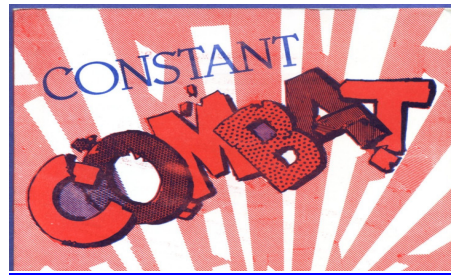


CONSTANT COMBAT - PART 2



PART TWO

KNOW YOUR ENEMY!

IN spiritual warfare, we must first know God, and recognise the fact that God's strategy always uses spiritual principles and NEVER carnal methods. And as believers are part of the Kingdom of God, they must know and practice the principles of the Kingdom.

Secondly, you will agree - it's good strategy to know your enemy. It is absolutely essential that we know who our enemy is, and what his plans and ways of working are.

As we have authority to withstand and resist the activity of the enemy, let us do so right now, as we turn to this subject which deals with that enemy.

“Heavenly Father, we come in the authority of the Name of Y'shua the Messiah, and we proclaim His victory, for Y'shua died on the cross, breaking the chains of captivity, and setting captives free. We proclaim His resurrection from the tomb; and His ascension to the Throne of God. And in the authority of the Name of the victorious Messiah, we resist and take a firm stand against the activity of “the strong man” who would seek to disturb or hinder our learning of this lesson. We deliberately take the helmet of salvation to protect our minds where Satan would seek to lodge doubts and thoughts and build strongholds. We take Your victory Master, as we study this subject, and we trust You to enable us to clearly grasp the lessons You want us to know. We pray in the authority of the mighty Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Y'shua the Messiah.” Amen.

IDENTIFY YOUR ENEMY CORRECTLY

If I ask you, “Who is the enemy?” you immediately say, “Why! Satan, the Devil.” Yes, you know that very well. But when it comes to practical living, and I ask, “Who is your enemy?” you might say, “It's my neighbour.” Who is your enemy? “It's my brother, it's that person in my work place.” This is one of Satan's methods to get our eyes off the real enemy and onto others.

It is a fact, SATAN is our enemy, not people. Tragically, however, we sometimes think of Satan as more of a doctrine than a reality. As good evangelical Christians, we major on Bible doctrine. And often we get bogged down with doctrine. For example, the Holy Spirit. What is He? He is a Doctrine! Oh no! He is not a doctrine! He is God, and the spirit and power of God.

Satan is not an imagination; he is not a theory; he is not a doctrine. Yes, you may have doctrine about Satan, but Satan is a reality. The world mostly treats the devil as a myth. And unless we are careful, we also could be inclined to treat him so. Yes, we know he is the devil, but aren't we very vague about his activity?

In Ephesians we have three references to Satan. "The prince of the power of the air" (2:2), "The devil" (4:27), "The evil one" (6:16); and in chapter 6 we are warned also of spiritual powers that contest our spiritual walk; very powerful forces of evil.

"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Master, and in the strength of His power. Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes *and strategies* of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the **principalities**, **against authorities**, against the **world-rulers of the darkness** of this age, against the **spiritual forces of evil** in the heavenly *places*." (Ephesians 6:10-12)

A vast unseen regime of evil is our enemy. We have not chosen this enemy, but as we are subjects of, and involved in the Kingdom of God, we will definitely attract the attention of the evil powers. Satan has declared war on the saints, on all believers. So reader, you must learn what we're talking about in this book.

THE SPIRIT REALM

Don't think of Satan and demonic forces as spooks floating in the air somewhere. They are very real beings. And if God opened our eyes for a moment to look into the spirit realm, we would be amazed at the spiritual beings about us.

The unseen spiritual realm is very real indeed. That realm includes, of course, both angelic beings and demonic beings.

We are told of **ministering spirits**, sent to help those who belong to the Master. There **are** guardian angels. We do not pray to, or communicate with them, but they are unseen co-workers of the LORD who come to the aid of His people.

"Bless YHWH, you His angels, mighty in strength, who perform His word, obeying the voice of His word!" (Psalm 103:20)

"Are not all *the angels* ministering spirits, sent out to render service *and* to assist those who are to inherit salvation?" (Hebrews 1:14)

The **demonic spirits** oppose the work of God, and aid the work of Satan in bringing "many sons" to **ruin**.

Communication with evil spirits is forbidden (Deut. 18:10), but that is exactly what happens in the world of the occult, through Transcendental Meditation, telepathy, necromancy, channeling, hypnosis, tarot cards, ouija boards and the like.

Reader, we are not seeking to **major** on Satan and his forces, but we dare not **ignore** them. We have to face the reality. You know very well that Satan has created havoc on the earth. Everywhere he has set up mighty strongholds. Sometimes his schemes are very subtle; at other times they are very blatant. It is clear that the evil one uses every devious device, and that our ignorance or wanton refusal to understand his activity, opens the door to, or aids, Satan's destructive activities.

Is Satan looking over your shoulder right now? Not necessarily. Satan is not omnipresent. He cannot look over every person's shoulder at the same time. But evidently he does have at least one delegated demon, assigned to your defeat. Ephesians 6:12 shows that there are great forces of spiritual wickedness. Together they are a very powerful enemy. Such evil beings contest our spiritual walk, and therefore, wherever or whenever their activity is discerned, they must be resisted in the Name of Jesus.

THE ORIGIN OF EVIL

The origin and fall of Satan, the demonic commander-in-chief, we find in the Old Testament, in Isaiah 14 and in Ezekiel 28. These two passages give us a clue as to the origin of sin. Some people object, saying that Isaiah 24 is simply speaking about the King of Babylon. But in Scripture, there are many passages which have two fulfillments or double applications. Isaiah 14 does refer to the King of Babylon; but there is more in the passage than a message about that King.

“How you have fallen from heaven, O **Helel** (Shining One, *Lucifer*), son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the ground - you who have ruined the nations - you who said in your heart, 'I will ascend into *the highest* heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit *enthroned* on the mount of assembly on the utmost heights of the north. I will ascend higher than the clouds; I will be like the Most High'.” (Isaiah 14:12-14)

More than the King of Babylon, the reference here is to Satan, the first one who sought to raise himself to the level of the LORD God. **Helel** was created as a high and beautiful angel, (evidently an archangel), and was called the “Star of the Morning.” (Lucifer is not in the Hebrew text; it was a name commonly used in the English world, in early times.)

We are told of other archangels in Scripture; **Gabriel**, the messenger of God (Luke 1:26) and **Michael**, the warring angel (Jude 9). Some have suggested that **Helel**, in his original state, was in charge of the music and the worship of God. There is no proof verse to support that, but Isaiah 14:11 may suggest it. Music is a very beautiful creation of God. God has created the eardrums; He has created the voice box, and the ability to differentiate between the tones; He has given us ability to appreciate rhythm and harmony. God has created music in harmony, melody and beauty; but Satan has distorted music, as is very evident in the world today.

In Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28, we have the origin of sin. I believe that sin began with a simply thought; and when you analyse it, nearly every sin begins with thought.

Ezekiel 28:12-17 is addressed to the King of Tyre, but again, the full description refers to someone other than that king.

"Son of man, take up a lament concerning the king of Tyre and say to him, 'This is what the Sovereign Master, YHWH, says *to you*:

“You were the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone adorned you: the ruby, topaz, and diamond; beryl, onyx, and jasper; sapphire, turquoise, and emerald; and *with* gold, the workmanship of your settings and mountings (*or* engravings) was prepared for you on the day you were created.

(The Hebrew meaning of the last part of that verse is uncertain. Older translations render it as: “The workmanship of your tambourines and flutes was in you. They were prepared for you on the day you were created.”)

“You were anointed as a guardian cherub (angel), and I placed you there. You were on the holy mount of God. You walked around in the midst of the fiery stones. You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created until wickedness was found in you.’

“By the abundance of your trade you were internally filled with violence, and you sinned; therefore I have cast you as profane from the mountain of God. And I have destroyed you, **O covering cherub**.

“From the midst of the stones of fire, your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom by reason of your splendor. I cast you to the ground; I put you before kings, that they may see you.” ” (Ezekiel 28:12-17)

The origin of sin began with thought in Lucifer’s mind. It developed from a seed of pride and grew into a tree of envy, egoism, rebellion, violence and depravity. Wisdom was rejected and the knowledge of evil was embraced. Divine principles were repudiated and evil methods adopted.

Satan’s rebellion influenced others to forsake their state of innocence, privilege and responsibility, and thus mutiny spread in much of the angelic realm. Later, in the Garden of Eden, the human race became infected, and evil, which insinuated itself into the minds of all men, produced a decadent landslide victory for Helel (Satan).

RIGHT EVALUATION OF THE ENEMY

My reader, we must have a right evaluation of Satan, even as we must have a right evaluation of our King and of our Kingdom. Don’t under-estimate Satan. He is totally evil, even though some people would put in a good word for him. Some would say he is not as bad as we try to make out. But he is totally evil. From the very first thought of pride, which expanded and led to rebellion in the angelic forces and then in the human race, Satan has led the way, step by step, to total depravity.

You might have heard about the Christian lady who would always give good compliments to everybody. She lived by the Word of God, and would never say

anything bad about anyone. Somebody said to the lady, “I think you would even give a good word about the devil?” She said, “Well ... you have to admire his persistence.”

Yes, he is persistent, but totally evil. Don't ever forget it!

UNDERSTANDING SATANIC ADMINISTRATION

Satanic forces are organised, and they work in a very governmental type of way. Satan's world-forces are more organised than the best army in the world. **SATAN** is the chief of the evil hosts. Under him, there are **RULERS**. These are very intelligent demonic beings. Some evil spirits are much higher than others. There are various categories or levels of demons. Some of these evil creatures are already in chains of darkness (Jude 6), but it's those who are still operating in the realm of men, that we confront.

Then there are **PRINCIPALITIES and POWERS** - demonic princes in charge of areas, communities and people groups. Under the authority of Satan, they form a governmental structure.

In the book of Daniel we read about the angel sent to help Daniel, and of how the Prince of Persia resisted him for 21 days, until Michael came to help the angel (Daniel 10:13). This is not speaking about a human ruler of Persia, but the demonic power in charge of that country. This passage suggests that Satan deposes powerful demonic beings, and places them over each country. And not only over countries, but over various areas.

Satan is not short of demons, and as commander, he places demons over various communities and people groups. He does not work in a haphazard way. He is not just a force, but an intelligent, experienced evil being with very real evil plans.

Sometimes it is possible to discern the predominant evil spirit over a certain area. It might be a spirit of murder. For example, we are aware of the great number of murders in Bihar, North India. There could be a demonic influence of murder over that area. There are groupings of people where a predominant immoral spirit is at work, such as the red-light area of Bombay. Some cities are noted for the spirit of gambling, or a spirit of perversion in the area. Evil is not happening by chance. It is planned and stimulated by powers of darkness, and we need to recognise these evil powers because we must resist and fight against them.

THE GOALS OF SATAN

Satan poses as the Source of the universe. It is, of course, Jesus Christ, who is the genuine Source - the Creator, the Source of all that is good, light and holy. But Satan claims to be the true God. In the world, it is now quite common to hear the expression “the force”; and it refers to Satan. He is a **FORCE**, but he is not the **SOURCE**. It is incredible, but he has succeeded in convincing many of his claims! In so doing, he has three priorities:

1. He seeks total **allegiance**. He succeeded early in gaining the allegiance of perhaps one third of the angels (Rev. 12:4 suggests this). Now Satan claims the majority allegiance of mankind.

2. He seeks **worship**. He says, “Because I am God, I am worthy of worship.” And so, whether directly or indirectly, Satan demands worship.
3. Behind this masquerade and deceit, Satan seeks to destroy everything that is of God. He seeks to **destroy** the truth, all righteousness, love and light. Thus he aims at frustrating the success of the Kingdom of God. His plans are **TOTALLY** evil. He does not possess one iota of love - not even for his own most devout followers.

In Satanist groups around the world today, it is quite common for somebody to present his small finger, to prove his dedication to Satan. A member will come forward and put his little finger on the altar and have it chopped off. The Satanists, I've heard, will chew on that finger as a form of communion with Satan. The Satanist movement is on the increase today, and it is very highly organised, wealthy and thoroughly evil.

THE STRATEGIES OF SATAN

In Ephesians 6:11 we read about the schemes of the devil, and we are told to take the full armour of God that we might be able to **STAND** against these schemes. If we have no idea of his schemes and strategies, how can we stand against them?

Satan has two basic strategies:

- A. **To build strongholds of evil.**
- B. **To break down the walls of Christian testimony.**

In 2 Corinthians also, Paul talks about our warfare and weapons:

“For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal *and* physical, but mighty in God for overthrowing **strongholds**, *for refuting* arguments and casting down every proud *and* lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and *for* capturing every thought, *and* bringing it into obedience to the Messiah.” (2 Corinthians 10:4-5)

These are fortresses that Satan has built. There are all types of strongholds. We say, “Oh, communism is a terrible stronghold.” Yes, atheism is a stronghold of Satan. But we can look around and find a thousand different types of strongholds - areas over which Satan has been able to gain control. It may be alcohol, immorality, pride, fear, bitterness, false doctrine, or a spirit of revenge.

Satan has a thousand ways of bringing saints down. **He is a master strategist**. You may say, “If that is so, if Satan is so powerful, then I have no hope in the world!” You're wrong again! I know it sounds scary, but that's why I emphasize, you must **KNOW YOUR GOD**, and you must **KNOW YOURSELF**, your **AUTHORITY**, your **POSITION IN CHRIST**, and **KNOW** your **WEAPONS** and how to use them.

Satan causes havoc at times, but He cannot destroy believers, because they are in the hands of the Lord. He can hinder us, he can disturb us, he can harass, he can discourage us, he can cause us to fall, he can get us to put our weapons down, he can make us ineffective, but he can't **DESTROY** us; because we are kept by the hands of YHWH, the Almighty.

But it is tragic that many believers are out of action, even if it may be temporarily. Satan encourages our pride, for example, so that we may want to jump on every platform. And then pride helps to bring us down. For this reason, the LORD often puts a thorn in our flesh. If we truly realised what we are, and just how vulnerable we are, there would be little place for pride.

THIRTEEN SATANIC METHODS

Some of Satan's well-proven methods are:

1. **STIMULATE** forces that are in conflict with God; every evil thing; anything that is opposed to God.
2. **PROMOTE** every type of EVIL HABIT and VICE, and then **INFILTRATE** the habits to build them into demonic strongholds. In these days, we are very much aware of the tremendous vices that are at work. We see it for example, in the DRUG ADDICTION problem that is striking our nations. You say, "That is the work of the Mafia." But who do you think controls the Mafia?

It's Satan and the evil powers that have been deputed to work in the Mafia.

3. **AROUSE PASSION** and **LUST** to build strongholds. Satan promotes pornography, for example. He uses every technology that is available, to fulfil his plans. TV, VIDEOS and INTERNET in themselves may be good, but they are undoubtedly being used by Satan to promote evil vices. And I would say, if you bring a TV into your home, you are inviting Satan into your home, too. Of course, when TV first came in, there were some Christians who used to call it "THE DEVIL'S VISION." In those days, TV was comparatively harmless; but now things have changed. Satan has filled our eyes, so that we even applaud HIS vision. TV doesn't need to be 100% depraved to fulfil the devil's vision. 1% is enough. It's the work of Satan - to promote evil by whatever means.
4. **DIVIDE AND RULE**. We have heard the slogan before, and we know it has been a very successful strategy. Divide and rule; play people against people, nation against nation; promote wars, armaments buildup; get people fighting each other; kill them off, destroy. Destroy sums up Satan's intention! And in the church also, Satan comes in to divide and to destroy.
5. **PROMOTE COUNTERFEITS**. This is a time-proven strategy which the deceiver has used right down through the centuries. For example, God placed the stars in the sky as signs, but very early Satan produced a counterfeit called ASTROLOGY. In religion, we see Satan's counterfeits everywhere. A counterfeit does not have to be far removed from the truth. The greatest counterfeits are those very close to the reality.
6. **CREATE FEAR and SCARE TACTICS**. This the devil does through setting up circumstances and by feeding our imaginations, suspicions and doubts. He can do this also by playing on worries or even dreams.
7. **INFILTRATE** society, particularly governmental structures, and use them as a means of control. Satan uses men - men influenced by demonic powers - to fill the positions. He will seek, of course, to remove a godly, or even a moderate person, in order to place one of his own men in the position.

8. **PLAY** upon people's ignorance. Keep the world from knowing there is a genuine solution to its needs - to its sin and guilt, desperation and loneliness. **PLAY** upon believers' ignorance - keep them ignorant to the Riches of Grace; to the Victory that is theirs in Christ; to the effective use of spiritual principles and weapons. Create a mental blockage when a believer starts to seriously read and study truth. By all means stop him putting it into practice.

9. **EXPLOIT BELIEVERS' WEAK AREAS.** With Christian testimony as a great hindrance to his goals, Satan has to come in to break down and to destroy "the walls of Zion." And for centuries, he has been developing a guided-missiles weapons system. With these weapons he exploits the weak points that every believer has. He will often exploit the most emotional areas.

In Ephesians 6:16, we are told to take up the **Shield of Faith** with which you will be able to **extinguish all the Flaming Missiles** of the evil one.

My reader! Look! Satan is not playing a game of darts, a barely dangerous little game. This is deadly war, and he uses "**flaming missiles.**" In modern terms you could call them **guided missiles.** You are aware of our modern weaponry - missiles which can be fired thousands of miles to hit targets with pin-point accuracy. Satan uses guided missiles - means and methods - to strike at individuals and ministries. He uses all types of missiles as part of his scheme to hinder the gospel. Whenever a group decides to take some action to spread the gospel, immediately Satan sets up a strategy to bring it down. He raises obstacle after obstacle - some are temporary obstacles, but tragically they can be very effective in hindering the work.

Here our essential weapon is **faith.** But the tragic part is that so often, as believers, as a church, we don't expect the attacks, and are not on the alert. We must always be on guard, because Satan has a strategy to knock us out, to make us ineffective, to put us out of God's service, or to bring us into a position where we are of no use to God.

Every young man who sets out to preach the gospel; every parent who seeks to train his children in the ways of the Lord; every Christian businessman who seeks to honor the Lord; every believer who would live godly, has to be on the alert. If you look through the Scriptures, you will see Satan's successful strategy in disabling godly people, one after the other. Some were defeated and ruined. Others triumphed through faith.

LUST, PRIDE and the **LOVE OF MONEY** are three sins which Satan stimulates so successfully. How many believers have started well in their Christian life and ended up in ruins. Sometimes they have been so sidetracked by satanic schemes, that they have been put on the shelf, by God, later on in their lives.

10. **ENCOURAGE CARNAL REACTIONS.** Sometimes it is a seemingly little thing that Satan successfully uses to stimulate carnal reaction. Satan encourages lies and dishonesty. A little financial pressure - and instead of reacting and resorting to spiritual methods, the believer gives way to carnal reaction.

A little conflict breaks out between two brothers, and instead of practising spiritual reaction, they resort to carnal action. They divide and fight. Satan builds

up the strongholds of **BITTERNESS** within the family and within the church. How sad to see one believer come in and go out via the front door, and another believer via the side door - because neither want to talk to each other.

Get Christians **CRITICISING** each other, and you will soon get the victory over them.

11. **GET BELIEVERS' EYES OFF THEIR MASTER.** Like Peter walking on the water, believers begin to sink when they turn their eyes from the Saviour, and focus on the winds and waves. So Satan creates a nest of troubles, and whips up waves of turbulence and winds of opposition, calculated to demand the believer's attention. "Look here - keep your eyes on your problems!"

A pre-occupation with problems can be built into a stronghold in the mind. It can keep the believer from praising the Lord, and can keep him from fulfilling the work he is called to do. We should not have a careless attitude regarding problems, but after bringing the problems to our Father, and taking authority over them in the Name of Jesus, we must leave them with Him, and press on.

12. **CONFUSE AND GET BELIEVERS SHOOTING EACH OTHER.** What a strategy for satanic victory! Get Christians shooting each other through self-righteous invectiveness. Criticism and gossip are destructive, and are very successful weapons in the devil's hand. Satan puts a sword into our mouths. He turns our tongues into a sword of evil, a sword of slander, a sword of anger and hatred, so that we can destroy ourselves. Do you lend your tongue to Satan? God forbid!

You know, as James says, no man can control the tongue. And you only have ONE tongue. Yes, you have two ears but one tongue, and either it is used as a sword of the Spirit of God, or it is used as a sword of Satan. And if you permit him, Satan will surely manipulate it. Slander, criticism and evil talk about other believers, is an expression of our own ego, of our own pride; "I thank You, Oh God, that I am not like **that** person."

13. Another strategy is to **MAKE BELIEVERS FEEL GUILTY.** "Friends, Romans, Christians, lend me your ears." And we say, "Yes, sir!" Then Satan speaks to us and accuses us. And we buy it! Oh! We are all aware of where we came from - we were all once in the pit of iniquity; but the Master has raised us up, cleansed us by His precious blood. Even after that we have had falls, but were restored. Even after that, we are not perfect, so the accuser of believers comes and says, "You low-down, rotten Christian. What's all this play-acting you're into? Look at yourself! How can you call **YOURSELF** a Christian? You are not worthy of the name of Jesus! I tell you what - you had better give up, right now! You haven't got a hope in the world. What can you do? How can you succeed? You're too weak. Don't fool yourself! Give up! Just enjoy the time!"

These are Satan's strategic suggestions and accusations to bring about the defeat of Christians. But praise God, we are not left defenceless.

We will deal more fully with our weapons in our last chapter, but for now, let this truth be impressed on our minds! Our weapons are not of the flesh! They are never, never fleshly weapons. Satan uses every carnal evil weapon, but God **never**

does! And the believer must **never** use fleshly weapons. I emphasize this right now, because you may need to remember this fact even before you get around to reading the last chapter. It's a tragedy when Christians resort to carnal methods and to fleshly weapons. As a result, they forfeit victory, and are defeated.

THE BATTLE OF THE MIND

It is most important to recognise that Satan builds strongholds in people's **minds**. Don't think that strongholds are merely communism, gambling dens and the red-light areas. No! The strongholds that Satan builds are in the mind. The mind - your mind - is the basic arena of contest. Whoever controls your mind, controls you.

If you come up against an ideology that's opposed to the Gospel, it is not a matter of arguing to convince your opponent. Intellectualism is not the arena; the arena is the mind where decisions are made, where Satan pollutes the thinking processes, warps the decision-making capacity, and builds radical patterns of behaviour. The battle is whether a person will overcome the suggestions of Satan, by the grace of YHWH, and break down the evil influence with the weapons God has provided. The arena is the mind and our mind is going to be conquered by Satan and the world, or by Y'shua and His Word. There's no neutral mind. If your mind is not going to be influenced by the Word of God, it certainly will be by the World. Don't give the world a toehold in your mind.

If our country has an outside enemy, that enemy will first seek to get a toehold in our territory, and then from the toehold, he will encroach, expand, and build a stronghold. And this is what Satan does in our mind, for our mind is our own territory.

Building a stronghold is a process. First Satan puts a thought into the mind, and then, unless we are alert, and reject it, we begin to think on that thought. We ponder it, deliberate on the idea, then give way to extended thinking about the thoughts, until this leads to experimentation. From experimentation we go on to practice, and repeated practice leads to habit, and habits to strongholds.

A simple example: Here is a young boy. He sees other boys smoking. He says, "Hey look at that!" First just a thought, then he thinks, "That's pretty smart. Maybe I should try." So he thinks about it for some time. Should he, or shouldn't he? After a little more thinking about it, he feels he wants to be like other boys, who look so good with cigarette smoke puffing out of their mouths. Then the time comes for him to take his first smoke. He repeats the action until it becomes a habit. And soon, smoking becomes a stronghold, and the boy just cannot break it. Any cigarette smoker will tell you that that is how the process takes place. It is basically the same with any other habit or stronghold.

In several Scriptural passages we read of the mind and its importance. James says a double-minded man is unstable in all his ways (1:8). Doubled-mindedness like divided loyalty, is very dangerous, debilitating and hindering. Double-minded! You cannot serve God, and mammon. You cannot be in both camps at the same time. You cannot have dual citizenship - in the Kingdom of Light, and the Kingdom of Darkness. Doubled-mindedness leads to death - to the destruction of our own spiritual lives.

The power of choice is given to us as individuals. Don't try to blame anyone else. YOU have been given a power of choice. Will you or will you not? Will you choose the influence of the world, or will you choose the Word of God. It comes back to **your** choice! This is why the mind is the arena of contest. If you do not give your mind to God, then Satan will certainly insinuate himself into your thinking. And as Satan builds and maintains strongholds in your mind, he can bring you down, step by step, to ruin.

Look at Adolph Hitler. He was such a beautiful baby; you would never have imagined that Adolph Hitler would become the demoniac that he became. And it didn't happen in one day; it was step by step, from insinuation to foothold, to stronghold. And thus the depraved mind goes on and on, unless redeemed, to total depravity.

That's the condition of man as pictured in Romans chapter one. But later on in the same book, Paul speaking now in the context of the believer's battle against the sin nature, says:

“The mind of the flesh, *the carnal mind*, is hostile toward God; for it does not submit to the law of God, nor is it able to do so.” (Romans 8:7)

The “mind set on the flesh” will never promote the kingdom of God. It arouses the emotions, and activates a lifestyle that is opposed to the Spirit - it stimulates actions of the flesh, with a resultant deterioration of spiritual life. We are warned;

“Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh shall from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit shall from the Spirit reap eternal life.” (Galatians 6:7-8)

But Paul also says; “You however, are not in the flesh, *the sinful nature*, but you are in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. But if any one does not have the Spirit of the Messiah, he does not belong to Him.” (Romans 8:9)

It is essential to remember that the Spirit of God lives in EVERY true believer. And as we read in John's epistle:

“He who is in you, is greater than he who is in the world.” (1 John 4:4)

The Spirit of God residing in our spirits, is the power of God within us, and it is He who translates the Victory of Christ into our experience.

Our mind must be brought under the Spirit's control. It needs to be **RENEWED**; it needs to be **RE-SENSITISED**. Our conscience needs to be re-sensitised, and that can only be done through the Word of God applied by the Holy Spirit. The Word of God is the only standard in this world that really shows us what is right, and what is wrong, and that has the power to change behaviour - because it has power to **RENEW THE MIND**.

The renewed mind is progressively, the mind of Christ (Philippians 2:5-8). And in Romans 12:2, Paul tells us of a transformation that comes through the renewing of the mind. It is this transformation that is needed in order to reject evil thoughts, and to think on that which is holy, lovely, pure and kind.

When our minds are renewed we will immediately recognise where evil thoughts come from, and we will deliberately reject them in the Name of Y'shua, the Lord Jesus Christ. Evil thoughts, if we continue to ponder and mediate upon them, become temptation. And so we must learn to **REJECT** wrong thoughts in the mighty Name of Y'shua.

If there are already satanic strongholds in our mind, if we are aware of anything in our mind and life which is not of God, and which is controlling us, then it has to be broken; and it can be broken! Go back to 2 Corinthians 10:4-5:

*“For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal *and* physical, but mighty in God for overthrowing strongholds, *for refuting* arguments and casting down every proud *and* lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and *for capturing* every thought, *and* bringing it into obedience to the Messiah.”*

This is the renewed mind.

SATAN IS A DEFEATED FOE

We must constantly recognise this fact, that Satan was defeated at Calvary, and he is being defeated today by believers who apply the authority of Christ in their lives.

“But,” you say, “at present Satan is very much alive and active.” And here I agree. He is. But he is defeated. He was defeated at the cross of Calvary, when the Messiah won a legal battle over him, and when the victorious Master made a public display of the forces of wickedness.

“But,” you insist, “if he is defeated, how can he be so active and cause so much havoc in the world? How is it that a defeated foe can do so much mischief?”

The answer is that **Satan is employed to the degree that people live selfishly and sinfully. He has access and is able to do only that which men permit him to do.**

Satan has a great claim over lost mankind. They are his subjects and his slaves, because they have employed him, and permitted him to become their taskmaster. So now they must do what he says.

But Satan has no right or claim upon a believer, because the believer is under a new Master – Y'shua. So why should we employ the old wicked master any longer? You may say, “But I cannot help myself!” Of course, you cannot help yourself! But you do have the power of God within you; the authority of God is available, and all the weapons that God has provided are yours to use. And remember, greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world. (1 John 4:4).

You are not fighting in your own power but in the power of the LORD. Don't think that you are weak; you must be **STRONG** in the LORD. The Bible doesn't say. Be **weak** in the Lord. It says, “Be **strong** in the LORD.” (Eph. 6:10). But again, yes again, I say, **Satan can only be defeated in your life by the use of SPIRITUAL WEAPONS and AUTHORITY.**

BIND THE ACTIVITY OF THE STRONG MAN!

Turn to the Master's teaching in Matthew 12:26-29:

“And if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then shall his kingdom stand? And if I by Beelzebul cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast them out? Consequently they shall be your judges. But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. Or how can anyone enter the strong man's house and carry off his property, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house.”

The Messiah is speaking here about binding the evil strong man. Y'shua Himself has broken the legal claim of the strong man (Satan) to hold sinners captive, by His victorious work on the cross at Calvary. And now He has given believers authority to share with Him in defeating the **ACTIVITY** of Satan - in our own lives, and wherever we discern his activity. The ultimate binding of Satan and all demonic powers will be fulfilled by the Lord in due time. Yes Satan is coming to his end. He will be bound for the 1,000 years, and eternally defeated when he is cast into the Lake of Fire, (see Revelation 20:1-10). But in the meantime, his activity must be resisted and defeated in our lives. We do not succeed by human force, by brute force, or by carnal weapons.

We contest demonic activity by the **AUTHORITY** of the Messiah. Again I repeat, that authority is the **NAME** of Y'shua, the Lord Jesus Christ, the **WORD OF GOD**, and the **BLOOD** of the Lamb, backed up by our own holy life, and the power of the Holy Spirit. They overcame the dragon by the blood of Lamb, and the word of their testimony and they did not love their lives even to death. (Revelation 12:11)

But never think of the Name of the Master, or the blood of the Lord Jesus, as a magic formula, as though it could produce magic. No! It is **NOT MAGIC**, it is His work and His **AUTHORITY**, and it must be applied by faith. Whenever a situation arises in your own life, or there's some evil activity or opposition to you, or to the gospel, come in the **NAME** of the Messiah, with absolute **FAITH** - knowing that you have been raised and seated in heavenly places - and **RESIST THAT ACTIVITY** of Satan. If there is something amiss going on in the family life, **RESIST IT** in the Name of the Lord Jesus; if it is something hindering the Gospel work, **CONTEST IT** in the Name of Y'shua.

If you are going to successfully fight the devil, **STAND FIRM AGAINST THE STRONG MAN**. You must **resist his activity in faith and with the Sword of the Spirit**. Stand up against his tactics, resist him, use the Sword of the Spirit, and stop his attacks in the Name of Y'shua the Messiah.

You need to come out boldly in doing this. In personal and group prayer, speak out openly and resist the activity of Satan. He is our enemy, a great enemy who could destroy the lot of us, if it were not for the blood of the Lamb, and the weapons and authority the Messiah has given to us. But by the grace of the Master, with those weapons and authority, we are victorious, because our Saviour is victorious. And we go on from **VICTORY to VICTORY**.

In part three we study about **Knowing Yourself**.

