

The Devil's Desperation

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When we choose to believe God's Word above everything else; above the chaos and famine, above the wars that are in the world, above disease, this is FAITH!

If I took a ceremonial knife from a witch's coven, tied someone down on a pentagram, and thrust them through the heart during a Sunday morning worship service in your church, would you turn to the person sitting next to you and say, "Correct me if I am wrong, I do not want to have a judgmental spirit or anything, but do you think that act was part of a Holy Ghost-filled worship service?"

Of course not, that would be ridiculous. And the reason you would not is because you are a whole lot smarter than that. If the devil is going to deceive you, he is going to have to use something a lot more subtle than a blatant act of human sacrifice.

Something the Holy Spirit said to me about my enemy has helped me to understand just exactly what kind of deception we are dealing with and why Jesus warned us as severely as He did. And, as much as I am understanding and anticipating Heaven, I would not be so foolish as to underestimate my enemy here and now.

Many have not only underestimated the devil but they have also misjudged him and the consequences have been devastating. Perhaps the saddest of all are the many who have been deceived and they do not even know who deceived them.

When Jesus said in Matthew 10:16 that we must be as wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove, He said it for a purpose. There are certain things the devil uses against human beings that only the wisdom of God can combat. To underestimate the enemy is to become subtly convinced in your mind he is not as dangerous as Jesus said he is.

But, when a serpent actually strikes, he strikes to kill. He does not intend for his victim to remain alive when he is finished.

Jesus said in John 10:10 Satan comes for only one reason, to steal, kill, and destroy. He does not know how to do anything else. His light has gone out and he is very good at causing havoc. It is a good thing for us, when Jesus said He beheld Satan as lightning cast out of Heaven, He was not just talking about geographical location. He was also talking about a realm of jurisdiction.

Because Satan is no longer a citizen of Heaven, he lost jurisdiction over any one of us born-again believers who has his citizenship in Heaven, if we walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. So, when Jesus said, "I beheld Satan as lightning cast out of heaven", he was also talking about Heaven's judicial and social systems, as well as its abundance. The enemy has no more right to rule over us than Al Queda has issuing orders to our military.

When an ambassador from the United States lives in another country, the U.S. Embassy located in that country is considered the same as U.S. soil and is governed by the Constitution of the United

States. Any act of aggression against the U.S. Embassy is considered to be an act of war against our entire nation. The United States stands by, with all her resources and military power, to enforce the rights of any U.S. ambassador or citizen whose privileges have been violated.

It does not matter Satan thinks he is "bigger and badder" than you. When he was cast out of Heaven, his jurisdiction over your life as a citizen of Heaven was terminated. We should bear in mind God has not given the enemy rightful jurisdiction in our lives, but we also must be careful to follow the instructions in Ephesians 4:17 which says; " ... give no place to the devil", so that we do not let him gain entry to the ground of our heart.

Angels are beings of incredible stature and might and, in God's service, have been known to annihilate entire armies. Yet, there is one angel, Satan, whose light has gone out. He has become an angry, sadistic killer and he would like, just one time, to vent his aggression against us. BUT HE CANNOT, because he is being restrained. Heaven would view that as an act of aggression against its ambassador and even Satan himself would not like to think about the consequences.

Yet, one thing has always puzzled me. I can understand Satan's power being broken off of us as born-again citizens of Heaven and that he no longer has any jurisdiction over any part of my life, BUT WHAT ABOUT THE UNBELIEVERS AND SINNERS?

It would seem to me Satan would have the power to randomly kill spiritually dead men because they are not under Heaven's jurisdiction but under his. It would seem anytime he wanted to, he could just physically kill sinners and send them to HELL, but it is obvious he cannot. But the question is, why?

When Paul revealed Satan as the god of this world, he meant the god of all murderers, liars, and deceivers and that all of these wicked acts must be traced back to an origin, That origin is Satan himself. He rules men through the lusts of the flesh and the hatred he so professionally generates between human beings. II Corinthians 4:3-4 says: "*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.*"

So, the reason Satan cannot rule any other way, except through the fallen nature of mankind, is because God stripped him of his power to do so at the fall of Adam and Eve in the garden.

Satan wants to do us harm; he does. He would love to go on a rampage as the god of this world and send people to Hell at his own discretion. He would love to exercise the authority he once carried as the archangel of God and use it to devastate human beings. But, he cannot, because God stripped him of that power in the Garden of Eden and limited him to a sub-level, hands-off operation, as far as physical force is concerned, on we unsuspecting human beings. Genesis 3:14-15 says: "*And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou are 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.*"

In Genesis 3:1, when the serpent first approached Eve to tempt her to transgress against God's

commandment, he (the serpent) is called more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. The word "subtle" means to possess an uncanny ability to deceive another as to the true nature of one's motives.

Satan, an archangel, approached Eve in all his seductive beauty. He almost appeared to be God Himself and he proceeded to work on Eve with all the deceptive skills of a genius. He knew the rebellion that had gotten him thrown out of Heaven and caused him to go from life to death, would also cause Adam and Eve to go from eternal life to eternal death.

Immediately after Adam and Eve transgressed against God's commandment, they received a nature capable of deceiving, lying, cheating, killing, and destroying. In fact, this nature brought them under subjection to Satan's power, and he fully intended to reign over them with the power of death and to send them to Hell anytime he pleased. He knew, as in his case, spiritual death would permanently alienate them from the presence of God and it would have worked except for one thing ... HE DID NOT FIGURE ON JESUS! Hebrews 2:9,14,15 says: "*But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. 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.*"

Immediately after Satan had tempted Adam and Eve in the garden, God stepped in and gave Satan, the serpent, the promise of a savior to come. He told him this savior would be born of the seed of a woman and would bruise his head. The head is the symbol of authority and Satan was the head of all spiritual death. This is why it was necessary for Jesus to be made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death that He might destroy him who had the POWER OF DEATH, as the 14th verse says: "that is, the devil." Jesus destroyed Satan's hold on death when He arose from the dead and bruised his head.

Meanwhile, there were 4,000 years between Adam and the fulfilling of the promise God had made to Satan that He would bruise his head and break the stranglehold Satan had on the whole human race through spiritual death. So, in the same breath God promised a Savior, He also stripped Satan of the power to randomly kill spiritually dead men while waiting on the promise of God that was to come.

Satan could not kill sinners then. He cannot kill them now. He can only generate the hatred in our world that causes us to kill one another. When God said to the serpent in Genesis 3:14, "*... 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:*" He was talking about cursing him below the physical operation of the flesh.

When God created our physical bodies from the dust of the earth, He also created the bodies of all the animals referred to as "*all the beasts of the field*".

When God told Satan, "dust shalt thou eat", because he (Satan) was cursed above all the cattle, above all the beasts of the field, whatever was made of the dust of the earth (spiritless animals or man - a

spirit being) was out of Satan's jurisdiction to kill. The enemy cannot step over to the physical realm and directly kill human beings or even animals for that matter. He must incite people to kill people and animals.

So even to the sinner, Satan's operation is limited (as II Corinthians 4 says) to deception and hatred, and he uses all the tricks of the trade at his disposal to keep a spiritually dead man blinded until Satan outlasts the man's lifetime and he can cause him to go to Hell.

To tell you the truth, the same tactics Satan employs over an unsaved man to keep him blinded, are the same tactics he uses against believers to take what we already have as Christians away from us, or to keep us from finding out what God has made available for us through His Word.

When we choose to believe God's Word above everything else; above the chaos and famine, above the wars that are in the world, above disease, this is FAITH! Satan uses these kinds of things to accuse God. Satan tells us God is unjust, that He does not care, and how can we have faith for personal things if God is indifferent to the overall tragedies of this world? But, believe me when I say, God does care and He loves us. But we must have faith in Him and in His Word. We must decide to believe God no matter how the circumstances try to convince us otherwise.

There is one thing Satan knows about God and that is the priority God has set in giving us the right to make choices. In fact, God's creation is not serving Him out of fear, bondage, or slavery, whether they be angels or human beings. God has given everyone the right to choose.

Our God is a God of love and it is impossible for love to exist alone. The very nature of love demands the only way to experience love is to give love and God loves us. He wants to gather His creation around Him forever and show the kindness and mercy of His love.

The reason for Hell, the place of eternal incarceration, is to remove everything from God's children that offends or hurts them. God is protecting those of us who choose Him. We will never be hurt again because God Himself will wipe all tears from our eyes and we will be with Him Who is love forever. Again, God created Hell for those who made the choice to serve the enemy and thereby become His enemy.

So, the one thing Satan knows he has going for him, is that, if he can blind, deceive, or convince you to be against God, then God will let you believe it. God will try to get the Word over to you, but, once it is delivered, He will not break your arm to make you receive it. He will do signs and wonders, send people you love to minister to you ... but He will not exploit your will. **YOU MUST CHOOSE TO LOVE HIM.** So the great battleground for the lost souls of men is fought in the arena of the soul, to keep men blinded and from making a wilful decision to accept Christ.

The battleground for the faith of the believer is also fought in the arena of the soul. If you have accepted Christ, then Satan wants to take your faith away. He wants to lock you up in a stronghold. The word for stronghold in II Corinthians 10 is "fortress" or "prison". II Corinthians 10:4-5 says: *"(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;"

The prison Paul was talking about here is the way a person thinks or the way he believes. The reason a sinner is a sinner is because of the way he believes and, if he continues in that wrong belief, it will send him to HELL. The reason a believer has everything God has provided for him (or none of it) is because of the way he believes.

Paul called the way a person believed a prison if it was keeping him from God or the blessings of God. PAUL KNEW THAT THE DEVIL ALSO KNEW, if he could get us to believe a bunch of lies like speaking in tongues is not for today, or healing has passed away, or God is using strong-arm tactics like the Mafia to break us down, by putting us through car wrecks, or giving us diseases to teach us things, then the way we believe would indeed be like a prison.

The devil knows, if he can get us to think this way, it becomes a prison because he knows God will let us choose to believe anyway we want to. Because we are created by God with the gift of CHOICE. God will not have a people who are forced to love Him. YOU MUST GIVE THAT TO HIM OF YOUR OWN VOLITION! YOU MUST CHOOSE TO LOVE HIM.

Since the devil is basically limited in our lives to convincing us to disbelieve the promises of God, and therefore limiting God's power in our lives, then, to turn that around, would be to release God's power by doing whatever is necessary to overcome the doubts and fears that rule our hearts in the place of God's Word. Let me help you. Ephesians 5:17-20 says: "*Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. And be not drunk on wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;"*

It is amazing how fast the enemy's strongholds can be pulled down in our lives. These strongholds stand between us and what God has promised to do for us in His Word. We must exercise these simple instructions from Ephesians which are:

1. Understand what God's will is.
2. Be filled with the Holy Spirit.
3. Speak in psalms, hymns; and spiritual songs.
4. Sing and make melody to the Lord in our hearts.
5. Give thanks to the Father always for all things in Jesus' Name.

First of all, no matter what a person's emotions say about a problem, a disease in their body, or possibly lusts that are out of control, if we make it a priority to accomplish these simple instructions from Ephesians, they will bring about a change in our lives. Watch what God will do for us, if we continue to worship Him, give Him thanks for His Word, and love Him. We can minister to our own hearts by speaking His Word in spiritual songs until we have the victory.

You see, the enemy has spent a long time creating these strongholds in our minds and emotions. He did this with the full intention of causing our eventual spiritual death. That is his only tactic since he is restrained from physically hurting us. But, thank God, since we are filled with the Holy Spirit we

have a way to be free from all lies, and strongholds of the enemy.

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