

OUR ENEMY – THE DEVOURER

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We have recently kept the Feast of Unleavened Bread ... and there were lessons to be learned. When we find sin ... we need to put it out. We need to live an unleavened life of sincerity and truth. Hopefully we don't want to sin and we need to be alert and watchful. And when we are sinning ... it's not only us on our own ... we have a spiritual enemy that encourages us to sin. He tries to get us to minimise sin. ... and ... ultimately ... destroy us. It is easy for us to forget that there are spirit forces arrayed against us. And sometimes when we sin ... we are being helped along the way.

1 Peter 5:8-9 (NKJV)

8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

9 Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.

We need to be on guard ... alert and aware ... because we have got an enemy.

1 Peter 5:8-9 (NET)

8 Be sober and alert. Your enemy the devil, like a roaring lion, is on the prowl looking for someone to devour.

9 Resist him, strong in your faith, because you know that your brothers and sisters throughout the world are enduring the same kinds of suffering.

Peter likens the devil to a roaring lion. Do we understand that we have an invisible enemy that we can't see or hear or touch? That can lead us into serious sin.

Ephesians 6:10-13 (NKJV)

10 **Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.**

11 **Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles (strategies/evil schemes) of the devil.**

12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, *but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

(4 RANKS OF DEMONS?)

*Principalities

*Powers

*Rulers of the darkness of this age

*Spiritual hosts of wickedness in the Heavenly Places)

13 **Therefore take up the whole armour of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.**

Notice there is warfare! The armour is there to protect us. Paul thinks there is danger here to God's people. We need to say alert. There isn't any point in providing armour ... if we don't wear it.

1 Thessalonians 2:17-18 (NKJV)

17 But we, brethren, having been taken away from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavoured more eagerly to see your face with great desire.

18 Therefore we wanted to come to you—even I, Paul, time and again—but Satan hindered us. (to cut in in front of you ... he gets in our way ... he tries to stop our progress). (Is that possible? An apostle of God being hindered by satan? Yes.)

We need to know that satan will try to hinder us like he did the Apostle Paul. Paul had an enemy ... we have an enemy.

Today ... people don't think about spiritual beings.

Acts 19:11-17 (NKJV)

11 Now God worked unusual miracles by the hands of Paul,
12 so that even handkerchiefs or aprons were brought from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out of them.

13 Then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists took it upon themselves to call the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, "We exorcise you by the Jesus whom Paul preaches." (*These Jewish exorcists seem to think they have found "a new formula". They have no authority from the Lord Jesus*)

14 Also there were seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, who did so.

15 And the evil spirit answered and said, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?"

16 Then the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, overpowered them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.

17 This became known both to all Jews and Greeks dwelling in Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.

Here's a demon ... in a man ... causing problems. There are demons still around causing problems. So if there are demons interacting with people ... then we need to stay alert.

Mark 16:15-20 (NKJV)

15 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

16 He who believes and is baptised will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.

17 And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; *(how can you do that if there are no demons today. Are there any? The answer is yes. But ... we forget there is a spirit realm ... principalities ... wicked spirits in the heavenlies ... because ... we are at war)* they will speak with new tongues;

18 they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover."

19 So then, after the Lord had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God.

20 And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs. Amen. (The signs confirm the message)

Science and the medical profession completely ignore the spirit world so can't answer all of the problems. We should be "clued up" about the spirit world.

2 Corinthians 2:8-11 (NKJV)

8 Therefore I urge you to reaffirm your love to him.

9 For to this end I also wrote, that I might put you to the test, whether you are obedient in all things.

10 Now whom you forgive anything, I also forgive. For if indeed I have forgiven anything, I have forgiven that one for your sakes in the presence of Christ,

11 lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices. *(Except we are!! Satan can use ill feeling. If you have a church that is in trouble ... it is like blood in the water to piranhas ... satan and the demons can "smell it" and turn up to cause further division)*

2 Timothy 2:24-26 (NKJV)

24 And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient,

25 in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth,

26 and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.

(Some people have been taken captive by the devil ... trapped in the snare of the devil. Remember the devil's objective is to devour!)

2 Timothy 2:26 (NET)

26 and they will come to their senses and escape the devil's trap where they are held captive to do his will. *(How do you get trapped by the devil? Perhaps they didn't think they were at risk. Perhaps they weren't diligent. There's no reason for us to be anything other than victorious ... but ... we do let down. Somewhere along the way they have given the devil an opportunity to come into their life).*

Ephesians 4:24-27 (NKJV)

24 and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

25 Therefore, putting away lying, "Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbour," for we are members of one another.

26 "Be angry, and do not sin": do not let the sun go down on your wrath,

27 nor give place (opportunity) to the devil.

Ephesians 4:27 (AMP)

27 Leave no [such] room or foothold for the devil [give no opportunity to him]. *(Don't give the devil a foothold ... don't give*

him an opportunity ... or he will destroy us if he can. Our bad attitudes play to satan's strengths)

Luke 13:10-17 (NKJV)

10 Now He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath.

11 And behold, there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bent over and could in no way raise herself up.

12 **But when Jesus saw her, He called her to Him and said to her, "Woman, you are loosed from your infirmity."**

13 **And He laid His hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.**

14 But the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath; and he said to the crowd, "There are six days on which men ought to work; therefore come and be healed on them, and not on the Sabbath day."

15 The Lord then answered him and said, "Hypocrite! Does not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or donkey from the stall, and lead it away to water it?"

16 **So ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound—think of it—for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath?"** (*Satan was behind this woman's infirmity. Some ailments have a spiritual cause ... a demon behind it*).

17 And when He said these things, all His adversaries were put to shame; and all the multitude rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by Him.

Mark 9:14-27 (NKJV)

14 And when He came to the disciples, He saw a great multitude around them, and scribes disputing with them.

15 Immediately, when they saw Him, all the people were greatly amazed, and running to Him, greeted Him.

16 And He asked the scribes, "What are you discussing with them?"

17 Then one of the crowd answered and said, "Teacher, I brought You my son, who has a mute spirit (a demon that makes you dumb).

18 And wherever it seizes him, it throws him down; he foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth, and becomes rigid. So I spoke to Your disciples, that they should cast it out, but they could not."

19 He answered him and said, "O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? (How long have I got to put up with you lot?) How long shall I bear with you? Bring him to Me." (Jesus is really dismayed)

20 Then they brought him to Him. And when he saw Him, immediately the spirit convulsed him, and he fell on the ground and wallowed, foaming at the mouth.

21 So He asked his father, "How long has this been happening to him?"

And he said, "From childhood.

22 And often he has thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us."

23 Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes." (the man had a part to play)

24 Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!"

25 When Jesus saw that the people came running together, He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "Deaf and dumb spirit, I command you, come out of him and enter him no more!"

26 Then the spirit cried out, convulsed him greatly, and came out of him. And he became as one dead, so that many said, "He is dead."

27 But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose.

Matthew 12:22-29 (NKJV)

22 Then one was brought to Him who was demon-possessed, blind and mute; and He healed him, so that the blind and mute man both spoke and saw.

23 And all the multitudes were amazed and said, "Could this be the Son of David?"

24 Now when the Pharisees heard it they said, "This fellow does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons."

25 But Jesus knew their thoughts, and said to them: "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand.

26 If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? (Jesus says satan has a kingdom)

27 And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges.

28 But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you.

29 Or how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house.

Mark 5:1-17 (NKJV)

1 Then they came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gadarenes.

2 And when He had come out of the boat, immediately there met Him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit,

3 who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no one could bind him, not even with chains,

4 because he had often been bound with shackles and chains. And the chains had been pulled apart by him, and the shackles broken in pieces; neither could anyone tame him.

5 And always, night and day, he was in the mountains and in the tombs, crying out and cutting himself with stones. (*Self-harm*)

6 When he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and worshiped Him.

7 And he cried out with a loud voice and said, "What have I to do with You, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I implore You by God that You do not torment me."

8 For He said to him, "Come out of the man, unclean spirit!"

9 Then He asked him, "What is your name?"

And he answered, saying, "My name is Legion; for we are many."

(There were about 6,000 men in a Roman legion. Did this man have that many demons?)

10 Also he begged Him earnestly that He would not send them out of the country. *(Some demons don't like not to have some physical body to dwell in ... they crave a body to be in)*

11 Now a large herd of swine was feeding there near the mountains.

12 So all the demons begged Him, saying, "Send us to the swine, that we may enter them."

13 And at once Jesus gave them permission. Then the unclean spirits went out and entered the swine (there were about two thousand); and the herd ran violently down the steep place into the sea, and drowned in the sea.

14 So those who fed the swine fled, and they told it in the city and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that had happened.

15 Then they came to Jesus, and saw the one who had been demon-possessed and had the legion, sitting and clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid.

16 And those who saw it told them how it happened to him who had been demon-possessed, and about the swine.

17 Then they began to plead with Him to depart from their region. *(Not a pleasant outcome!!)*

Luke 11:15-26 (NKJV)

15 But some of them said, "He casts out demons by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons."

16 Others, testing Him, sought from Him a sign from heaven.

17 But He, knowing their thoughts, said to them: "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and a house divided against a house falls.

18 If Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? Because you say I cast out demons by Beelzebub.

19 And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges.

20 But if I cast out demons with the finger of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you.

21 When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are in peace.

22 But when a stronger than he comes upon him and overcomes him, he takes from him all his armour in which he trusted, and divides his spoils. (*Satan may be strong ... but Jesus is stronger*)

23 He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters.

24 "When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.'

25 And when he comes, he finds it swept and put in order.

26 Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first." (*Perhaps it would have been better when the spirit came back if it had found a spirit-controlled mind ... that wouldn't let it in. We can lose control of our minds ... by drugs ... alcohol ... hypnosis ... playing with the occult. We should expect demonic interference and be ready to counteract it*)

Acts 16:16-22 (NKJV)

16 Now it happened, as we went to prayer, that a certain slave girl possessed with a spirit of divination met us, who brought her masters much profit by fortune-telling.

17 This girl followed Paul and us, and cried out, saying, "These men are the servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to us the way of salvation." (*The Greek means "a way of salvation" ... "one way of salvation". She is misleading them. Paul was proclaiming the one and only way of salvation*)

18 And this she did for many days.

But Paul, greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And he came out that very hour.

19 But when her masters saw that their hope of profit was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace to the authorities.

20 And they brought them to the magistrates, and said, "These men, being Jews, exceedingly trouble our city;

21 and they teach customs which are not lawful for us, being Romans, to receive or observe."

22 Then the multitude rose up together against them; and the magistrates tore off their clothes and commanded them to be beaten with rods.

We shouldn't be ignorant of satan's presence. He and his demons are working in the "sons of disobedience" ... he is active in many people all around us. Some times at a "low level" and other times ... "higher up" ... people like President Obama, Hillary Clinton, David Cameron ... the singer Madonna.

Ephesians 2:1-3 (NKJV)

1 And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins,
2 in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,
3 among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.

2 Corinthians 4:3-4 (NKJV)

3 But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, (if you are perishing ... you are being devoured)
4 whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.

There is a spirit out there who is after our minds.

1 Peter 5:8-9 (NKJV)

8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. *(Some he may not ... because they have got their armour on. Some he can ... because they have taken their armour off)*

9 Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.

So ... you and I ... just because we don't see our enemy ... can't see him/them or touch him/them ... does not mean that they are not there. They are there and looking for a foothold into our life to destroy us.