

Demonology

Foundational Truth Volume 6

By Johann Melchizedek Peter

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PREFACE

The doctrine of demonology is one of the most controversial and confusing subjects that Christians have encountered. Extremes of both doctrine and practices occur in Christendom. The pathetic fact is that Christians have many times been guilty of not looking into the written Word of God to consider what it says on this subject.

We seek to point out errors in current practices among so-called deliverance ministries. In the first place, the ministry of deliverance was never intended to be separated by itself. It was to flow hand in hand with all the other aspects of the teaching and healing ministry of Christ. Isolation has led to imbalance; and sometimes demon-consciousness.

Through this book, we seek to restore the consciousness of God and of the authority that God has given us as believers. We are not ignorant of the devices of the enemy; yet we do not want to be demon-conscious. Through clear teaching from His Word we can be aware of all the devices of the enemy and yet be God-conscious.

May God grant you the understanding to trample satan under your feet.

Pastor Johann Melchizedek Peter

CHAPTER 1

THE ORIGIN OF DEMONS

The origin of demons and satan is given over scattered verses in the Bible. Some are in Isaiah, some in Ezekiel, some in Revelation and some in the gospels and epistles. In this chapter, we seek to bring all these Scriptures together to get a complete picture of the organization of the satanic realm and the origin of satan and all his cohorts. (The small letter 's' for satan is intentional and not a misprint. Through this book, we seek to show Christians that they have great authority over satan himself).

Satan's Fall and Destruction

God did not create satan as an evil being. God originally created satan as a perfect and good being. Satan was formerly called Lucifer (Isaiah 14:12). The name 'Lucifer' means 'the shining one.' Lucifer was a perfection of beauty and wisdom (Ezekiel 28:12). He was an anointed cherub (Ezekiel 28:14). Cherubim are creatures that dwell very close to God. The Ark of the Covenant was made with the mercy seat overshadowed by the wings of the cherubim (Exodus 25:22).

Angels and cherubim were created with free choice like man. Angels today are carrying out God's commands throughout the whole earth bringing God's plan to pass. The fact that they could obey God's commands rationally proves that they are not robots but rather creatures with a free will. After an unknown expanse of time serving God, Lucifer thought that he knew everything about God. He thought that he could remove God with the cooperation of some of the other angels and become God himself (Isaiah 14:13, 14).

The question is sometimes asked as to why he dared to think that way. Even among close human friends, we have seen betrayal taking place when one friend thought he knew everything about the other person; both weaknesses and strengths. Amplify this many, many times and you have a picture of satan's attempted usurpation of power. God was very close with satan and must have shared many special things with Lucifer. Lucifer, thinking he knew all the weaknesses and strengths of God, sought to overcome God and replace Him. He tried to do the same thing with Jesus on the planet earth.

In his pride, Lucifer rebelled with one third of the angels (Ezekiel 28:17; Revelations 12:4). In judgment, God threw Lucifer out of heaven and destroyed him (i.e. removed all his power) (Ezekiel 28:16). He became

known as the devil or satan, the accuser, who opposes all of God's works. All of this happened before the creation story as recorded in Genesis chapter one. It is possible that it all occurred between Genesis 1:1 and Genesis 1:2 when there was a pre-Adamic civilization that existed on the planet earth.

The Gap Creation Theory of Pre-Adamic Civilization

The gap creation theory of pre-Adamic civilization is based upon the fact that the earth was created perfect (Genesis 1:1) and it 'became void' (Genesis 1:2 Hebrew *tohu wa bohu*; *tohu* – waste or desolate; *bohu* – empty or devoid of life); and 'darkness' (Hebrew *hashek* – absolutely no light at all) was on the face of the 'deep' (Hebrew *tehom* – abyss). Isaiah 45:18 says that God did NOT create the earth 'void' (Hebrew *tohu wa bohu*). It is highly likely that millions of years could have passed between Genesis 1:1 and Genesis 1:2 where a pre-Adamic civilization was thriving under the domain of Lucifer before the rebellion (Note: the garden of Eden during Lucifer's time as described in Ezekiel 28:13-14 seems to be a different Garden of Eden from Adam's time. It was filled with precious stones).

Moreover, the words *tohu* and *bohu* have been used to describe the fall and destruction of Edom (Isaiah 34:11 ...He shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion – *tohu* – and the stones of emptiness – *bohu*). The prophet Jeremiah describes the destruction of Israel as *tohu wa bohu* (Jeremiah 4:23 partially fulfilled under Nebuchadnezzar). It is highly possible that there was a total and complete destruction of a pre-Adamic civilization that led to the earth becoming without form and void in Genesis 1:2. There is also the choice use of the word 'create' (Genesis 1:1 Hebrew *bara* – out of nothing; also found in Genesis 1:21, 27; 2:3, 4; 5:1, 2) which differs from the word 'made' (Genesis 1:7 Hebrew *asah* – recreated out of pre-existing materials; also found in Genesis 1:16, 25, 26, 31; 2:2, 3, 4, 18; 3:1, 7, 21) particularly in reference to the seven day re-creation of the Adamic earth.

The Fall of Adam

Eons after the fall of satan, God created Adam and Eve. God gave all authority and power on the planet earth to Adam (Genesis 1:26-28). Adam's authority included access to God's throne. He could approach God freely. Satan sneaked into the garden and subjugated Adam through temptation. Adam, who was supposed to exercise his authority, fell instead to the wiles of the devil. In his fall, Adam lost all his rights, privileges and authority to satan.

In the temptation of Jesus, satan made mention of the fact that all authority had been delivered to him (Luke 4:6). It was Adam who had ignorantly

delivered it all to him. Satan entered the Garden of Eden with nothing but he left the Garden of Eden with everything that was Adam's. Since the Fall, satan has all authority on this planet earth and an access to God through Adam's authority. He made use of this free access to function as the Accuser (Job 1:5-12; Revelations 12:10).

Apparently, the earth was given to Adam under a leasehold. It could possibly have been a six thousand year lease but we do not have to be dogmatic about it. For this reason, satan's demons know that the leasehold of this earth would one day expire and their day of reckoning would come. When they saw Jesus manifested in the flesh, they were surprised for the lease had not yet expired. They asked Him why He had come to torment them before the time (Matthew 8:29).

Wicked Spirits in Heavenly Places

The book of Ephesians speaks about the four classes of demons. They are listed in ascending order of rank: principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness of this world and wicked spirits in heavenly places (Ephesians 6:12). The fallen angels became the highest ranking demonic host. They are the wicked spirits in the heavenly places. Heavenly places refer to the atmospheric space above the earth. These are the princes over geographical regions. Demonic powers who dared to hinder Gabriel the archangel (Daniel 10:13).

Fallen angels do not like to dwell upon this earth. They set their thrones in the atmospheric realm above the earth. This is the reason why they are called the wicked spirits in heavenly places. They only come to earth on assignments for the devil but fly back to their atmospheric thrones after their work is finished. They are the warring demons of satan who have a major influence in shaping world events and the political scene of nations.

The Defilement of Man and Angels

Some of these fallen angels were assigned the task of cohabitation with the daughters of men (Genesis 6:1-4). Some scholars interpret the phrase 'sons of God' to mean the 'sons of Seth.' To argue that the 'sons of God' were the sons of Seth would be an argument unsupported by other Scriptures. Moreover, it would be implying that holiness is based on the genes.

The phrase 'sons of God' has been used in the Old Testament four times (Genesis 6:2; Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7). This phrase has been used three times in the book of Job to refer to the angels. From evidences in other Scriptures,

this phrase in Genesis also refers to the angels. Peter, in his epistle, speaks of angels who have sinned and are now in chains of darkness (2 Peter 2:4, 5). Jude speaks of angels who have not kept their domain but left their own habitation and are now in chains of darkness (Jude 6). He speaks of how they have committed sin in a similar manner to Sodom and Gomorrah (Jude 7).

Apparently, some of these fallen angels had the ability to cohabit with women to produce offspring. This isolated group were chained even before the judgment day. The offspring of this adulterous relationship were giants who were neither human nor angels. It is because of this major event that God passed judgment on the earth to destroy all the earth and leaving only Noah and his family who were of the pure Adamic stock.

When the earth was destroyed, all flesh died. The souls of fallen men would go to Hades to await the judgment day. But what about the half-breeds of angels and men? It is possible that the disembodied spirits of these half-breeds became the various other classes of demons. Some scholars have said that the various classes of demons came from the pre-Adamic world which is also a possibility. We need not be dogmatic about all these but the above theories could help satisfy our intellectual need to understand the origin of demons.

The Classification of Demons

These disembodied spirits roam about this earth seeking for human bodies to manifest through. They are unlike the fallen angels. These disembodied spirits do not make their headquarters in the atmospheric realm. They desire to possess human bodies. They vary in form, shape, height, appearance and power. The highest class of these disembodied spirits are the rulers of the darkness of this world (Ephesians 6:12). These are the demonic powers who mastermind the possession of a human soul. If a person is possessed by numerous demons, there is usually only one major team leader, a ruler of the darkness of this world.

In the case of the man with the legion of demons, which is possibly six thousand demons, there was only one ruler of darkness heading them. When Jesus asked him for his name, he (singular) answered that his name was Legion (Mark 5:9). Those who understand this truth will not take long in delivering people who are possessed by multitudes of demons. All we have to do is deal with the key demon, who is leader of the possession team, and the rest will come out.

We do not have to cast out demons one by one. If a person has six thousand demons and we cast out three a day, it would take us slightly less than six years working everyday to cast out all the demons. However, if we take authority over the head demon and command him to come out with all his team, we can deliver the person on the spot. It is the rulers of the darkness of this age who are the key demons involved in temptation and possession. The other two categories of demons, the principalities and powers are of lesser power. Some of these look like little imps who have very little power but play their demonic role in the use of distractions and irritations in a person's life.

The Judgment of satan

The purpose of Jesus in coming to this earth was not only to die for our sins. He came also to destroy all the works of the devil (1 John 3:8). Jesus came as a man to destroy the devil as a man, and to restore all the authority that rightfully belongs to man. In dying on the cross, Jesus paid the legal cost for man's disobedience and therefore had the legal right to take over all authority on this earth.

At the cross, satan was judged (John 12:31; 16:11). The legal hold that satan had over this earth was broken and satan was cast out (John 12:31). He is now an outlaw. In His death, Jesus destroyed the devil (Hebrews 2:14). The word 'destroy' means 'to make of no effect' (Greek - katargeo). Satan was made completely powerless and stripped of all his legal authority that he usurped from Adam.

Satan lost all his dominion over Hades and Death (Revelations 1:18). He lost all dominion over the earth and the heavenly places (Matthew 28:18). Jesus disarmed all the cohorts of the devil and made a public spectacle of them (Colossians 2:15). All things in heaven, earth and hell are now being brought under subjection to Jesus (Hebrews 2:8; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:22). All believers not only have authority over all the demonic hosts, they have authority over satan himself (Mark 16:17; James 4:7, 8).

The illusive authority that satan seems to function in today is based on deception. If somebody could con you into believing that he has the right over your house and property, you will surrender it to him. Satan is like a skinny turkey which spreads out its feathers trying to make onlookers think that it is bigger than it really is. Yet at the very mention of the Name of Jesus by believers, he drops his feathers and flees naked, clucking all the way.

If we resist the devil, he will flee from us (James 4:7). The word 'flee' is from the Greek word 'pheusetai' which is from the root word 'pheugo.' The word 'pheugo' means 'to shrink or to stand fearfully aloof' (Matthew 8:33). The devil is more afraid of us than we are of him. When you stand your ground and resist him, he flees as in terror from you. He becomes terrified by you. God intends to crush the devil under our feet (Romans 16:20).

CHAPTER 2

DEGREES OF DEMONIC CONTROL

All the demonic forces under satan seek to control and possess this earth. They know that their time is short and so they try to do as much destruction as they can before their judgment. Their judgment is hell fire because they fell by free choice without temptation. They fell after having known the deep and holy things of God and after having served Him closely. Even human beings who have known the deep things of God and choose to reject the Lord have suffered the same judgment (Hebrews 6:4-6; 10:26-29).

The Lake of Fire was never created for men. It was created for satan and his demonic hosts (Matthew 25:41). The devil in his wickedness has sought to bring the souls of men together with him into the Lake of Fire.

Demonic Influence in World Events

The wicked spirits in the heavenly places affect the course of world events. While Joshua was battling in the natural, God sent an army of angels to fight for Joshua (Joshua 5:13-15). The wicked spirits that were ruling the land of Canaan had to be routed just as the Canaanites had to be routed. Unless the wicked spirits were routed, the natural routing will not succeed.

While Daniel was fasting for twenty-one days, there was a spiritual warfare taking place in the cosmic realm. Gabriel was being withstood by the wicked spirit called the prince of Persia (Daniel 10:13). It was when Michael the archangel joined the battle that Gabriel was released to come to Daniel. The time of this spiritual occurrence was during the reign of King Cyrus of Persia (Daniel 10:1).

Gabriel said that he would return to fight with the prince of Persia (Daniel 10:20). After his defeat of the prince of Persia, the natural kingdom of Persia would fall. At the same time, the wicked spirit called the prince of Greece would rise (Daniel 10:20). At his rising, there was also the rising of the Grecian Empire under Alexander the Great.

The natural world is a replica of the spiritual world. Some of the world events are the manifestations of demonic activities. Other world events are the result of the interception of God's angels through the prayers of the saints. I believe that the world event of a Roman census in Jesus' time was arranged by angels so that the prophecy of the Messiah's birth in Bethlehem could be fulfilled (Luke 2:1, 2).

Demonic Control of Human Beings

There are three major areas of demonic control over a human being. Control or affliction upon the body would be demonic oppression. Control over the human soul would be demonic obsession. Control over the human spirit would be demonic possession. Sometimes people use these terms interchangeably and create confusion in the minds of Christians.

The Bible calls being afflicted by a sickness as being oppressed (Acts 10:38). Jesus went about healing all who were oppressed by the devil. Oppression is the work of demons on the physical body. They cause blindness, deafness and all bodily infirmities. Not all sicknesses are directly caused by demons. Some have natural causes as seen in Volume Three of this Foundation Truths series. However, those sicknesses that are caused by demons cannot be diagnosed nor healed by natural means. Only when the demons are cast out of the bodies can such sicknesses be healed.

The work of demons on the soul and on the thought life is defined as obsession. Demons can also attack the emotions of a soul with depression and melancholy. They attack the will of a soul by suppression. However, the overall work of demons upon the soul can be classified as obsession since the end result is a person being obsessed by a wrong thought or concept.

A person can be bound by demonic powers by just one thought. The thought becomes a stronghold and sucks the life out of a person (2 Corinthians 10:4, 5). John Osteen shares in his book 'Pulling Down Strongholds' about the healing of his sister Mary (page 14-17). She was bound by one thought - that God had sent her the sickness. When she rejected that thought, she was instantly freed. A lifetime of suffering, in and out of hospitals and institutions, was over when she was freed that day.

Simon the magician was bound by iniquity because of the thought of his heart (Acts 8:22, 23). It was the wrong thought that led to his wrong request. Bondages of the soul and life come from bondages in the thoughts. Ananias and Sapphira were obsessed with the thought of cheating (Acts 5:3-5).

Possession is the complete subjugation of the spirit of man. At this stage, the complete control of the spirit, soul and body of a human being has been taken over. The true personality of the human soul is suppressed and only the demonic personalities come forth, as in the demoniac (Mark 5:1-5).

Christians under Demonic Control

The question is often asked as to whether a Christian can be possessed. To me this is usually a question of syntax and definition. Those Christians who believe that a Christian can be possessed usually define possession as any demonic control of spirit, soul or body. They do not differentiate the control of demons over each of these areas. As long as a demon speaks through the vocal chords of an individual, they classify it as possession.

Those who do not believe that a Christian can be possessed say that a Christian can have a demon or be demonized. I have personally preferred to define control of the human spirit, soul and body as possession, obsession and oppression respectively. This is done for the sake of theological accuracy.

It is unbiblical to accept the fact that the spirit of a Christian can be possessed. The Bible says that He who is in us is greater than he that is in the world (1 John 4:4). The Holy Spirit is living inside the new born spirits of all Christians (Ezekiel 36:26, 27). It is only the soul and the body of a Christian that can be controlled if they open the door through sin and disobedience. So-called demonic manifestations by genuine Christians or so-called symptoms of deliverance like vomiting or regurgitation are caused by the following: psychological induction due to a semi-hypnotic state under a 'deliverance' minister, sometimes physical and natural causes, and in rare occasions actual demons inducing those manifestations from a distance (not necessarily from within a person). In all these cases, the 'deliveree' must first be indoctrinated to believe whatever is told to them or be susceptible to the commands of the deliverance minister.

The only theologically sound possibility of a Christian being possessed in spirit, soul and body is for the Christian to first reject Christ thus becoming an unbeliever. The Bible acknowledges the possibility of a Christian rejecting Christ (Hebrews 6:4-6; 10:26-29).

Three Levels of Demonic Attack

God works through the Holy Spirit first in our spirits, then in our souls, and afterwards through our bodies. The devil works from the body, dominates the soul and enslaves the spirit. Every attack of the enemy upon a human being has always started in the sense realm. All his temptations make use of things in the natural realm. If we will constantly guard our five senses, satan would have no opportunity to lure us into evil.

The first level of attack is to make human beings slaves to the passions and appetites of their own bodies. The attack on Eve was through the eye gate. Eve saw that the tree of knowledge was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise (Genesis 3:6). Achan fell because he saw the beautiful Babylonian garment and the silver and gold (Joshua 7:21). King David fell because of the lust of the eyes (2 Samuel 11:2).

Satan used the hunger of Jesus to tempt Him (Matthew 4:2, 3). When it did not succeed, he tried to use the riches and the glory of earthly things to tempt Jesus (Matthew 4:8). Jesus was tempted in all points as we are, yet He was without sin (Hebrews 4:15). Lesser mortals, have allowed the devil to reduce them to nothing but brute beasts; living only to satisfy their bodily appetites and desires. Such people experience agony in their sober moments, feeling like slaves trapped within their own bodies.

The second level of attack is in the soul realm. Demons seek to gain control over a soul through any of the avenues of the soul, which is the will, the emotions and the intellect. By using other human beings, demons can suppress the initiative and the liberty of the free will. They succeed when they cause a soul to go into regression. This opens doors to many areas which they can slowly control and dominate. They attack the emotions through crises and upheavals in a person's relationship. Demons attack the intellect through wrong thoughts, wrong doctrines and wrong conclusions.

Finally, demons attack the spirit of man through false visions and revelations. They sometimes speak in audible voices to human victims impersonating God. These are the deceiving spirits that lead people astray (1 Timothy 4:1).

Christians need not fear any of the attacks of demons because of the presence of the Holy Spirit in their lives. They do not even have to be demon-conscious. All they have to do is remain God-conscious and be continually filled with the Holy Spirit. Demons do not like to hang around a Christian who constantly speaks in tongues, worships the Lord and speaks in line with the Word.

As long as Christians do not grieve the Holy Spirit, they are virtually in the secret place of the Most High where no evil can come near their dwelling place. Notice that the exhortation of Paul not to give place to the devil is found in the same passage that tells us not to grieve the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:26-30).

CHAPTER 3

BIBLE METHODS OF DELIVERANCE

Much controversy has arisen in the deliverance ministry because people have developed methods of deliverance from their own experiences rather than from the Bible. Extreme practices have prevailed in places where the balanced Word is not taught. Methodology that is experienced-based will sooner or later contradict the clear teachings of the Bible; bringing disrepute to the precious Name of Christ.

Unscriptural Methods of Deliverance

Some ministers insist that people confess and renounce their past life. Sometimes, they even have a long list of areas on a checklist for their followers to confess. Without exception, everyone who comes to them must go through their checklist. Sins that have been forgiven and placed under the blood of Jesus have to be dragged out of the sea of forgetfulness.

The favourite Scriptures of these ministers are those pertaining to the breaking of the curse of ancestral sins (Exodus 20:5). The error of this method is that it takes one method to apply to all cases. Sometimes, the Holy Spirit may lead us to help a person renounce certain sins. At other times, the deliverance can be received without any need of confession.

It would be wrong for us to take one method and make it a requirement for all. If Jesus spat and healed once, it does not mean that we have to do it all the time. Otherwise we may end up with a spitting ministry. The positive confession of the Word can also bring deliverance to people. But we do not limit God by ministering with that one method either.

The apostle Paul did not require the slave girl in Philippi to confess her sins to cast the demon out of her nor was confession needed when deliverance came via handkerchiefs and aprons (Acts 16:18;19:12). Neither did Jesus ever put anyone through a confession list when He cast out demons (Matthew 8:16).

Please note that I am not condemning the need of some to renounce. Rather I am pointing to the error of the indiscriminate use of this method without the leading of the Holy Spirit. A blanket use of one method alone would cause more hurt to the body of Christ than any relief it can bring. It would be like a doctor trying to use one natural medicine for all illnesses. Or

like a minister who attributes all arthritis to unforgiveness. Think about the damage this kind of theology brings.

Unscriptural Conversations with Demons

Another unscriptural practice is that of talking to demons. Whenever demons tried to talk, Jesus always commanded them to keep quiet (Luke 4:41). Even Paul did not take a liking to the demon that tried to do some unsolicited advertising for him (Acts 16:17, 18).

Some deliverance ministers have relied on information that the demons supplied them to treat their patients. Some go further by formulating doctrine and theories of the demonic realm from their conversations with demons during deliverance. The excuse of these ministers is that when they command in the name of Jesus for the demons to speak, the demons have no choice but to speak the truth. The problem is that this practice is neither supported by the Scriptures nor evident in the life of Jesus or His disciples.

The devil is a liar and so are his cohorts. We should not rely on any information that these liars provide. The only recorded conversation of Jesus with any demon was in the deliverance of the demoniac (Mark 5:7-13). Even then, it was an exceptional case just as it was unusual to see Jesus allowing demons to go into pigs.

What some deliverance ministries have done is to take the exceptional and made it the norm. They might as well take the spitting incident of Jesus and spit on everybody. God have mercy on them if they do! Or they could have taken the healing of the blind man with clay and start a clay ministry.

The Bible discourages conversations with demons (Mark 1:25, 34; Luke 4:41). The Bible way for causing demons to manifest is not by encouraging or talking them into manifestation but by the preaching of the Word or by the Anointing. The man with the unclean spirit could have been attending the synagogue for years. It was only when Jesus preached the Word that the demon manifested (Mark 1:22, 23). Demons recognized the Anointing that was upon Jesus' life (Mark 5:6, 7; Luke 4:41).

The Key to Bible Deliverance

The key to all deliverance cases is not psychoanalysis or psychotherapy but faith. All demons feed on fear. The modus operandi of the devil is fear. Demons that possess people feed upon fear in the atmosphere to gain strength to resist being expelled. For that reason, it is not the more the merrier when it comes to deliverance. One or two believing disciples are

better than a hundred fearful disciples. A fear-filled atmosphere is not conducive to quick and rapid deliverance.

The primary spiritual force that ejects demons out of people's lives is the force of faith. When the disciples of Jesus experienced an unsuccessful deliverance, they were rebuked by Jesus for their unbelief (Matthew 17:20). On the other hand, when great faith was demonstrated, deliverance could even be performed from a great distance (Matthew 15:22, 28). It was the Canaanite woman's faith that brought deliverance for her daughter.

Faith is released through the spoken word. The authority of the spoken word is the key to biblical deliverance ministry. It was Jesus' spoken word that the demons feared and obeyed (Matthew 8:16; Mark 1:27; Luke 4:36). The power of our spoken words depends on the faith level of our hearts (Mark 11:23). The faith level of our hearts depends upon our intake of God's Word (Romans 10:17).

Two Channels of Ministering Deliverance

Just like in ministering healing, there are two basic ways to minister deliverance: by our faith and by the Anointing. When the disciples of Jesus could not cast out the demon, Jesus had to minister faith to the father of the possessed boy (Mark 9:23). No deliverance resulted because the disciples did not have faith (Matthew 17:19, 20), the boy's father did not have faith (Mark 9:24) and the people who came to watch did not have faith (Mark 9:19).

Deliverance can be obtained through the Anointing. Without a single command, demons fled when anointed cloths touched the bodies of the possessed (Acts 19:12). Under the Anointing, a single spoken word can drive out a multitude of devils simultaneously from the possessed (Matthew 8:16). It is the Anointing that breaks the yoke (Isaiah 10:27). The manifested presence of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God causes torment to demons (Luke 4:18, 31-34, 41; 8:28).

Demons are Vagabonds

Some ministers command demons to go into the pit whenever they cast them out. This is unscriptural for their time has not yet come. When demons are cast out, they wander about this planet earth seeking another body (Luke 11:24). The mention of 'dry places' seems to indicate a condition of perpetual thirst. This same condition seems to be present in lost souls in Hades (Luke 16:24).

Demons can be commanded not to enter a body again (Mark 9:25). As kings and priests in Christ, we can exercise authority and dominion in the areas and countries where we live. We do this by binding the work of demons in areas under our jurisdiction or commanding them to leave our geographical area (Revelations 1:6; Matthew 16:19). Our times of fasting and prayer can create great havoc in the devil's camp (Daniel 10:2, 3, 12, 13; Mark 9:29).

Commanding demons into the pit, however, is under the jurisdiction of God. If enough Christians will rise up to take dominion over the areas they live, we will be able to make life miserable for these ungodly aliens. It is the intention of God that His manifold wisdom be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places (Ephesians 3:10). All the power and authority of Jesus has been delegated to the church to demonstrate the devil's defeat (Matthew 28:18; Mark 16:17).

Regarding Works of the Flesh

The mistake of some deliverance ministries is to blame every problem on demons. People taught under them attribute every small problem to a demon. Logically, they then believe that every problem needs deliverance. The Bible is very clear that the works of the flesh are not dealt with by deliverance. They are dealt with by repentance. The passions of the flesh need to be crucified and not cast out (Galatians 5:24).

Bondages and strongholds over the mind are not dealt with by deliverance. They are dealt with by bringing every thought subject to Christ (2 Corinthians 10:4, 5). The need of such people is not deliverance but rather renewal of the mind (Romans 12:2). The weapons of our warfare to renew the mind are not deliverance but the Word of God (Ephesians 5:26; 6:17). It is the Word that makes us clean (John 15:3).

The Word of God in our spirits, souls and bodies is the only insurance, antidote and formula for total freedom and deliverance. The Word of God achieves deliverance and maintains deliverance. Those who do not build their lives upon the Word of God but rely on the so-called deliverance ministry, live on endless deliverance therapy that does not have permanent results. Some of the deliverance ministers themselves confess to their own need of constant deliverance therapy.

Meditating on the Word of God is the key to infusing the Word of God into our spirits, souls and bodies. All conditions of oppression, obsession and possession result from a thought; a pattern of thinking which keeps a person bound in mind and in body. After deliverance, these thoughts and

patterns of thinking need to be removed from a person's life for permanent deliverance. Only meditating on the Word and sound teaching from the Word can bring this.

CHAPTER 4

THE THOUGHT LIFE

The realm of the thought life is the operating sphere of the devil. All operations of oppression, obsession and possession start in the thought life. Wrong thoughts spawn a host of problems and are a fuel for demonic activity. We should guard our thought life and not allow weaknesses to occur in this realm.

Strongholds in the Mind

Demonic attacks begin with temptation. As a person entertains temptation and dwells upon it, the imagination becomes infected. Continual imagination of the wrongs things lead to the development of a pattern of thinking. By this stage, a person's life becomes infected with demonic activity and some of his actions become demonically inspired. At this stage, the demons have a stronghold built into the person's life (2 Corinthians 10:4, 5).

All human beings, including Jesus as a Son of Man, experience temptation. However, we do not need to entertain nor allow it to build a stronghold over our lives. The birds can fly over your head but don't let them build a nest in your hair. For this reason, we should spend some time in the Word of God every day in order to have our thought lives patterned after the Word of God.

Simon the magician was a young Christian and did not have much teaching in the Word of God after he was born again (Acts 8:13). When Peter and John came from Jerusalem to pray for the Christians to be baptized in the Holy Spirit, he wanted to use money to buy the ability to impart the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:19). Peter rebuked him for his wrong thought (Acts 8:20). In fact, repentance was necessary for the wrong thought (Acts 8:22). Simon was under obsession which Peter called being poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity (Acts 8:23).

Ananias and Sapphira died because they lied to the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3). They had conceived the plan in their hearts (Acts 5:4). It was their thought life that led them into error and deception. The control of demons over all of mankind is through the mind (Ephesians 4:17; 2 Corinthians 4:4).

The Thought Life and Demons

Satan cannot read our minds. All the information he has about us is through our conversations, actions and spiritual radiance or lack of it. Satan does not know everything. He was quite confused when it came to the crucifixion of Jesus. At one point, he was using Peter to try to stop Jesus from going to the cross (Matthew 16:22, 23). At another time, he was using Judas to quickly get Jesus to the cross (John 13:27). Nor did the cohorts of Satan know what it was all about. Paul wrote that if they knew it, they would not have crucified our Lord (1 Corinthians 2:8).

It is significant, when the demoniac was delivered, that the Bible mentions that he was in his right mind (Mark 5:15). In all cases of demonic activity, the demons seek to build a mental hold over a human being. This activity is usually master-minded by a ruler of the darkness, the second rank of demons. As a soul yields to its temptation, the demons slowly take control. At a certain point of yieldedness, the demon gains access to enter into the soul. This demon then opens the door for other spirits to enter a soul.

The entrance into a soul is through the thought life. It is very easy to command demons to come out. But it takes a longer time to seal the entrance through the thought life that they had used. It is as hard to break mental habits as it is to break physical habits. Mental habits can hold a person stronger than prison bars can hold him. If the entrance is not sealed, they will try to come back into the person (Luke 11:24-26).

Manifestations of Deliverances

Sometimes deliverance ministers seek to establish whether a demon has left by its manifestation. They look for signs of vomiting, heavy breathing or screams before they will believe that the demon has gone. This is unscriptural and it is basing the ministry on sense knowledge rather than on faith in the Word of God.

No doubt there can be some manifestations in some of the cases but this is not universally true. The most important manifestation is that a person is in their right mind (Mark 5:15). If a person ministered to can acknowledge that Jesus is their Saviour by praying the sinner's prayer, the demons have left. They do not need deliverance any longer. They need teaching.

It would be good to minister the baptism in the Holy Spirit after they have been born again. That would help them to remain filled with the Holy Spirit, thus giving no ground for the demonic spirits to work on. Demons do not like to hang around those who pray in tongues constantly. It drives them

crazy. Add the meditation of the Word with this and it torments them to be near you.

The Authority of the Believer

It is not scriptural for us to pray to God to cast out the demons. God has given us all authority and power to cast out demons. Paul prayed three times for God to remove the demon from him but God's only answer was 'My grace is sufficient for you' (2 Corinthians 12:7-9). God was saying that He had given enough grace for Paul to overcome the situation. Paul does not need the Lord to come and do it for him. He has received the grace to do it himself.

Nowhere in the Bible are we told to ask God to cast out demons for us. Instead, we are exhorted to cast out demons by the Name of Jesus (Mark 16:17). We are told to wrestle against demon powers (Ephesians 6:12). We are told to resist the devil (James 4:7). We are told to resist satan the devourer (1 Peter 5:8, 9).

The apostle Paul did not ask God to cast out any demons for him but he personally cast out demons in the Name of Jesus (Acts 16:18). Christians must rise up in the authority that God has delegated to them. God will not do for us what He has delegated us to do. Remember that He wants to show His authority and power through the church (Ephesians 3:10).

We do not pray for demons to leave. Nor do we beg them to leave. We order them to leave. We issue the command for them to leave by the Name of Jesus Christ. All demons fear and tremble when they hear the Name of Jesus (James 2:19). They are all liars and try to put on a front when you command them to leave. Rebuke them. Tell them to shut up and leave. Exercise your faith and believe in the authority of your own words (Mark 11:23).

Testimonies of Faith

Smith Wigglesworth was a man of faith who cast out demons by releasing his faith. Once he was called to pray for a demon-possessed woman in Kansas city. When he reached the city, the demon power in the woman was most violent in its curses. He commanded the evil spirits to depart in the Name of Jesus. He then prepared to leave. All the way that he walked to the door, the woman followed him, and from her mouth there poured out a volume of curses.

He did not say, "I guess I did not pray the prayer of faith; I had better go back and pray again." To him such a course would have been failure. Before he left the door, he told the demon power with great authority saying, "I told you to leave." That was enough. The woman was completely delivered and her pastor stated later that she had no recurrence of demon possession (Smith Wigglesworth by Stanley H. Frodsham, page 62).

Kenneth E. Hagin, in his third vision, described how as the Lord appeared to him, a demon came between him and the Lord Jesus. He waited for a while wondering why Jesus did not command the evil spirit to leave. In the end, he got irritated and told the demon to shut up and leave in Jesus Name. Jesus then told him that if he didn't do something, He couldn't do it. The reason He can't is that He has legally delegated the authority over demons to His church (I believe in visions by Kenneth. E. Hagin, Fleming H. Revell Publishers, pages 80-84).

Rise up, Christians and take dominion. God has given you the task to do the works of Jesus and greater works, too. All power and dominion has been given unto you. You don't have to be afraid of any counterattack or repercussions from the enemy because Jesus said that He has given us the authority to trample on scorpions and serpents (symbols of demons), and all the power of the enemy, nothing shall by any means hurt us (Luke 10:19).

We dwell in the secret place of the Most High God and no evil shall befall us nor any plague come near our dwelling place (Psalms 91:1, 10). When I first started in the deliverance ministry, I was given countless warnings by older ministries that the demons would surely counterattack, that it was dangerous, etc. The only problem is that their advice did not line up with the Word of God.

As I researched into the Word, I realized that demons are more afraid of us than we are of them. The basic problem that we have to confront is more our own fear than their so-called counterattack. It is fear that opens the doors. The cure for fear is faith, which in turn comes from meditation in the Word of God.

It is my testimony that you can be immune to all the attacks of the enemy. I share this to encourage all Christians to claim the promises of God and be bold to uproot the work of the devil and his cohorts from people's lives. Don't listen to the fears of others. Listen to the Word of God. Jesus commands you to go forth and cast out demons in His Name (Mark 16:17).

CHAPTER 5

THE WORK OF ANGELS

It is important, as we confront the spiritual world, to be more conscious of God and His angels than of demons. There are more angels of God working together with us than demons working with the devil. Angels are sent by God to minister together with us. We need to learn the spiritual laws that are involved in working together with angels.

Guardian Angels

At the birth of every human being, God assigns a guardian angel to watch over each life. These angels protect their charge as much as is legally possible for them. Jesus speaks of the guardian angels of children who always behold the face of the Father in heaven (Matthew 18:10). When the servant girl saw Peter who was supposed to be in prison at the door, the Christians in the house thought that it was his guardian angel (Acts 12:15).

However, the angels' legal right to protect the children and the family is severely restricted when parents freely choose to give their children over to false worship or when they themselves openly welcome demons into their family life.

Angels cannot prevent us from entering danger areas which we voluntarily choose to walk in. They merely cover the blind spots or areas where we are not able to exercise our free will. Like God, angels cannot violate or work against our free choice.

Nevertheless, if we openly choose to welcome them into areas of our life, angels would have a wider field to work on. Our free choice to openly welcome them gives them the legal right to interfere in the affairs of our life for good. Abraham was aware of the angel of God helping him in the affairs of life (Genesis 24:7). Jacob acknowledged that it was an angel who redeemed him from all evil (Genesis 48:16).

As a human being grows into adulthood, his free choice to do evil will prevent his guardian angel from working on his behalf. If the human being turns to God and seeks a deep relationship with God, his guardian angel will be able to work more effectively. It was probably Cornelius' guardian angel who instructed him to send for Peter (Acts 10:3).

Angels on Assignments

Although angels seem to manifest at different times in the Bible, they are still working invisibly twenty-four hours a day. The times of their manifestations are special occasions under the permission of the Father. They are still working although they are not manifested all the time. A study of the times of their manifestation shows us some of the work that they have rendered to humans.

When nations go to war, angels and demons go to war. Joshua saw the captain of a host of angels leading the battle in the spiritual realm (Joshua 5:14). God sent an angel to lead Moses and the Israelites in the wilderness (Exodus 23:20, 23). In fact it was an angel that appeared to Moses in the wilderness (Exodus 3:2; Acts 7:30). I believe that the lifted hands of Moses, in the battle with the Amalekites, released the aid of angels to Joshua (Exodus 17:8-16).

Even in modern battlefields, it is the work of angels that brings the decisive victory. Testimonies abound of angelic assistance in battles (*Hand on the Helm* by Katherine P. Carter). An angel of the Lord routed the whole Assyrian army in King Hezekiah's time (2 Chronicles 32:21).

Angels bring provisions and supplies in times of need. An angel brought supernatural food to Elijah (1 Kings 19:5). The manna which the Israelites ate for forty years was actually angels' food (Psalms 78:24, 25). Possibly, the angels could have been responsible to place it there every morning for forty years.

Angels have worked directly with men of God in the ministry. Elijah seems to be a prophet who worked closely with angels. An angel encouraged him when he was down (1 Kings 19:7). He worked closely with the angel of God sent to Him (2 Kings 1:3, 15). Zechariah the prophet had numerous conversations with angels (Zechariah 4:1; 5:10; 6:4).

In modern times, William Branham has worked together with angels in the healing ministry (*A Man Sent from God* by Gordon Lindsay). {This book is not circulated now because William Branham, who was called to be a prophet and an evangelist, tried to enter the office of a teacher and ended up teaching many doctrinal errors. He died in the permissive Will of God in an accident. Today some of his followers still perpetuate his wrong teachings. However, there are still some positive things that can be learned from his early ministry}.

Angels have brought revelations to men of God. Gabriel the archangel was especially sent by God to bring revelation to Daniel (Daniel 9:22). It was an angel who explained some of the visions of Zechariah for him (Zechariah 1:9; 4:4; 5:2, 6). It is important to note here that all revelations received by whatever means must be in line with the written Word of God.

Paul said that if an angel or any one preach a gospel contrary to that which he had preached, the person or angel is to be rejected (Galatians 1:8). Neither should we worship angels (Colossians 2:18). Satan can also try to impersonate an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14). All manifestations and revelations received via angels must be checked by the written Word of God, by the inward witness and by the resultant fruit.

Angels strengthened our Lord Jesus at different points in His ministry. After forty days and nights of temptation, angels came and ministered to Him (Mark 1:13). During His great travail at Gethsemane, God sent a powerful angel to strengthen Jesus (Luke 22:43). Angels were manifested at His birth and at His resurrection (Luke 1:30; 2:9, 10; John 20:12).

The apostles in the book of Acts worked together with angels. An angel freed them from prison twice (Acts 5:19; 12:7, 8). An angel slew Herod the persecutor of the church (Acts 12:23). Paul had an angelic escort all through his ministry and when he was in danger of shipwreck, the angel appeared to him (Acts 27:23). All two hundred and seventy-six people were safely brought to shore in the shipwreck because angels were at work (Acts 27:24, 37).

In the last days, we can expect to see more and more angelic manifestations. Do not be hoodwinked by every unscriptural manifestation or revelation but be open to the work of angels in your life. Learn to work together with the angels of God. Be balanced in the Word of God. Learn to accept all things that are scriptural.

Principles that Activate Angels

There are principles which will activate the work of angels in our lives. The work of angels in our blind spots (areas where free choice is not possible) is automatic. But the work of angels in areas within the boundaries of our free choice is determined by our obedience to the principles of God.

Angels love to encamp around those who fear the Lord (Psalms 34:7). This implies a life of uprightness and righteousness. Those who make God their fortress and their trust have angels watching over them (Psalms 91:11). If you desire an encampment of angels around you all the time, make God

your dwelling place and abide under the shadow of the Almighty (Psalms 91:1). This involves waiting on God and ministering to Him. Angels love to worship God. True worshipers of God will find themselves surrounded by angels. In the spirit world, like attracts like.

Fasting and prayer activates angels to our aid. Gabriel told Daniel that from the first day of his fast, God had heard his prayer and sent Gabriel (Daniel 10:12). An angel came to deliver Peter from prison because continual prayer was made for him by the church (Acts 12:5-7). In response to prayer, God sent an angel to destroy the Assyrians (2 Kings 19:15, 35). Daniel's prayers caused Gabriel to fly swiftly (Daniel 9:21).

Be careful of the words you speak. Your words either give legal ground to demons or angels to work. You are justified or condemned by the words you say (Matthew 12:36, 37). It is words that rule the course of nature (James 3:6). Gabriel told Daniel that he came because of his words (Daniel 10:12). Speak words that are in line with the Word of God if you want angels to work actively on your behalf.

Develop in worship, prayer and the Word of God. These three principles will bring about a greater activity of angels on your behalf. The purpose of this chapter is to build into Christians a consciousness of God and His angels rather than a consciousness of demons. No study on demonology is sufficient without the study of angels. After learning what goes on in the enemy's camp, we should also know what is going on in our own camp.

All fear of demons and the devil must be totally eradicated from the Christian life. There are more angels who work with us than demons who work for the devil. We outnumber them. And above all things, we have Almighty God - the Father, the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit - with us and in us. If God be for us, who can be against us? (Romans 8:31).

March onward Christian soldier and take dominion. Bring all things subject to the feet of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 15:24; Ephesians 1:22, 23). Every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord! (Phil. 2:9-11).

CHAPTER 6

THE PERMISSION OF GOD

Many people wrestle with the understanding of why satan continues to be around wreaking havoc in people's lives if God exists. If they were God, they would have shut satan out completely and dealt with him so completely that he no longer exists or is free to trouble innocent people. For those who understand his right to exist, especially those in the Word of Faith movement, they know that satan's authority is based on the authority he stole from Adam who has been given the authority over the whole earth (Genesis 1:26; Luke 4:6). The devil had genuine authority and power over all the kingdoms of the earth with which he used to tempt Jesus (Luke 4:5, 6). It was stolen from Adam but now his by default through the fall of Adam, which God has to respect and recognized (Romans 5:14; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 2:2).

Firstly, we need to establish the following perspectives and parameters lest we presume of ourselves more than we should:

1. God is smarter than us and knows the best way to remove evil from the Universe.
2. God has the better perspective because He created satan and all his cohorts before their fall and knows the best way to deal with them.
3. God has to deal with evil without violating the very laws and principles He made that govern the Universe.
4. God has to deal with evil without violating His nature and attributes.
5. God's perspective in dealing with evil has to take into account the history of creation and the end-plan for the entire Universe and not just the perspective of the planet earth.
6. God's dealing with evil has to take into account all other types of creation and species and not just the race of humans.
7. God, being the all-knowing omniscient God, must have foreseen the rise of evil and also the end of evil, and He would act according to His omniscient knowledge.

Having established the above points, we can now better understand and know that God's dealing of evil at the human history level and on the tiny scale of our planet is but a very tiny perspective from our point of view. We should not judge God from our ant-size view, rather our micro-atomic size view, of our human perspective. We can only observe and understand the place of evil in our human history, how it came in through Adam's fall, and how it will be finally eliminated in Christ. We need to come to a proper understanding of this in order to have a non-judgmental attitude in our relationship with God our Father.

Limitation of satan's Power and Authority

We note from the study of the Bible that evil has existed in the Universe even before the existence of mankind. The rebellion of angels pre-dates the creation of Adam by at least a million years; and the existence of angels pre-dates the rebellion of one third of created angels by many more millions of years. Satan was a perfect cherub named Lucifer for millions of years before he led the rebellion of one third of angels (Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:12-15). By the creation of Adam and Eve in Genesis chapter one, the rebellion had been stopped and judged; probably about a million years before the creation of mankind. In spite of the judgment and the failure of the rebellion, the existence of satan and his cohorts still continued in a limited way with some of his angels imprisoned. During the judgment of mankind, who followed evil in Noah's time, more of his angels were imprisoned in chains of darkness (2 Peter 2:4).

Since the fall of Adam, satan has used the stolen authority from Adam to exercise his rule and reign on the earth. This use of authority is, however, limited and it seems that he still needs the permission of God to cross boundaries that test God's people. He easily dominates those who are not of God but for those who have a relationship with God, he needed God's permission to tempt and test. The following Scriptures show forth his need of God's permission:

1. In the testing of Job, he had to ask God first for permission to test Job, then more permission to afflict Job with sicknesses but he was specifically told that he cannot take Job's life (Job 1:9-12; 2:4-8).
2. In the account of the testing of King David in numbering Israel, two Scriptures record differently, the book of Samuel recorded that God was angered at Israel and tested David but the Chronicles record said that satan arose and moved David to number Israel (2 Samuel 24:1; 1 Chronicles 21:1). Between the lines we can deduce that Israel as a nation had displeased God (angered God) in some way and God must have given permission to satan to test David and the whole nation. There was no way satan could have got near to test the David and the nation of Israel in such a manner unless God had allowed him to do so; for God and His mighty angels were protecting all of Israel and His servant David.
3. In the testing of Peter, Jesus said that satan had asked for Peter (Luke 22:21-22). Why did satan go to Jesus for Peter instead of using his authority to directly do so without approaching Jesus for permission? Apparently he is limited as far as the people of God are concerned and he is not allowed to test or tempt them without the permission of God.

4. In the temptation of Jesus recorded in the Synoptic Gospels, Jesus was actually led by the Holy Spirit to the wilderness to be tempted by satan (Matthew 4:1; Mark 1:13; Luke 4:1, 2). It is obvious that if God did not lead Jesus to the wilderness, he was beyond reach of satan. The gospel of Luke did say that he will look for an opportune time but even if the opportune time is there he still needs God's permission otherwise he cannot even get near to Jesus (Luke 4:13).
5. In speaking about temptations, Paul specifically said that with every temptation God would provide a way of escape (1 Corinthians 10:13). It also says that God would NOT allow us to be tempted beyond what we are able. This directly implies that God DOES NOT ALLOW us to be tested or tempted by satan or his cohorts unless He deems that we are ready and able to resist the temptation. Until that point of time, He does NOT ALLOW, which implies He does not give permission for us to be tempted or tested. It also does imply that when we are able, He gives permission for us to be tested. Satan requires the consent of God to test and tempt us.
6. In speaking of spiritual warfare, Paul speaks of a day of evil (Ephesians 6:13). This implies a specific day when the devil is allowed to test us which in turn implies that we are protected in the other days. God has confined the work of the devil against His people and he is helpless against the people of God unless God gives him permission.
7. In the rise of the antichrist, who is the personification of satan and all that is evil, the power that he has is limited and even his ability to persecute and kill the saints of God was only because of God's permission (Daniel 7:25). Without the saints being given into his hands for three and a half years, he could not come near to even touch a hair on their head (Luke 21:18).

Reasons for God's Permission

If indeed, satan cannot touch even a hair on our head, then why did God allow us to be tempted and tested? The Lord's Prayer implies that on a daily basis, God does keep us from temptation (Matthew 6:13). At Gethsemane, Jesus told His disciples to watch and pray, lest they enter into temptation (Matthew 26:41; Mark 14:38; Luke 22:40, 46). In dealing with sin in the church, the apostle Paul seemed to imply that satan could not destroy the sinning believer until he is ex-communicated from the church (1 Corinthians 5:4, 5). We surmise the following reasons why God gives permission for His people to be tempted and tested:

1. When we choose to have the world in our hearts or divert away from God's perfect Will, God would give permission in order for us to see the folly of our ways.

Those who desire to be rich (in a worldly sense), fall into temptation and Satan is allowed to put a snare before them (1 Timothy 6:9).

Lot chose to live in Sodom and Gomorrah (for he was naturally inclined to seek the naturally good things), and his soul was tormented day by day, seeing and hearing the lawless deeds (2 Peter 2:8). When Abraham prayed for the righteous to escape the punishment of the wicked, Lot was, surprisingly, among the righteous that saved (2 Peter 2:9). Our stubborn choice to pursue worldly agendas might result in God giving permission for us to enter the permissive will but suffering all the consequences of daily temptations. It is never God who tempts us but rather our own inner inclinations are daily brought forth into our consciousness during temptations for us to be aware of them and to deal with them (James 1:13, 14).

2. Despite the first reason that we might invite more temptations into our lives by our free choice, we are told to rejoice in God when we fall into temptations (James 1:2, the word translated '*trial*' is Greek word '*peirasmos*' translated '*temptation*' in James 1:12). Of course, this implies that we do not yield to temptation and fall further into sin (James 1:13-15). To be tempted is not a sin but yielding to it is a sin. With every goal set by us (which usually includes natural goals) there will be a price and a test that relates to the possession of the natural and spiritual objective. Based on what we are to attain and obtain in this life of our spiritual and natural goals, we will have to deal with different temptations that correlate to the success of those goals. In the light of always living the godly life and not yielding to the sin around us, we must live with, and daily overcome the temptation of the environment we choose to live in. Though Lot chose to live in Sodom and Gomorrah, he did not yield to the sin around him although he was daily tormented. The Bible still considers him a godly man whom God rescued (2 Peter 2:9). However, he did lose everything that he had acquired. When Solomon chose to marry many foreign women in political alliances, he added the temptation of their desire to worship foreign gods. He resisted this temptation until he was old and gave in to them (2 Kings 11:1-4). There was no escaping the temptations in the environment of the ungodly women that Solomon loved.
3. We are allowed to be tempted in order to be tested and rewarded by God when we successfully endure the temptation and overcome it (James 1:12). Note that since the temptation brings out what is actually within us, the external environment being the catalyst, the

success of overcoming the temptation is actually the conquest of self by the godly nature of Christ within us. We overcome by changing and growing stronger on our inside.

4. When we overcome the temptations that God has allowed us to enter upon, we are rewarded with more authority and anointing as Christ was (Hebrews 1:9; 4:15; Luke 4:14).
5. At critical times before major events and breakthroughs, God allows temptation to prove us and in overcoming them, equip us.

After Jesus was filled with the Holy Spirit and ready to start His ministry as the Messiah, God through His Spirit, sent Him in the wilderness to be tested and tried (Matthew 4:1; Mark 1:12; Luke 4:1). When the time came to reveal the place to build the temple of God, which was prophesied to Moses hundreds of years before, King David and all of Israel was allowed to be tempted (Deuteronomy 12:5-26; 2 Samuel 24:18; 1 Chronicles 21:22; 2 Chronicles 3:1). Despite failing at first in the temptation of pride, David's repentance together with all the elders of Israel, brought forth the ultimate revelation that God wanted to achieve, the revelation of the place to build His temple. Our failures are a catered for in God's planning especially when we can get through them and get back into His perfect plan, despite the failure. All things, indeed, work for God to those who love God (Romans 8:28). The main thing we must never sacrifice is our first love for God. There was no way that Peter could have avoided his failure in the temptation during Jesus' trial. Jesus knew about it and had prayed for his returning back to him after his denial of Jesus (Luke 22: 32). God included our potential failures in His predestination of our lives. Note that Solomon was born through David consummating his relationship with Bathsheba after his sin and the victory of Joshua after the failure at Ai used the retreat of Israel as part of the strategy to conquer Ai. We are deemed to have overcome, even if we failed, when we return to God lock, stock and barrel, with all our heart, mind, soul and strength.

6. Temptations serve to humble us and teach us our place as His servants and created beings.

Peter was tempted because even though he was predestined to lead all the other disciples, he still had pride in his own ability and strength (Luke 22:33). King David was tempted because he had achieved much success and before the revelation of the sacred place to build the temple, he had to humble himself. It seems that God does not like to reveal His greatness, His power or His special revelation unless His people and His servants are in a state of humility. The purpose of the tests in the difficult walk through the wilderness was to humble His people (Deuteronomy 8:2, 3). Before

God exalts us, He must place us in a state of humility (1 Peter 5:5, 6; James 4:6).

7. Those who are tempted, and with many experiencing failures, sin and repentance are able to develop greater love for God and for His people.

We need to make a note that one need not fail in order to develop love and compassion just as Jesus was tempted and did not fail. Jesus did suffer temptation in order to identify with us and love us and aid us in our weaknesses (Hebrews 2:18; 4:15). It is the sufferance of temptations that one develops love and compassion for God and others. However, even if one fails but returns to God, the lessons learnt will still increase one's love for God and for others. Those who are forgiven much loves much, and those who are forgiven little loves little (Luke 7:47). The apostle Paul loves much and considered himself as owning a debt of love to the people he preached to because he considered himself the chief of sinners and had received forgiveness from Christ (1 Corinthians 9:16-20; 2 Corinthians 2:4; 2 Corinthians 5:14; Romans 13:8; 1 Timothy 1:13-15)

Having considered the reasons why God gives permission for us to be tempted, let us rejoice in God's great love for us and see how greatly and tenderly He protects us from the devil and his cohorts. Satan is not as powerful as he seems when we see him in the light of the greatness of God's protection upon our lives. Even in the Great Tribulation, not even a hair on the head of God's people can be harm (Luke 21:18). In humbling ourselves before God, we can resist him and he will flee in terror from us (James 4:7, 8). However, we must always maintain and live in a state of humility otherwise God would have to let our pride be tested until we are humbled. The best way to maintain the state of humility is to watch and pray always (Matthew 26:41; Mark 14:38; Luke 21:36; 22:46). In doing so, we always live in God's perfect Will.

Our Father in Heaven, Hallowed be Your Name. Your kingdom come. Your Will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And do not lead us into temptation but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever. In Jesus Name. Amen.