

THAT ROARING LION

“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walks about, seeking whom he may devour.” I Peter 5:8.

It was in the spring of 1943, the allies were attempting to drive the Germans out of Africa. The Americans had just taken a beating at a place called Kasserine Pass in North Africa. Morale was low, and we were making a rather poor showing against the battle hardened German troops led by Field Marshall Rommel. So, General Eisenhower placed a foul mouthed, swaggering showman in charge of our troops by the name of Lt. General George S Patton.

At first, he was resented by the men because of his requirements of strict discipline and constant training but encouraged by his repeated pledge to kick the Hun out of Africa. If you saw the movie “Patton,” you might remember the battle scene where Patton is shown observing the battle through field glasses. The Americans are soundly beating the Germans and Patton says, as if speaking to Rommel, “I read your book you son of a *^*#!. Patton had taken a discouraged American army and beaten Germany’s best.

How did he do it?

Is there a lesson for us in that fateful event of history? Ask yourself: What was the first thing Gen. Patton did upon

taking command? He required strict discipline and constant training, but that was not all. There was one other very important thing that made Patton victorious. He had studied his enemy carefully and anticipated his every move. **He knew his enemy!**

Let's remember those three points as we study our enemy. We have a very sly, capable and determined enemy that is out to destroy us. Peter has cautioned us to take his warning seriously - to be alert and ever on guard. Ephesians 6:10-19 tells us how to prepare for the battle, and we will get more on that later. But first, let's identify and learn all we can about our enemy.

Who is our enemy?

He is known as Satan, the Devil, Beelzebub, adversary, serpent, dragon, god of this world, our accuser, as well as many other descriptive terms describing his character.

But, is he real?

A 2002 poll by Barna Research showed that 75% Roman Catholics, and 55% of Protestants considered Satan simply a symbol, or concept, or principal of evil, not an actual personality. Whereas, only a minority of 34% believed Satan to be a living being with supernatural powers.

Humanity has a very dangerous, determined, enemy, fully bent on destroying the human race; yet, the largest

percentage of those who should know about him does not even believe he exists. Who's to blame? If the watchmen have not sounded the alarm, the people may perish, but ---, take warning, you who are the watchmen over God's people, Ezekiel 33:6 still applies.

“...if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come, and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his *iniquity*; but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand” (Ezek. 33:6).

How did Satan come to be?

Christ created all things (John 1:1-3); but did He create the Devil? No, He created a super archangel called Lucifer (light bringer), a highly intelligent, perfect angel. Ezekiel tells us, “and you were the anointed cherub that covers with overshadowing [wings], and I set you so. (*See Exodus 25:17-20 for a description of God's throne in heaven describing over shadowing-wings*). You were upon the holy mountain of God; you walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire” (Ezek. 28:13-14 AMP). Also, Isaiah says that he even had a throne of his own (Isa. 14:13).

What happened to him?

Lucifer, the light bringer, whom God had given all these things, including free choice, chose to rebel against God and thus became Satan.

“Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. (*So, he is a created being and was created perfect*). By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire (Ezek. 28:15-16). We read of his rebellion in Revelation 12:7 “And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,
8 “And prevailed not, neither was their place found any more in heaven.
9 “And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceives the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.”

Still a ruler

Satan fell from his position of authority in heaven, but he is still the god of this world.

Verse 12 “Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! For the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.”

Jesus speaks of Satan’s fall in Luke 10:18, “And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.”

And in Isaiah 14:12-15 we read:

12 “How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!

13 For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars (angels) of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:

14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.

15 Yet thou shall be brought down to hell, (Sheol, Hades) to the sides of the pit.” (*See the booklet Understanding Hell for an understanding of Sheol and Hades*).

Why did he fall?

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

“Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffic; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee” (Ezek. 28:17-18).

(The pronouncements about Satan given in Isaiah and Ezekiel are considered by some to include Satan and his earthly representatives as it shifts from one to the other).

Facts about Satan

Lucifer was a very high-ranking angel with such persuasive powers and authority that he was able to convince one third of all the angels to follow him in a rebellion against God.

Although fallen, he still occupies a position of power

He is the god of this world (II Cor. 4:4).

He has an army of demons equal to one third of God's angels (Rev. 12:4).

Paul gives us valuable information about our battle in his letter to the Ephesians, "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" (Eph. 6:12). By exercising these powers, Satan along with his demons can and does influence or even possess some high ranking or influential people into doing his will, i.e. Judas (John 13:27).

The fearful power of demons

Satan's demons even have power to resist God's angels. Read about the battle God's angels had to fight against the prince of Persia and Greece when one of God's angels was sent to deliver a message to Daniel (Daniel 10:11-20).

Satan should be feared and respected. Consider what Jude tells us in verse 9:

"Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring

against him a railing accusation, but said, ‘The Lord rebuke thee’.”

Even so, he is limited in his power against us

We are given assurance in 1 Corinthians 10:13 that, “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.” (*Look for that way, it will be there*).

In James 4:7 we are told, “Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the Devil, and he will flee from you.”

Why would that be, when even the archangels had such a battle? When Jesus defeated Satan (Matt. 4:10-11), Satan and his angels had to obey Him. Who is in us when we submit ourselves to God? Read John 17 especially verses 22 & 23.

Our hedge

Satan complained to God that he had placed a hedge of protection around Job (Job 1:10). Teaching, advocating and observing God’s laws are often compared to a hedge of protection against Satan’s attacks (Ezek. 13:5; 22:30). If we step outside that hedge by breaking one of God’s directives, you can be sure that Satan and his demons will take advantage of the opening, even in what we may think to be small things.

Consider: we are told not to consult mediums, witches, astrologists, the dead, etc; yet some do and swear by the results, or say that it's just for fun. They have not stopped to consider that they have just opened a hole in their hedge and subjected their life to the influence of demons. This same principle applies to tempting God by so-called "*innocent*" gambling.

Other attributes of Satan

He is not omnipresent.

He is not all knowing.

He and his demons can manifest themselves as physical beings.

He will tempt you and try to influence your decisions.

He is the father of lies, a murderer, and there is no truth in him (John 8:44).

He constantly accuses us before our God (Rev. 12:10).

He is a deceiver, enticing us with his substitutes for every good thing that God has planned and designed for us. Always examine the source of what you are offered as truth. Is it from man, or God's word? Why settle for a substitute when you can have the real thing?

He appears as an angel of light and his ministers as ministers of righteousness (II Cor. 11:14). Jesus exposed them in His day and we can in our day (John 8:44). They often advocate

Satan's substitutes over God's laws, claiming authority by the traditions of the elders or church fathers (Mk. 7:7-9).

Satan hates God and his world hates God; therefore, he hates you and the world hates you (John 15:18).

Satan's ultimate end

At Christ's return, Satan will be bound for a thousand years. After which he will be released for a short time and then cast into the lake of fire for all eternity. Since Satan is a spiritual being one would assume the fire would not destroy him. However, this is not so for the beast and false prophet. Being mortal they are consumed by the flames. Interestingly, the AMP and the RSV Bibles stress that view (Rev. 20:1-10).

Now we know

God's word has given us a working knowledge of our enemy, so that we can know who he is, what he is, his agenda, his tactics, abilities and limitations.

Now let's make sure we are prepared to withstand his attacks. The underlying truth of our victory is given to us in Revelation 12:11, "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death."

There are three wonderful truths in that verse. 1. Christ's blood is our victory. 2. Our testimony, which is the stand we

take in the face of opposition 3. Our love of God, which surpasses our love of this life.

How to be an overcomer

Paul gives us the formula to be one of those “overcomers” in Ephesians 6:10-20

10 “Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.”

It's His strength, His power and His might and it's ours to use for the asking. Don't even try to go it alone.

11 “Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.”

If we leave anything out, you can bet that's where Satan will attack us.

12 “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.”

It's a spiritual battle and must be fought in spirit and in truth, avoid the physical.

13 “Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.” *Take note that we are to stand, not slink timidly into the background.*

Paul gave good instructions on how to stand

“For God did not give us a spirit of timidity (of cowardice, of craven and cringing and fawning fear), but [He has given us a spirit] of power and of love and of calm and well-balanced mind and discipline and self-control. Do not blush or be ashamed then, to testify to and for our Lord, nor of me, a prisoner for His sake, but [with me] take your share of the suffering [to which the preaching] of the Gospel [may expose you, and do it] in the power of God”

(II Tim. 1:7-8 AMP).

Ephesians 6:14-15

14 “Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness.” *Truth with righteousness, an unbeatable combination, but be sure you know what God’s truth is, as opposed to Satan’s deceptions, which has infiltrated so much of Christianity. When God has given you the truth, make your stand on it.*

15 “And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace.” *Be prepared by learning to act rather than react.*

“A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger” (Prov. 15:1).

16 “Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.”

We don’t know all the answers, but that’s not a requirement if we have faith. “For we walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Cor 5:7).

17 “And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”

“fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul” (Matt. 10:28). Our salvation is complete in our resurrection; our helmet cannot be pierced. The sword of the spirit is the word of God, the Bible; learn to use it well.

18 “Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.”

Prayer is our spiritual nourishment; our life-blood, and how we sustain our selves and each other, pray always.

19 “And for me, (also) that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel.”

As Paul asked for prayers for himself I do so for myself, and all of you, that we may all be and do as he says in verse 20.

20 “For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.”

Just as General Patton led our forces to victory against overwhelming odds, we can be victorious by using the same principles he used:

Discipline

Disciplining ourselves to always choose the path of righteousness.

Training

Constantly training by studying, using and applying the whole armor of God.

The greater the ignorance, the greater the dogma!

Know your enemy

Knowing his tactics, methods, agenda, and especially his ministers, those who have crept in unawares (Jude 4).

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Booklets on related subjects:

ANGELS,

ANSWERS TO THOSE WHO HAVE CREPT IN UNAWARES,

TAKE HEED THAT NO MAN DECEIVE YOU,

THE PROTECTING WALL,

UNDERSTANDING HELL.

I BELIEVE IN THE SUN EVEN THOUGH IT
IS SLOW IN RISING.

I BELIEVE IN YOU WITHOUT REALIZING.

I BELIEVE IN RAIN THOUGH THERE ARE
NO CLOUDS IN THE SKY.

I BELIEVE IN TRUTH EVEN THOUGH
PEOPLE LIE.

I BELIEVE IN PEACE THOUGH
SOMETIMES I AM VIOLENT.

I BELIEVE IN GOD EVEN WHEN HE IS
SILENT.

--UNKNOWN

NOT ONE OF US KNOWS WHAT
EFFECT HIS LIFE PRODUCES,
AND WHAT HE GIVES TO
OTHERS.

THAT IS HIDDEN FROM US AND
MUST REMAIN SO, THOUGH WE
ARE OFTEN ALLOWED TO SEE
SOME

LITTLE FRACTION OF IT, SO
THAT WE MAY NOT LOSE
COURAGE.

THE WAY IN WHICH POWER
WORKS IS A MYSTERY.

--ALBERT SCHWEITZER
(01/14/1875-1965)

The secret of obtaining God's power.

It still works, God does not change. His word is truth and lasts forever and ever.

You can defeat Satan.

“IF MY PEOPLE, WHICH ARE CALLED BY MY NAME , SHALL HUMBLE THEMSELVES, AND PRAY, AND SEEK MY FACE, AND TURN FROM THEIR WICKED WAYS; THEN WILL I HEAR FROM HEAVEN, AND WILL FORGIVE THEIR SIN, AND WILL HEAL THEIR LAND” (2 CHRON. 7:14).

Great things you can do.

Be bold.