This is the "wrath of God". Jesus experienced this wrath for us (Matt. 27:46) so that we don't have to.

2. A "spoil" is the plunder or bounty obtained after a great victory is achieved over an enemy (2 Sam. 23:10; 1 Chron. 26:27; 2 Chron. 14:13; 20:25). In the case of Jesus we read how His death would do this for us:

Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors. (Isa. 53:12)

Other translations use more warfare analogy to bring this point across, thus showing that Jesus engaged in a real battle with Satan in order to redeem us and restore everything that Satan and demons had taken from mankind:

*So I will give him a place of honor among those who are great. **He will be rewarded just like others who win the battle. That is because he was willing to give his life as a sacrifice.** He was counted among those who had committed crimes. He took the sins of many people on himself. And he gave his life for those who had done what is wrong.” (New International Reader’s Version)*

***Therefore shall He win victory, He shall succeed triumphantly, since He has shed His life-blood, and let Himself be numbered among the rebels, bearing the great world’s sins, and interposing for rebellious men.** (Isa. 53:12; The James Moffatt Bible)*

These are the expansion of the first prophecy given in Genesis 3:15 in which Jesus would crush Satan’s head. Once again we see that Christ’s work was not a matter of trying to appease an “offended God” but was very much a rescue mission from God to set us free from satanic bondage and captivity. This is the major, and sadly often neglected, truth of the gospel.

3. “The context of Ephesians 4 is how believers are prepared to effectively serve Christ. First, they must be delivered from Satan’s power, by which he disrupts their progress, and second, they must be given gifts to enable them to properly function in the body of Christ.” Epp, Theodore H. **Living Abundantly: Studies in Ephesians** (Lincoln, NE: Back to the Bible, 1978), p. 165

4. “...expose them to public view and shame, and triumph over them, ‘in him’, in and by his Son Jesus Christ: the whole is an allusion to the victories, spoils, and triumphs, of the Roman emperors, who when they had obtained a victory, a triumph was decreed for them by the senate; in which the emperor was drawn in an open chariot, and the captives being stripped of their armour, and their hands tied behind them, were led before him and exposed to public view and disgrace; while he was shouted and huzzaed through the city of Rome, and had all the marks of honour and respect given him: now all that is said in the preceding verses show how complete the saints are in and by Christ; and stand in no need of the philosophy of the Gentiles, or the ceremonies of the Jews; nor have anything to fear from their enemies, sin, Satan, and the law, for sin is pardoned, the law is abolished, and Satan conquered.” Gill, John **John Gill’s Exposition of the Bible** (Paris, AR: The Baptist Standard Bearer)

5. Richards, Lawrence O. **Zondervan Expository Dictionary of Bible Words** (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1985), p. 224

6. “There are two thoughts among others which are suggested by these words. First, the power Satan had. He is described as having the power of death. Satan evidently had great dominion and strength before Christ’s death. The Greek word “*kratos*” suggests this. It is rendered dominion in I. Peter iv.11; v. 11; Jude 25; and R. i. 6 in ascribing dominion to God. It is rendered “*strength*” in Luke i. 51, and “*power*” in Ephesians 1. 19 and vi. 10, in speaking of the power of God’s might. The second thought is that Christ has taken away this power by means of His death. The word “*destroyed*” is translated “*loose*” (Romans vii. 2), “*done away*” (I Cor. Xiii. 10), “*put down*” (I Cor. XV. 24), “*ceased*” (Gal. v. 11), and “*abolished*” (II Tim. i. 10). Each of these words might be read instead of “destroyed,” and may be employed by way of illustration in showing how completely Christ conquered.” Marsh, F. E. **Why Did Christ Die?** (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1985), p. 130
7. Vine’s Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words
8. Strong, James. **The New Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible**, Copyright (C) 1984 by Thomas Nelson Publisher's.
9. Snodderly, Mary Elizabeth A **Socio-Rhetorical Investigation of the Johannine Understanding of “the Works of the Devil” in 1 John 3:8** (University of South Africa, 2008), p. i
10. Ibid., p. 224
11. Matson, William A. **The Adversary, His Person, Power, and Purpose: A Study in Satanology** (New York: E.S. Gorham, 1902), p. 99, 1902
12. Luther, Martin **Watchwords for the Warfare of Life** (New York: M. W. Dodd, 1869), p. 119. This quote, interestingly enough, was in his book under the heading, “Warfare against all kinds of Evil— Warfare against the Devil.” Of course Luther was very inconsistent in his views as he held to a view of predestination that often defamed.

Chapter Five

1. Usher, *Satan*, p. 5
2. Chant, Ken **Throne Rights** (Ramona, CA: Vision Publishing, 1997). One of my favorite books and one highly recommended in order to gain more insight on this subject.
3. Peck, George B. **Throne-Life or the Highest Christian Life** (Boston, MA: The Watchword Publishing Company, 1888), p. 198
4. Gordon, Samuel D. **Quiet Talks on The Tempter** (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1910), p. 79
5. Hobbs, Herschel H. **Romans: A Verse by Verse Study** (Waco, TX: Word Book Publishers, 1977), p. 116. Explaining the Greek word in detail Hobbs writes, “‘We are more than conquerors’ is the translation of *hupernikomen*. It is formed out of a verb meaning to conquer, with the prefix *huper*, here meaning over or beyond.... It may be translated ‘superconquerors’”

6. In an interesting parallel between Superman and Jesus, one writer observes: “For example, just as Jesus died on a cross for the forgiveness of sins, defeated the devil, and was resurrected from the dead by God; in 1993, Superman died fighting the Doomsday while saving mankind from creature's path of destruction, later Superman was resurrected by his father, Jor-El” See “*Is 'Man of Steel' Superman Really Based on Jesus?*” Found at <http://www.christianpost.com/news/is-man-of-steel-superman-really-based-on-jesus-97957/> (Last accessed: June 3, 2014)

7 Gordon, *The Tempter*, p. 240

8. Middleman, Udo **The Innocence of God** (Colorado Springs, CO: Paternoster Press, 2007), p. 73

9. Nee, *The Glorious Church*, p. 66

10. Theologian Dietrich Suzanne explains further: “‘Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven.’ In the Old Testament, this term translated here by ‘will’ means also ‘good will,’ ‘benevolence,’ and the New Testament readily uses it in this sense (see Luke 2:14; margin; Matt. 11:26). It suggests God's benevolent purpose toward us, as it is revealed in Jesus Christ. Jesus has come to the earth to accomplish the will of God, which is the salvation of all men (see Heb. 10:7-9; John 3:16; 6:38-40; 12:32). This petition, then, does not imply a mere passive resignation. To pray that God’s will be done ‘on earth as it is in heaven’ is to pray for God's victory over all adverse forces which still hold the world in hostage; it is to pray that all shall come to know God; it is to pray that his will be done in us and by us. For a Christian to who lives under the sign of the cross and the resurrection of Jesus Christ, to pray this prayer is to enter into battle alongside his Lord so that Christ may reign on the earth as he does in heaven.” Dietrich Suzanne de “Matthew” in **The Laymen's Bible Commentary** (Richmond, VA:John Knox Press, 1961), pp. 41, 42. Translated by Donald G. Miller.

11. In his studies on the book of Revelation, Theodore Epp writes, “Why is it necessary to loose Satan after the 1000 year rule of Christ? ...it will prove he is still the same after the 1000 years of imprisonment. His evil nature will not change simply because he is confined for 1000 years. This demonstrates the justice of God in His final, eternal judgment of Satan.” Epp, Theodore H. **Practical Studies in Revelation (Vol. II)** (Lincoln, NE: Back to the Bible, 1969), p. 362

12. Gordon Lindsay, the late healing evangelist and founder of the Charismatic Bible school, *Christ for the Nations*, writes: “The question is: ‘Why did God, after the devil rebelled, not punish him at once? Why did He permit him freedom to continue on in his evil course?’ Though there is undoubtedly more than one reason why God delayed judgment on Lucifer, the one that surely stands out above others is that Satan in seducing as many as one third of the angels, must have succeeded in bringing into question the goodness and justice of God.” Lindsay, Gordon **Satan’s Rebellion and Fall** (Dallas, TX: Christ for the Nations, 1981), pp. 10-11

Chapter Six

1. Usher, *Satan*, p. 18

2. One dictionary, referencing Rev. 12:10 above, writes, “The Soteria is God’s, and it carries the OT nuance of victory. The overcomers confess that salvation belongs to

God (7:10), a loud voice proclaims that salvation has come (12:10)” Gerhard Kittel, Gerhard Friedrich, Geoffrey William Bromiley (editors) **Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Volume 1** (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1985), p. 1136

3. Schillebeeckx, Edward **Christ, the Experience of Jesus as Lord** (Crossroad, 1981), Page 478

4. Nigel Turner **Christian Words** (Thomas Nelson Incorporated, 1981), Page 394

5. Gordon, Tempter, p. 179

6. Spurgeon, Charles, Robert Hall (editor) **Spiritual Warfare in a Believer's Life** (Lynnwood, WA: Emerald Books, 1993), 157

Chapter Seven

1. In the King James Bible as well as most other translations, the “s” in the word “Spirit” is capitalized in Eph. 6:17. The word “Spirit” comes from the Greek word “*pneuma*.” The Bible translators usually capitalize the first letter in the word “Spirit” when they believe the writer is referring to the Holy Spirit and not the human spirit. When the translators believe that it is referring to the human spirit then the “s” is not capitalized.

Some scholars and Bible teachers believe that the translators were mistaken in capitalizing the “s” for Spirit because they believe that this is either referring to the human spirit or that this is a spiritual sword. Other scholars believe that the “S” was correctly capitalized for various reasons. Not agreeing with all of the reasons that some of them cite, I do agree with them that the “S” is correctly uppercase. Ephesians 6:17 seems to be referring to the sword of the *Spirit*.

2. Marsh, F. E. **The Discippler's Manual** (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1980, 1991), pp. 138, 139

3. Smith, William. **A Dictionary Of The Bible**, Thomas Nelson Publishers. Revised and edited by F. N. and M. A. Peloubet.

4. The late R. A. Torrey writes: “Some believers magnify the Spirit but neglect the Word. This will not do because fanaticism, groundless enthusiasm are the result. Others seek to magnify the Word, but largely ignore the Spirit. This will not do, either. It leads to dead orthodoxy and truth without life and power. The true course is to recognize the instrumental power of the Word through which the Holy Spirit works, and the living, personal power of the Holy Spirit who acts through the Word.” Torrey, R.A. **How to Obtain Fullness of Power** (New Kensington, PA: Whitaker House, 1982), pp. 38, 39

5. Now we must use caution here. Some have erroneously taught that a believer with enough faith will never see *physical death*. This is not true since death is the *last* enemy to be destroyed. However, we can take God’s life for our physical bodies and receive healing until our work is done and we are ready to be with the Lord (preferably in our old age). There are also some detractors of the message of faith and healing who mock it by claiming that if the message were legitimate then one should be able to believe that they would never grow old or never die. Legitimate

faith teaching is based on the clear promises of God. There are numerous promises of God to heal the body (Ex. 15:26; Ex. 23:23-25; Deu. 7:15; Psalm 10:1-5; Mark 16:15-20; James 5:14-16, etc.). There are no promises in the Bible that can be claimed to *never* growing old and neither are there any promises that we can live in this physical body forever. To do such would go beyond the realm and object of faith which is God's Word. No teacher of faith and healing that I am aware of has taught anyone that they can ask God for something that is not covered by a promise.

Chapter Eight

1. While Satan is certainly able to plant thoughts in our minds (Gen. 3:1-5; John 13:1, 2; Acts 5:1-5; 2 Cor. 4:3-5; 11:3) the only way for Satan to know whether or not his mind suggestions have taken root in us is by our *words* and *actions* (Gen. 6:5-7; Job 20:2; Isa. 65:2; Mat. 12:33-37). For more a more thorough biblical understanding on how Satan works on our minds see my book, **The Tempter: His Tactics and How to Take Him Out** (Pawtucket, RI: Victorious Word Christian Publishing, 2009), pp. 101-114.

Chapter Nine

1. Greene, Oliver B. **Why Does the Devil Desire to Damn You?** (Greenville, SC: The Gospel Hour, 1966), pp. 9, 10
2. While this is not true of all groups that teach *annihilation*, many who teach this false doctrine also deny the deity of our Jesus Christ and teach that He is a *created being*. Along with that many of these people deny the personality of the precious Holy Spirit, making Him out to be some impersonal power or force. While you will find a wonderful passion in many of these churches and cults for vindicating God's character against the lies taught concerning it among the more "Orthodox Evangelical" Christians (that God sovereignly ordains sin, evil, sickness, disasters, etc.), they have also become tools of Satan for denying the essential truth about the Triune Godhead. Their doctrine on hell can also lead one to believe that there is no severe eternal consequence for rejecting Christ and living a life of sin. After all, if after a life time of sin means that I will "soul sleep," wake up to be judged, and then blasted out of existence, what have I to fear about living a life of indulging my fleshly lusts?
3. Winter, Ralph D. "*The Purposes of the Roberta Winter Institute*" in **The Goal of International Development: God's Will on Earth as it is in Heaven** (Pasadena, CA: William Carey International University Press, 2009), p. 46
4. Usher, *Satan: A Defeated Foe*, p. 13.
5. For a further explanation as to why God had to allow Satan to attack Job and why we need not tolerate what Job had to tolerate, see Appendix B.
6. Usher, *Satan: A Defeated Foe*, pp. 16, 17
7. Gordon, Samuel D. *Quiet Talks on Prayer* (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image Publishers, Inc., 1906, 1910, 2003), p. 34

8. Usher, Charles **The Prayer Life** (Fort Washington, PA: Christian Literature Crusade, 1967), p. 17

Chapter Ten

1. Matson, *The Adversary*, p. 40

2. Theis Sr. (impersonating the earth's having a conversation with us) gives these staggering stats and believes that these are the reasons why we suffer "natural disasters": "From 1900 until about 1970, natural disasters were at a fairly low and consistent rate. The sins written about in Leviticus Chapter 18 were being committed at this same low and consistent rate. Then in the early 1970s, the rate shot up at an unbelievable pace. From 1900 until 2003, the total number of natural disasters was around 9,000. Almost 80 percent of that number, or actually, 6,367, occurred in the past thirty years. In fact, the rate annually went from 100 natural disasters a year before 1970 to 400 a year by 2003. A fourfold increase" Their attributes this to Satan's ability to deceive mankind. Theis Sr., T. R. **Natural Disasters are NOT Natural** (Shelbyville, KY: Wasteland Press, 2012), p. 79, 109, 111

3. Gordon, *Tempter*, pp. 91, 92

Appendix B

1. Barnes, Albert

2. Marston, Paul and Forster, Roger **God's Strategy in Human History** (Eugen, Oregon, Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2000), p. 7

Invitation and prayer for salvation

To become a TRUE Christian One must be born again -1. John 3:1-7

We must be born of the water and the Spirit. This water is not speaking of water baptism but of the Word of God (1 Pet. 1:23; James 1:18; 1 Cor. 4:15; Eph. 5:25-27).

There is only ONE avenue into heaven and that is to be born again. Water baptism, church membership, religious duties, giving to the poor, living a moral life, taking the Lord's supper, being a member of a denomination, or an INTELLECTUAL reception (vs. a heart reception) of Jesus Christ cannot save you. You must be born again.

Are you born again? If you are not you will not spend eternity in heaven with Jesus Christ but instead you will enter into eternal damnation. I urge you to consider accepting Jesus Christ as your savior.

To be born again is very simple. You need only accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour. Why not give your heart to Him today. All you need to do is ask Him to come into your life. If you are not sure of how to do this here is a simple prayer to pray:

Lord Jesus

I ask you to come into my heart right now. You said in your word that if I confess you with my mouth and believe in my heart that God raised you from the dead then I will be saved (Rom. 10:9). I recognize that I am a sinner and I need your forgiveness and a change in my nature. I repent of all my sin. I know that all that come to you, you will not reject (John 6:37). Thank you for your dying for me so that I can be born again. Thank you Father for Jesus. Thank you Holy Spirit for coming in to my life. AMEN.

You are now born again. It's that simple. By the way, welcome to the family!

Invitation to receive the baptism with the Holy Spirit

What Is This Baptism? He is a Gift to be given to the believer - Acts 2:38. Every born again Christian has the Holy Spirit in them but not every Christian has received the BAPTISM (immersion) with the Spirit.

He is also a PROMISE that can be claimed - Acts 1:4 A promise implies something that one has a legal right to claim. You need not beg, plead, and do things to earn this blessing. He is a gift so it's free. He is a promise that is claimed by faith. He can be received AFTER one is born again - Acts 19:1-6.

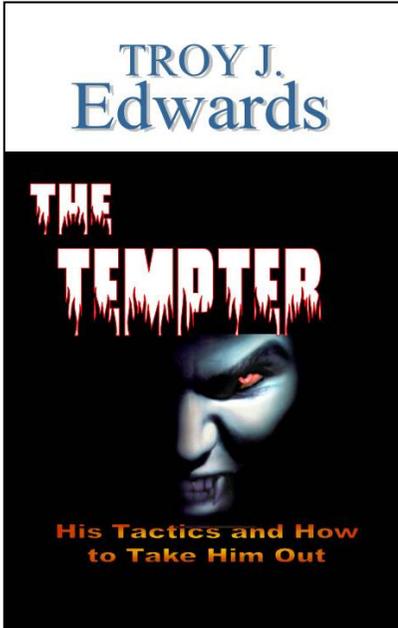
Though it is better to ask God for this baptism in your own way, below is a prayer that may help you if you are at a loss as to how to ask:

Heavenly Father

The Lord Jesus promised that I can receive the baptism with the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking with other tongues. You promised that if I ask then I would receive exactly that which I have asked you for. Father I thank you in the name of your son Jesus and I yield myself to you Holy Spirit. Thank you for baptising me with Your Spirit.

Now just lift your hands and receive. Don't forget to share this blessing with others.

Books by Pastor Troy J. Edwards



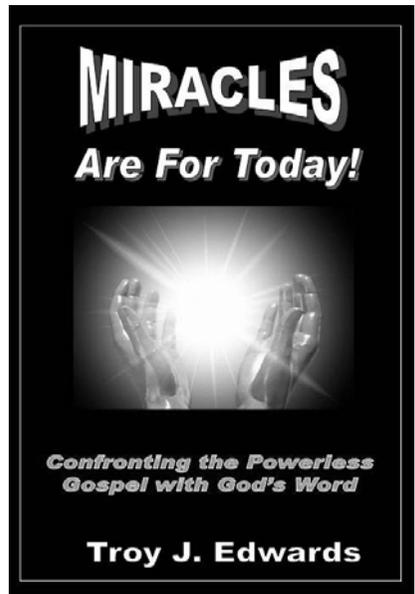
The Tempter: His Tactics and how to Take Him Out

In *The Tempter: His Tactics and How to Take Him Out*, Pastor, Teacher and author Troy J. Edwards takes you through the Scriptures and exposes the Tempter's sinister and crafty attacks on man. You will learn how the Tempter has used so-called Christian theology to make God appear to be the author of sin. You will also learn why the Tempter tempts God's people and non-Christians into sin. Finally you will learn practical truths from Scripture on how to overcome this enemy.

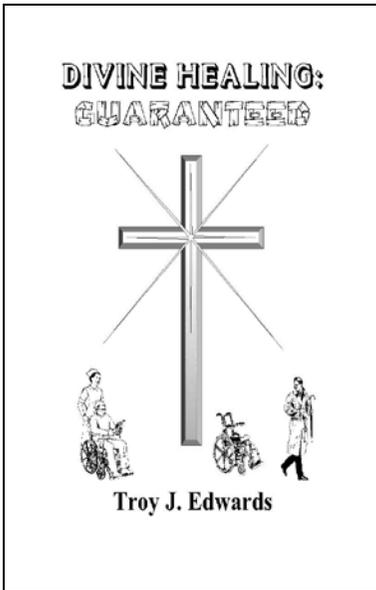
Miracles Are For Today: Confronting the Powerless Gospel with God's Word

*Confronting the Powerless Gospel
with God's Word*

In his book, *Miracles Are For Today*, Pastor Troy J. Edwards refutes the idea that God's miracles are only for a past generation and explains from Scripture how God's people can experience frequent miracles in their corporate worship as well as within their personal lives. Get ready to believe God for a miracle today.



Purchase online at www.victoriouswordchurch.org

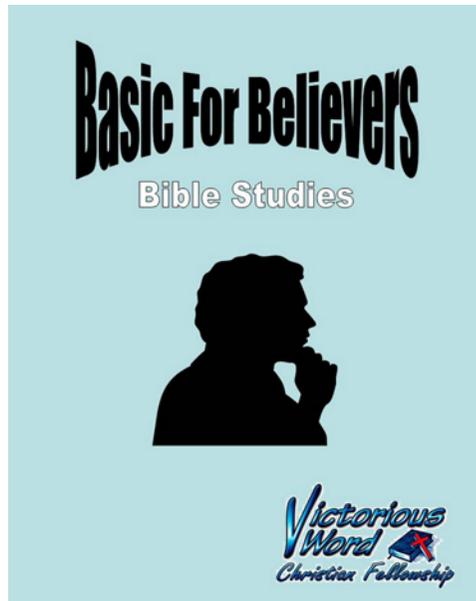


Divine Healing: Guaranteed

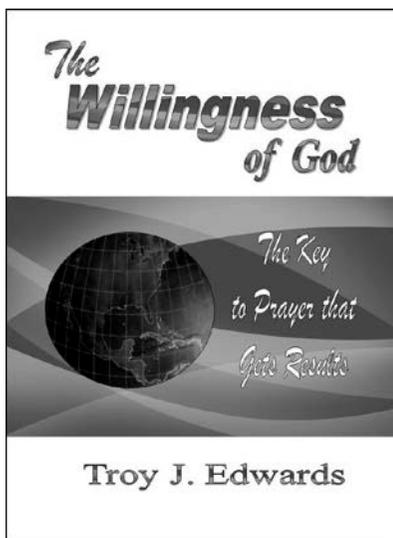
In this book, Pastor and teacher Troy Edwards shows you from the Scriptures that God is not only able and willing to heal, but has provided covenant promises that guarantee His intervention when claimed in faith. The death, burial and resurrection of Jesus has purchased our healing, further guaranteeing its fulfillment in our lives as we look to Him. God wants to heal you. It is His desire. He is simply waiting for you to seek Him for it. This book will give you the confidence to do just that.

Basics for Believers Bible Studies

Many people who make a decision for Christ do not remain in Him. Why are so many backsliding and falling away? Why is it that for many, a decision to make Christ their Lord and Savior does not result in a changed life? Pastor and teacher Troy Edwards believes that it is due to our failure to disciple new believers and teach them the BASICS – the foundational truths needed to empower us to live victorious Christian lives.



Purchase online at www.victoriouswordchurch.org



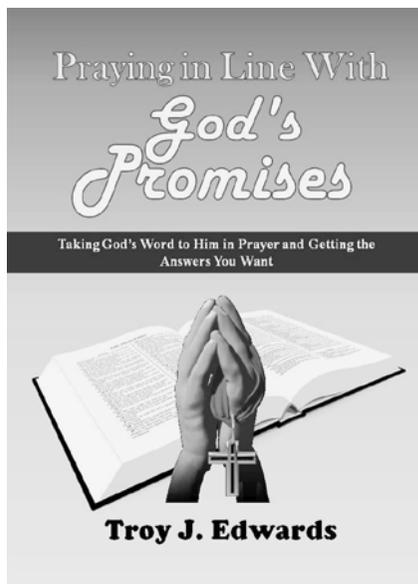
The Willingness of God: The Key to Prayer that Gets Results

In this book, Troy J. Edwards will show you from the abundance of Scripture testimony the seldom talked about attribute of God: His willingness. You will understand that the promises of God are revelations of His will to bring about the answers we seek. Pastor Troy also refutes the unbiblical teachings of well-known Evangelicals that promote unbelief in God's willingness to answer prayer.

Praying in Line with God's Promises

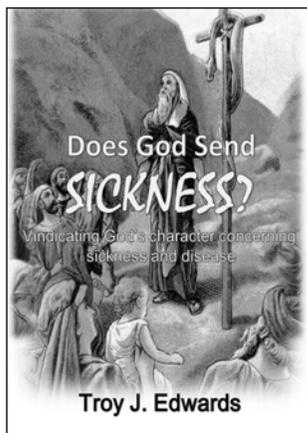
Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises (2 Pet. 1:4a)

God's promises are made available for every child of God but if God's people do not learn to appropriate them by faith and prayer, these promises will always be available but never utilized. In this book you will learn how God's Promises are guaranteed to every believer, and other vitally important information.



Purchase online at www.victoriouswordchurch.org

Coming Soon from
Vindicating God Ministries!



Does God Send Sickness?

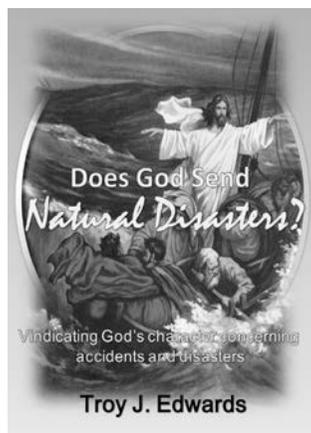
Vindicating God's character concerning sickness and disease

A number of places in the Bible, especially in the Old Testament, seem to make God the inflictor of sickness and disease. Find out how, when we interpret Scripture correctly, that sickness and disease is not a tool of God, how He hates it and desires to rid the universe of it.

Does God Send Natural Disasters?

Vindicating God's character concerning Accidents and Disasters

Some have called natural disasters “acts of God”. They even have Scriptures to make a Biblical case for this assertion. However, does the Bible actually teach that God is the One sending them? Learn that Scripture teaches us that God is actually trying to protect the world from disasters.



WHY?

A Biblical Explanation for Evil

Why is there so much evil in our world? Why does the Bible seem to attribute so much evil to God? Why Doesn't God just destroy Satan? Why did God create this world if He knew that things would turn out this way? These and many more questions are answered in this powerful book.

