

## Defeat The Devil

Scripture Reading:

**I Peter 5:8-10** “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. BUT THE GOD OF ALL GRACE, WHO HATH CALLED US UNTO HIS ETERNAL GLORY BY CHRIST JESUS, AFTER THAT YE HAVE SUFFERED A WHILE, MAKE YOU PERFECT, STABLISH, STRENGTHEN, SETTLE *you*.”

### Satan is Real

**Genesis 3:1** “NOW THE SERPENT WAS MORE SUBTIL THAN ANY BEAST OF THE FIELD WHICH THE **LORD** GOD HAD MADE. AND HE SAID UNTO THE WOMAN, YEA, HATH GOD SAID, YE SHALL NOT EAT OF EVERY TREE OF THE GARDEN?”

The confrontation between Satan and Eve in the garden of Eden was a real occurrence recorded for our benefit. It explains many things, including how sin came into the world but for our purpose in this lesson, the revealed Word of God plainly confirms Satan’s existence. This was a real conversation between two real beings, one flesh and one spirit in nature. This fact is confirmed through the pen of the Apostle Paul:

**II Corinthians 11:3** “BUT I FEAR, LEST BY ANY MEANS, AS THE SERPENT BEGUILED EVE THROUGH HIS SUBTILTY, SO YOUR MINDS SHOULD BE CORRUPTED FROM THE SIMPLICITY THAT IS IN CHRIST.”

While Satan is of divine origin, Satan is not deity. He is a created being that has pitted himself against God and against all those who would be followers of God. He was created as an angel with the same ability to chose his purpose and destiny as you and I. He chose to rebel against God.

**Jude v.6** “AND THE ANGELS WHICH KEPT NOT THEIR FIRST ESTATE, BUT LEFT THEIR OWN HABITATION, HE HATH RESERVED IN EVERLASTING CHAINS UNDER DARKNESS UNTO THE JUDGMENT OF THE GREAT DAY.”

And we have further evidence of Satan’s origin in **II Peter 2:4**.

Satan’s mission in this world is to take as many of God’s final creation, mankind, to hell with him that he can. When Satan pitted himself against God and man in the Garden of Eden the war was on and still continues until this day. In our scripture reading we saw the Apostle’s warning:

## Defeat The Devil

**I Peter 5:8** “BE SOBER, BE VIGILANT; BECAUSE YOUR ADVERSARY THE DEVIL, AS A ROARING LION, WALKETH ABOUT, SEEKING WHOM HE MAY DEVOUR:”

### Satan's Tactics

We are in the midst of a war for our souls. But Satan's warfare is not that of flesh and blood as we normally think of warfare. Satan's war is guerilla warfare; a sneak and peek, ambush kind of warfare for our hearts and minds. His tactics are to deceive, propagandize, lead us to believe something that will condemn our souls, lead us away from God. One of his ways is through temptation:

**James 1:14-15** “BUT EVERY MAN IS TEMPTED, WHEN HE IS DRAWN AWAY OF HIS OWN LUST, AND ENTICED. THEN WHEN LUST HATH CONCEIVED, IT BRINGETH FORTH SIN: AND SIN, WHEN IT IS FINISHED, BRINGETH FORTH DEATH.”

One way that we sin is through the breaking or transgression of God's Law (**I John 3:4**). This was the sin of Adam and Eve. Eve disobeyed God because she was tempted and overcome by that temptation. Adam disobeyed God because he allowed the love of his life to lead him astray when he knew that he was disobeying God. We are told that Eve was deceived but Adam was not (**I Timothy 2:14**).

We look at the example of Judas. We already know that Judas was a thief because the Apostle John tells us (**John 12:6**). Through his example we can see that if we allow sin to creep into our lives the next time, the next level of sin becomes even easier. He stole money from the common treasury of the disciples so it was easier for him to sell Jesus for 30 pieces of silver.

**John 13:2** “AND SUPPER BEING ENDED, THE DEVIL HAVING NOW PUT INTO THE HEART OF JUDAS ISCARIOT, SIMON'S *son*, TO BETRAY HIM;”

Satan does much more than just tempt mankind to sin. First and foremost of his work is to prevent the word of God from penetrating our hearts, from taking root in our minds, from influencing our lives. Jesus gives us these examples in the parable of the soils:

**Matthew 13:19** “WHEN ANY ONE HEARETH THE WORD OF THE KINGDOM, AND UNDERSTANDETH *it* NOT, THEN COMETH THE WICKED *one*, AND CATCHETH AWAY THAT WHICH WAS SOWN IN HIS HEART. THIS IS HE WHICH RECEIVED SEED BY THE WAY SIDE.”

## Defeat The Devil

The hearts of many men are as hard and stony as the footpaths between the fields of Israel. When the seed of the kingdom, the word of God, is presented to them it means nothing. It bounces off and blows away or is taken away. Many times they have made up their minds about God and the word of God before they even hear His Word and to try to influence or teach them is an exercise in futility.

**Matthew 13:20-21** “BUT HE THAT RECEIVED THE SEED INTO STONY PLACES, THE SAME IS HE THAT HEARETH THE WORD, AND ANON WITH JOY RECEIVETH IT; YET HATH HE NOT ROOT IN HIMSELF, BUT DURETH FOR A WHILE: FOR WHEN TRIBULATION OR PERSECUTION ARISETH BECAUSE OF THE WORD, BY AND BY HE IS OFFENDED.”

Others are like the stony ground. They accept the word of God readily but they have short attention spans. The word sprouts, even grows enough to display some promise that it will bear fruit. So rather than like the first example where the goodness of God was rejected entirely; here it starts to grow then withers and dies because the person who gladly received is so shallow that it cannot grow and mature.

The third example is those who allow the cares and troubles of this world crowd out the Word of God from their lives:

**Matthew 13:22** “HE ALSO THAT RECEIVED SEED AMONG THE THORNS IS HE THAT HEARETH THE WORD; AND THE CARE OF THIS WORLD, AND THE DECEITFULNESS OF RICHES, CHOKES THE WORD, AND HE BECOMETH UNFRUITFUL.”

These folks allow the world to overcome word of God, overcome the good that has been planted in them and turn themselves to worldly pleasures. They apparently think little about their souls, not recognizing that they will stand before Jehovah God in judgment.

Our adversary uses all three of these methods to keep the word of God from influencing the lives of men. Even those who are children of God can allow these maladies to keep them from hearing and heeding parts of what they scripture provide for our spiritual wellbeing. And there are more ways that Satan seeks to ruin the spiritual well-being of mankind:

Satan wrests the scriptures, he tried this one with the Son of God:

**Matthew 4:6** “AND SAITH UNTO HIM, IF THOU BE THE SON OF GOD, CAST THYSELF DOWN: FOR IT IS WRITTEN, HE SHALL GIVE HIS ANGELS CHARGE CONCERNING THEE: AND IN *their* HANDS THEY SHALL BEAR THEE UP, LEST AT ANY TIME THOU DASH THY FOOT AGAINST A STONE.”

Satan tried to work on Jesus' pride and will use ours to destroy us if we let him.

## Defeat The Devil

Satan will garner strife among brethren, friends and families in order to destroy our souls. Paul wrote to the Corinthian brethren about forgiving the man in their congregation who had repented of his sin:

**II Corinthians 2:10-11** "TO WHOM YE FORGIVE ANY THING, I *forgive* ALSO: FOR IF I FORGAVE ANY THING, TO WHOM I FORGAVE IT, FOR YOUR SAKES *forgave* I WE IN THE PERSON OF CHRIST; LEST SATAN SHOULD GET AN ADVANTAGE OF US: FOR WE ARE NOT IGNORANT OF HIS DEVICES."

Satan plans and works for our spiritual demise in every way possible. If we do not guard against him we will be trapped in situations that will destroy our souls and/or the souls of those around us.

Satan also disguises himself to keep us from recognizing him:

**II Corinthians 11:13-14** "FOR SUCH ARE FALSE APOSTLES, DECEITFUL WORKERS, TRANSFORMING THEMSELVES INTO THE APOSTLES OF CHRIST. AND NO MARVEL; FOR SATAN HIMSELF IS TRANSFORMED INTO AN ANGEL OF LIGHT."

Thereby destroying, not just individuals and families, separating them from God but entire congregations; men and women in the denominations and even those among our own brethren who have abandoned the "OLD PATHS".

## Know Our Weapons

So how do we overcome the wiles of Satan? How do we counter the continuous attacks that he makes against us as children of God? Jesus did so in **Matthew 4** with a simple "IT IS WRITTEN". Satan could not stand against the revelation of Jehovah God on that occasion. And if we use the same shield of faith today he cannot destroy us either. We must properly prepare ourselves for this spiritual war. Paul admonished the brethren at Ephesus and us as well when he wrote:

"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." **Ephesians 6:11-12**

Paul goes on to describe this armor as being made up of the girdle of Truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the preparation of the gospel, above all the shield of faith and the helmet of salvation, carrying and using the sword of the Spirit, "WHICH IS THE WORD OF GOD."

## Defeat The Devil

### Be Sober

**I Thessalonians 5:6** “THEREFORE LET US NOT SLEEP, AS *do* OTHERS; BUT LET US WATCH AND BE SOBER.”

The Apostle is recording a warning to those whom he has converted to Christ to not only be watchful but to be sober. What does it mean for us to be sober? When we look at a current dictionary we see among other definitions: “quiet demeanor”, “marked by seriousness” “free from excess, extravagance or exaggeration” “showing self control”. Is it any wonder then that when choosing men to serve God in the leadership of the congregation that he would require those that are sober?

**I Timothy 3:2** “A BISHOP THEN MUST BE BLAMELESS, THE HUSBAND OF ONE WIFE, VIGILANT, SOBER, OF GOOD BEHAVIOUR, GIVEN TO HOSPITALITY, APT TO TEACH;”

And the admonition given by Paul to Timothy doesn't apply just to the men chosen from within a congregation to serve as its elders and deacons but observe with me a requirement of the wives of deacons:

**I Timothy 3:11** “EVEN SO MUST THEIR WIVES BE GRAVE, NOT SLANDERERS, SOBER, FAITHFUL IN ALL THINGS.”

So should we not expect that this same attribute of soberness to be a goal, a work for all members of the congregation? If not, why not? Paul writes to Titus:

**Titus 3:11-12** “FOR THE GRACE OF GOD THAT BRINGETH SALVATION HATH APPEARED TO ALL MEN, TEACHING US THAT, DENYING UNGODLINESS AND WORLDLY LUSTS, WE SHOULD LIVE SOBERLY, RIGHTEOUSLY, AND GODLY, IN THIS PRESENT WORLD;”

The standard for our daily living; the standard by which we should measure ourselves, the standard by which God measures us is found encapsulated within this single verse of scripture. We are taught by the “GRACE OF GOD” that we are to deny “UNGODLINESS” “WORLDLY LUSTS” and that we should and can “LIVE SOBERLY, RIGHTEOUSLY AND GODLY” where? We can live soberly, righteously and godly “IN THIS PRESENT WORLD”. Not only that my friends it is expected of us by the God of Heaven who will judge us one day.

The Apostle Peter admonishes us further:

**I Peter 1:13** “WHEREFORE GIRD UP THE LOINS OF YOUR MIND, BE SOBER, AND HOPE TO THE END FOR THE GRACE THAT IS TO BE BROUGHT UNTO YOU AT THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST;”

## Defeat The Devil

Gird up our minds, bring it under control, (remember our definition) just like we control that roll around our middle that many of us carry, "BE SOBER" and focus on that "HOPE TO THE END" "FOR THE GRACE" of God that is to be what? That the grace of God will be brought to each of us when Jesus Christ will be revealed in his glory. Then he reminds us again near the end of his epistle:

**I Peter 4:7** "BUT THE END OF ALL THINGS IS AT HAND: BE YE THEREFORE SOBER, AND WATCH UNTO PRAYER."

If our focus is right, if our purpose is right, if our relationship with our Father in Heaven is right then we will be soberly looking forward, working toward that heavenly reward and the devil and all of his angels won't be able to move us. This brings us to our next point:

## Be Steadfast

Likewise we will look at a definition of being steadfast and we find it to mean "fixed in direction", "firm in purpose", "unwavering faith", "firmly established", "firmly fixed in place or position; stable." What does it mean to be steadfast? Some examples:

**Joshua 24:15** "AND IF IT SEEM EVIL UNTO YOU TO SERVE THE **LORD**, CHOOSE YOU THIS DAY WHOM YE WILL SERVE; WHETHER THE GODS WHICH YOUR FATHERS SERVED THAT WERE ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE FLOOD, OR THE GODS OF THE AMORITES, IN WHOSE LAND YE DWELL: BUT AS FOR ME AND MY HOUSE, WE WILL SERVE THE **LORD**."

This steadfastness of Joshua extended through the entire Israelite nation for his generation and the generation of the elders who served under him:

**Joshua 24:31** "AND ISRAEL SERVED THE **LORD** ALL THE DAYS OF JOSHUA, AND ALL THE DAYS OF THE ELDERS THAT OVERLIVED JOSHUA, AND WHICH HAD KNOWN ALL THE WORKS OF THE **LORD**, THAT HE HAD DONE FOR ISRAEL."

Josiah, made King of Judah when just a lad of eight years old:

**II Kings 22:2** "AND HE DID *that which was* RIGHT IN THE SIGHT OF THE **LORD**, AND WALKED IN ALL THE WAY OF DAVID HIS FATHER, AND TURNED NOT ASIDE TO THE RIGHT HAND OR TO THE LEFT."

Job, in his relationship with God:

**Job 23:11** "MY FOOT HATH HELD HIS STEPS, HIS WAY HAVE I KEPT, AND NOT DECLINED."

## Defeat The Devil

Peter and John before the Sanhedrin:

**Acts 4:19-20** "BUT PETER AND JOHN ANSWERED AND SAID UNTO THEM, WHETHER IT BE RIGHT IN THE SIGHT OF GOD TO HEARKEN UNTO YOU MORE THAN UNTO GOD, JUDGE YE. FOR WE CANNOT BUT SPEAK THE THINGS WHICH WE HAVE SEEN AND HEARD."

In the writing of Paul to the church at Corinth we find another word that parallel's steadfastness, one that we may remember even better:

**I Corinthians 15:58** "THEREFORE, MY BELOVED BRETHREN, BE YE STEDFAST, UNMOVEABLE, ALWAYS ABOUNDING IN THE WORK OF THE LORD, FORASMUCH AS YE KNOW THAT YOUR LABOUR IS NOT IN VAIN IN THE LORD."

But we can still fall as the Apostle Peter warns us:

**II Peter 3:17** "YE THEREFORE, BELOVED, SEEING YE KNOW *these things* BEFORE, BEWARE LEST YE ALSO, BEING LED AWAY WITH THE ERROR OF THE WICKED, FALL FROM YOUR OWN STEDFASTNESS."

## Be Vigilant

In Moses words to Israel we find a strong definition of what it means to be vigilant.

**Deuteronomy 4:9** "ONLY TAKE HEED TO THYSELF, AND KEEP THY SOUL DILIGENTLY, LEST THOU FORGET THE THINGS WHICH THINE EYES HAVE SEEN, AND LEST THEY DEPART FROM THY HEART ALL THE DAYS OF THY LIFE: BUT TEACH THEM THY SONS, AND THY SONS' SONS;"

Our vigilance in keeping our souls from sin and from the clutches of Satan is a matter of spiritual self-preservation. We understand all of the aspects of physical self-preservation, self-protection from evil doers, the protection of our families from those who would harm them in any way. We even go to war to protect our country and our way of life. Why doesn't mankind apply the same level of concern and effort to preserving their spiritual well-being? I suppose that the answer is the influence of Satan and worldliness on the souls of the masses of this world. As they slept in the garden just before his arrest Jesus warned his disciples:

**Matthew 26:41** "WATCH AND PRAY, THAT YE ENTER NOT INTO TEMPTATION: THE SPIRIT INDEED IS WILLING, BUT THE FLESH *is* WEAK."

## Defeat The Devil

He wasn't concerned about their physical well-being even though the soldiers that were to take him were probably already on their way. He was concerned about their ability to withstand and overcome the wiles of Satan. He was concerned about them overcoming the temptations they would face and the persecution and trials that they would endure. Our situation is so much better today that we probably need to be even more vigilant than they because it is so easy to allow the world to overcome us. Paul warned the elders from Ephesus:

**Acts 20:31** "THEREFORE WATCH, AND REMEMBER, THAT BY THE SPACE OF THREE YEARS I CEASED NOT TO WARN EVERY ONE NIGHT AND DAY WITH TEARS."

This warning to be vigilant followed immediately after he told them that men would arise even from among them that would "TEACH PERVERSE THINGS" to "DRAW AWAY DISCIPLES" from the fellowship of God.

The Apostle Paul warns the brethren at Corinth twice in his first letter about this matter of being vigilant to protect themselves spiritually.

**I Corinthians 10:12** "WHEREFORE LET HIM THAT THINKETH HE STANDETH TAKE HEED LEST HE FALL."

His first admonition speaks to our confidence in ourselves. Even those who have spent many years in the battles with Satan and his influence should be vigilant "LEST HE FALL". Will we fall? Will we stumble along the way? Oh, yes we will.

## When We Stumble

When we stumble, even when we fall we can still defeat Satan. God has given us a remedy for our weakness. The Apostle John knew and understood the nature of man. He writes:

**I John 2:1** "MY LITTLE CHILDREN, THESE THINGS WRITE I UNTO YOU, THAT YE SIN NOT. AND IF ANY MAN SIN, WE HAVE AN ADVOCATE WITH THE FATHER, JESUS CHRIST THE RIGHTEOUS:"

Yes, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the one who understands our struggles, one who understands when we stumble or when we fall:

"FOR WE HAVE NOT AN HIGH PRIEST WHICH CANNOT BE TOUCHED WITH THE FEELING OF OUR INFIRMITIES; BUT WAS IN ALL POINTS TEMPTED LIKE AS **we are, yet** WITHOUT SIN." **Hebrews 4:15**

One who the prophet writes was sent to intercede for us:

## Defeat The Devil

**Isaiah 53:12** “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.”

He told the Apostle Peter:

**Luke 22:31-32** “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.”

And he prayed for his disciples when faced with the darkest hour of his life here on this earth; but he prayed for you and I as well:

**John 17:9** “I PRAY FOR THEM: I PRAY NOT FOR THE WORLD, BUT FOR THEM WHICH THOU HAST GIVEN ME; FOR THEY ARE THINE.” **v.20** “NEITHER PRAY I FOR THESE ALONE, BUT FOR THEM ALSO WHICH SHALL BELIEVE ON ME THROUGH THEIR WORD;”

Jesus prayed for every one who would ever “BELIEVE” on him “THROUGH THEIR WORD.” Yes, we have an advocate with the Father, an advocate who was tempted just as we are; an advocate through whom we have access to Jehovah, God of all that exists. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, Our Lord and God hears us. As children of God when we stumble, when we fall, when we sin, he has given us a remedy in the words of Peter to Simon the Sorcerer and recorded by Luke:

**Acts 8:22** “REPENT THEREFORE OF THIS THY WICKEDNESS, AND PRAY GOD, IF PERHAPS THE THOUGHT OF THINE HEART MAY BE FORGIVEN THEE.”

At the same time if you have not named the name of Christ in the good confession, if you have not put on Christ in baptism, then Satan owns your soul. You can be made free, you can remove yourself from his control because you can be redeemed, bought back by God, restored to the spiritual purity you enjoyed as a little child:

Simply believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God – **Mark 16:15-16**

Repent of your sins – **Luke 13:3**

Confess that belief before men – **Romans 10:10, Acts 8:37**

Be baptized to wash away your sins just as Saul was – **Acts 22:16**