

Messages From the Gates of Jerusalem
#25 - Horse Gate - Part II - Spiritual Warfare continued

11. II Kings 6: The king of Syria was waging war against Israel. God informed Elisha (the prophet) of all the Syrian king's battle plans in advance. Elisha conveyed them to the king of Israel, so that all of Syria's attacks were nullified. When the king of Syria learned that Elisha was the source of his troubles, he sent his army to seize him. In the morning, the Syrian troops surrounded the city of Dothan, where Elisha was staying. When Elisha's servant arose early and went out, he saw the Syrian army as it was surrounding the city. The panic-stricken servant rushed to his master and told him what he had seen. While the servant was terrified by what he had seen, Elisha remained calm. He knew that earthly armies were no threat when the host of heaven was on his side. "Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them." He prayed that the eyes of his servant might be opened, to SEE the "invisible hosts of God's army" which was on duty to protect the people of God. His eyes were opened to see into the spiritual realm.

12. II Samuel 24:10-12,15 And David's heart condemned him after he had numbered the people. So David said to the LORD, "I have sinned greatly in what I have done; but now, I pray, O LORD, take away the iniquity of Your servant, for I have done very foolishly." The word of the LORD came to the prophet Gad, David's seer, saying,¹² "Go and tell David, 'Thus says the LORD: "I offer you three *things*; choose one of them for yourself, that I may do *it* to you.'"" So the LORD sent a plague upon Israel from the morning till the appointed time. From Dan to Beersheba seventy thousand men of the people died.

I Chronicles 21:1 Satan's opposition to God and to His people.

"Then Satan stood up against Israel and moved David to number Israel."

Unless we had been given the revelation of this verse, no one would ever have attributed David's actions here to anything other than bad judgment. But behind his foolish and sinful decision we find Satan, ever seeking to oppose God through His people. God was angry at David because in those times, a man only had the right to count or number what belonged to him. Israel did not belong to David; Israel belonged to God.

13. Daniel 3: Daniel's three companions are thrown into the fiery furnace because they will not bow down before the golden image which king Nebuchadnezzar had set up. When they were cast into the furnace, the king looked in and was shocked to see not three, but four men inside. They were not writhing in pain or being consumed by the flames; they were walking around inside that furnace. If not our Lord Himself, this fourth person was surely an angelic being, sent there to save the lives of these faithful men.

14. Daniel 10 provides one of the most dramatic examples of spiritual warfare.

Daniel was a man of God living in a pagan land. One day he received revelation from God about the future. (Daniel 10:1). He began to fast and pray (Daniel 10:2-3). Yet, nothing happened. Days turned into weeks. Twenty long days passed and still nothing. But then came DAY 21. Dan. 10:5-6 I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, a certain man clothed in linen, whose waist *was* girded with gold of Uphaz! ⁶ His body *was* like beryl, his face like the appearance of lightning, his eyes like torches of fire, his arms and feet like burnished bronze in color, and the sound of his words like the voice of a multitude.

Daniel says only he saw the vision; the men with him did not. It was the angel Gabriel ("God is my warrior"). He had the message Daniel had been waiting for. What had taken him so long?

Dan. 10:10-14; 20-21 Suddenly, a hand touched me, which made me tremble on my knees and on the palms of my hands. And he said to me, "O Daniel, man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak to you, and stand upright, for I have now been sent to you." While he was speaking this word to me, I stood trembling. ¹² Then he said to me, "Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words. ¹³ But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia. Now I have come to make you understand what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision *refers to many days yet to come.*"

Then he said, "Do you know why I have come to you? And now I must return to fight with the prince of Persia; and when I have gone forth, indeed the prince of Greece will come.

²¹ But I will tell you what is noted in the Scripture of Truth. (No one upholds me against these, except Michael your prince.

Only Daniel saw the angel standing before him as everyone else felt the "terror" and fled from the scene. Daniel was granted an access to see, hear and speak spiritually, as he could communicate with the angel.

God had responded to Daniel's prayer the very moment Daniel offered it. But there was war in the heavens that delayed it until DAY 21. Daniel had no idea of the major spiritual warfare that was going on. Gabriel had been delayed by the mighty demonic principality over the kingdom of Persia. *But then Michael, one of the chief angel-princes, intervened to help me. I left him there with the demon-prince of the kingdom of Persia. Now I'm here to help you understand what will eventually happen to your people.* (Daniel 10:13-14)

After he finished speaking with Daniel, the angel would encounter the "prince of Persia" and the "prince of Greece" (verse 20). The important thing to notice here is that angels are very much involved in the affairs of men and of nations. The godly angel came in response to Daniel's prayers and the ungodly celestial beings opposed this angel.

More than this, the unholy angels seem to have a link with political kingdoms and their king.

The Spiritual War in the Gospels

The account of our Lord's temptation by Satan: Matt:4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13

1. Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, ² being tempted for forty days by the devil. ⁵ Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. ⁶ And the devil said to Him, "All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for *this* has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish.

⁷ Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours."

Satan sought to tempt our Lord to renounce His submission to the Father by acting independently for His own selfish gain.

Luke 4:13 Now when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time.

2. Three of the Gospels provide another example of this invisible world by recording the exorcism which our Lord performed on the Gerasene demoniac. Jesus allows us to see the operation of the demonic realms of this invisible world. Note the unique contribution of each account, which adds to our understanding of the spiritual war:

a. Matt. 8:28-29 When He had come to the other side, to the country of the Gergesenes, there met Him two demon-possessed *men*, coming out of the tombs, exceedingly fierce, so that no one could pass that way. And suddenly they cried out, saying, "What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?"

These demons knew their days were numbered. They expected the Lord Jesus to come engage them in war. What they did not understand was why He had come at that time. He had arrived early by their way of thinking.

Consider: They, like all others, were not looking for two comings of the Messiah, but only one.

b. Mark 5:6-10 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."

¹⁰ Also he begged Him earnestly that He would not send them out of the country.

c. Luke 8:30-31 Jesus asked him, saying, "What is your name?" And he said, "Legion," because many demons had entered him. ³¹ And they begged Him that He would not command them to go out into the abyss.

From these two texts we would conclude that for a demon to be sent "out of the country" was also to be confined "in the abyss."

Here again, as in the Book of Daniel, it seems fallen angelic beings have certain geographical boundaries for their activities. If a demon was sent "out of the country" he understood this to mean that he was no longer free to oppose God and His people on the earth, but would thereafter be confined in chains in the abyss.

Major points

- a. The man had a supernatural strength but his power was subject to God.
- b. The man in whom the demons dwelt was in torment.
- c. He recognized who Jesus was, and appealed to Him.
- d. The spirit dwelt in the man, allowing him to interact in the physical world.
- e. The demon was frightened of Jesus.
- f. He had an identity; he was named "Legion"
- g. He was more than one demon.
- h. They could only do what was permissible, such as entering the pigs

God wants us to understand the details of the Spiritual War, so we can comprehend the conflict we are in. Many dismiss the whole idea of demons and possession as a relic of from the past. Satan's goal is not to be seen, but to deceive.

In a secular, skeptical world it's to Satan's advantage for people to think he does not exist.

3. In Matthew 16:18 we learn the church which was soon to be established is going to withstand the attacks of hell itself.
4. Luke 22:31 Satan had the audacity to demand that Jesus allow him to "sift Peter like wheat."
5. John 13:27 It was Satan who entered into Judas, using him to betray the Lord and to hand Him over to those who would arrest Him.
6. John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11 In spite of his efforts to the contrary, Satan, the "ruler of this world" was soon to be defeated on the cross of Calvary.

The Spiritual War in the Church

1. Acts 5:3 Satan is found opposing the people and the purposes of God. Ananias and his wife Sapphira had given a certain amount of money to the work of the Lord, but lied about the amount. When Peter rebuked Ananias for his deception, he attributed the source of the lie to Satan: "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit, and to keep back some of the price of the land?"
2. Acts 13:8-10 Paul rebuked Elymas the magician for opposing the gospel, calling him a "son of the devil."
3. II Cor. 2:10-11 Paul spoke of the church's reticence to forgive a repentant brother as giving Satan the opportunity to take advantage, adding that we are not ignorant of his schemes.

4. II Cor. 4:4 Paul speaks of Satan as the "god of this world" who has "blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ."

5. II Cor. 11:13-15 Paul warns that Satan and his subordinates disguise themselves as true believers, thereby seeking to lead some astray by their authoritarian leadership:

For such *are* false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ.¹⁴ And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light.

¹⁵ Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.

6. II Thess. 2:1-12 Paul speaks of a future day of evil, when "the man of lawlessness" is revealed, whose working is in accordance with the activity of Satan, and is accompanied by power, signs and false wonders (2:9).

7. ITim. 3:6 Paul warns about laying hands too quickly on leaders, lest they become conceited and fall into the same condemnation incurred by the devil.

8. I Tim. 4:1 He warns of those who will fall away from the faith and pay attention to "deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons."

9. I Tim. 5:14-15 Paul urges younger widows to get married and not to become idle gossips and busybodies. This sounds very "human," but Paul links it to satanic activity:

"Therefore, I want younger widows to get married, bear children, keep house, and give the enemy no occasion for reproach; for some have already turned aside to follow Satan"

Imagine this. Paul refers to gossiping as turning aside to follow Satan. Gossip to be satanic?

10. James 4:1-3 James condemns the quarrels and strife which were taking place among the saints. He first links such sins to the pursuit of fleshly pleasures.

James 4:3-4 He indicates that such sin is rebellion against God which grieves His Holy Spirit.

Next, James links quarrelling and strife with Satan: James 4:6-7 But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, "God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

11. Peter learned about Satan the hard way.

Matt. 16:21-23 From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day. ²² Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!"

²³ But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense (stumbling block) to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men."

Luke 22:31 And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift *you* as wheat.

We find Peter warning others of the threat which Satan poses as our adversary.

His warning comes in the context of leadership and of submission.

I Pet. 5:1-7 Be clothed with humility for God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.
I Peter 5:8-9 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.

12. In the letters to the seven churches, recorded in Revelation 2 and 3, the Lord Jesus frequently mentions Satan as the source of temptation and trials in the church.

Rev. 2:9 I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and *I know* the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but *are* a synagogue of Satan.

Rev. 2:13 I know your works, and where you dwell, where Satan's throne is. And you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days in which Antipas *was* My faithful martyr, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.

Rev. 2:24 "Now to you I say, and to the rest in Thyatira, as many as do not have this doctrine, who have not known the depths of Satan, as they say, I will put on you no other burden.

Rev. 3:9 Indeed I will make *those* of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie—indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you.

Truth: Satan is the arch-enemy of the church. He is ever seeking to cause the saints to stumble and attempting to thwart the plans and purposes of God for His church.

The Bible repeatedly makes it clear that demonic forces have a strong influence over the material world. The demons provide the motivation and humans act on that impulse.

The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) has become the most powerful religious terrorist group in modern history. Like locusts invading a field, the single focus of ISIS is to consume everything before it.

Anyone that ISIS views as an enemy faces summary executions. This militant organization has proven it will even kill fellow Muslims who fail to adhere to its version of Islam. ISIS has been most vicious in targeting Iraqi Christians and members of the Yazidi religious sect. Some 700,000 Yazidis are believed to have been displaced.

The barbarity of ISIS is a throwback to the carnage of medieval times. They have hanged children and placed their heads on posts, abducted young boys forcing them to fight, and girls are being used as sex slaves.

What makes me wonder if these people are part of the human race is the glee they have in showing their genocidal acts. They use social media sites to post endless streams of photos and videos of themselves brutalizing their innocent victims.

The situation in Iraq brings to mind the Rwandan Genocide, and a comment made by a missionary to that nation which was quoted in TIME magazine:

"There are no demons in hell. They are all in Rwanda." (Actually, there are no demons in hell.) The statement is profound in describing the extent at which forces of darkness had taken over that nation.

In 1994 for approximately 100 days, demonic insanity had Rwanda in its grip. The Hutu tribe suddenly began killing members of the smaller Tutsi tribe. During this time of madness, an estimated 500,000-1,000,000 Rwandans were slaughtered, constituting as much as 20% of the country's total population. Most of the Tutsis were hacked to death with machetes.

Even today, people marvel at how quickly the carnage swept over Rwanda. Just like the genocides carried out by Nazi Germany and the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia, the global community was left wondering how people could stoop to this level of cruelty.

Demonic activity is like a drug addiction. Once demons are allowed to take over, they become very difficult to resist. The ability of 300 fighters to defeat 10,000 Iraqi soldiers has all the markings of demonic empowerment. The mass confusion in Iraq's capital is another indication that fallen angels are working on the side of ISIS.

Iraq is a venue for flare-ups of demonic driven despotism. The area has long been a hotbed of underworld activity. Babylon was the fountainhead of all Luciferian and pagan religions. The Prince of Persia was a demon so mighty, he was able to withstand the archangel Michael for twenty-one days.

Somewhere along the Euphrates river are bound four demons who are so powerfully evil they will kill 1/3 of the world's population when they are released.

Rev. 9:13-15 "And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, 'Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates.'

And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men."

As we get closer to the Tribulation hour, we're likely to see more situations where it appears that all the demons have gathered together in one place for a campaign of devastation and destruction. Of course, once the Rapture takes place and the restraining power of the church is lifted, the entire world will look like Iraq.

Rev. 16:13-14 "And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty."

13. The remainder of the Book of Revelation (chapters 12 & 20) describes the coming final conflict with Satan, and his ultimate defeat. Hallelujah!!