

Spiritual Warfare *and the* Demonic!



Part 1 of 2

Christian *tradition* teaches that Satan was once a leading angel in the kingdom of heaven.

This is taken from Isaiah chapter 14.

Slide # 2

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 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 shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

Tradition teaches that Lucifer was an angel leading the choirs of heaven in worship of God.

The name Lucifer means ‘Bright shining star!’

Tradition also teaches us that Lucifer became proud and wanted the worship of God for himself.

God cannot share His glory with another, that’s why He is God – and so a battle resulted with around 1/3 of the angels being cast out of heaven – turning into demons as they did – and now inhabiting earth as their kingdom.

While this sounds good and appears to make sense, it is also wise to understand that the passage from Isaiah chapter 14 is actually talking about a specific (human) historical king of Babylon who wanted to exalt his kingdom above the rule and reign of God/Israel.

Scholars agree that Isaiah was actually drawing on an ancient Canaanite/Secular myth already in existence about an angelic revolt in heaven, and *attributing* this to the king of Babylon using hyperbole. ¹

Whether or not this myth was accurate and true is open to debate, but one thing that is not – is that the Bible makes it clear that demons are angels that have fallen from their rightful position in heaven – from creatures of light to gargoyles of darkness.

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2nd Peter 2:4

For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them into gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment;

Jude 6 also states:

And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day;

Although appearing to present a problem by describing these fallen angels as *kept in chains* (appearing to mean they are *not* free to roam the earth), however, we also read in 2nd Peter 2:9 that God also knows how to rescue godly people, and hold/guard/keep restrained the ungodly for punishment.

¹ Eclectic Notes of the Bible – Isaiah 14:12. On-Line Bible DVD

The language is almost identical, that of God restraining the demonic and the ungodly – while also permitting their activity to persist – literally on a leash – *on a chain*.

I like to think of it as the *demonic* being like a wild dog held on a leash!

(We will return to this helpful description later when we look at the power demons have to influence our lives!)

So – what we do know, is that demons are angels created by God and were originally good, but they sinned and became evil.

We don't really know *when* this rebellion took place, but it must have happened between the time when God completed His creation of the universe and pronounced it 'Very good!' and the temptation and fall of humanity in Genesis chapter three.

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Chief of demons:

The Hebrew (Old Testament) name given to the demonic leader is satan – which means *one who acts as an enemy*.

Satan is the one who opposes the plans and will of God on the earth.

The Greek (New Testament) name for satan is devil – meaning *one who accuses*.

The devil has many other names in Scripture, such as Tempter, Beelzebub (Lord of the maggots), Enemy, Evil One, Deceiver, Father of lies, Murderer, and Sinner.

All of these things express the *nature* of the devil – as *one who is evil*.

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The main purpose of satan is to deceive.

2nd Cor 11:14 Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light.

Revelations 12:9 The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray ,
20:8, When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison

8 and will go out to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth, 10 And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulphur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown

Let me repeat that.

The main purpose of satan is to deceive!

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Most Christians think the main purpose of satan
is to attack!

It is not.

It is to deceive!!!

In fact – the notion or words *spiritual attack* doesn't even appear in the entire New Testament – it's just not there! (Note: The NIV interprets 2nd Tim 4:18 as *attack* – but this is wrong. The original word is work or enterprise – *not* attack!)

Satan has also blinded the minds of unbelievers (Greek: απιστος *apistos* *ap'-is-tos*: NOT referring just to Non-Christians, but to those who profess Christ but still refuse to let go of darkness and replace it

with Light!) so that they cannot see the light of the gospel, or the glory of Christ who is the image of God. (2nd Cor 4:4)

So – in relation to this important point, satan often deceives or manipulated humans to act out his plans, and even his attacks upon Christians and righteousness.

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Satan *hinders* and opposes Christians in their service to God.

1 Thessalonians 2:18.

On this account we wanted to come to you—at least I Paul wanted again and again to do so—but Satan hindered us.

The Bible doesn't describe how satan hindered Paul on his mission, and it is unwise to speculate.

We do know that any hindrance Paul encountered towards the spread of the gospel, he *credited* to Satan.

This opposition came through human agents that were under the influence of satanic suggestion and manipulation.

However, he also credited God with supreme power and history has shown that the persecution of the Christians in the first centuries was used mightily of God to spread the gospel throughout the world.

If we were to credit satan with the storms Paul faced while travelling on a ship across the Mediterranean sea, we would also have to credit God with using that experience to evangelize and reach a whole new people group with the gospel. (Acts chapter 27)

In this way, even the oppression or hindrance of satan is subject to Romans 8:28.

God causes ALL THINGS to work together for the good of those who are called according to His ways...

Even the hindrances of satan.

I have thought and studied deep and wide on this topic, and have experienced many testimonies of satan's attack over the decades I have been in Christian leadership.

I would have to be honest, that most of the time the attacks people say are of the devil, actually have *nothing* to do with him.

'My car broke down, and it is an attack of the devil!'

'The wind blew over the tree in the back yard and it smashed my pergola, and satan is attacking me!'

Most of the time, the bad stuff that happens to us, is just the result of living in a fallen world.

One important question I have asked myself and others, is...

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..if satan and his angels have the power to alter creation at a molecular level?

It's actually a very sound and practical question.

And Biblically, the answer is that yes – satan can manipulate creation at a molecular level.

The plagues of Egypt are just one example.

The New Testament and Revelation talks about false prophets under the influence of satan performing many counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders – to deceive even the elect of God.

However, the Bible also teaches that satan can do nothing without first asking God's permission, and that our faith and Christian character is actually *strengthened* through these attacks, trials and tribulations!

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My personal view is that we should **not** credit satan with accidents or mishaps that happen to us – and that we should seek for the higher purposes of God within and through them.

The main way satan will harass a Christian is through people who are weak of mind and have allowed him to influence them.

People who lack self-awareness or spiritual discernment.

And I have to be honest with you – that I am *not* talking just about non-believers!

100% of the opposition I have faced in the last 10 years of fulltime Christian study and ministry has been through Christians.

However, there still are times when the attack of the enemy are very real.

I remember one day, around a decade ago when my wife's brother – who was a non-Christian – found himself on a plane bound for a mission trip in China.

We offered to look after their special needs son, little Ben.

The next night, all was well and we went to bed.

Around 11pm I was woken with a deep discernment that a demonic spirit was approaching our house, desiring to harm little Benny.

I lay there silently, praying in my mind for God's protection upon our house and everyone in it.

Suddenly Debbie sat bolt upright and shouted, 'What's happening! What's in our house!'

I assured her everything was okay, and she went back to sleep – while I prayed fervently!

The next morning, Debbie was speaking to her brother in China, who excitedly told her that the previous night, on the plane trip to China – he had given his life to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Debbie asked him what time this was.

It turned out to be 11pm our time – exactly when we experienced a backlash from the spiritual realm against our household – and little Benny.

Now, to be honest – I think that an experience like this would only happen about once in a life time for a normal Christian!

Thing is – that satan has no desire to hinder a Christian that is of no threat to him.

It is only when we step out and try to advance the kingdom of God that the enemy comes in like a flood.

And when the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him. Isaiah 59:19

Even in times like this, the enemy can be successfully resisted, and will flee from a Christian who does so! (James 4:7. Eph 4:27)

Satan can also be put to flight, but not on our own strength, and only on the strength of the Holy Spirit. (Rom 8:26. 1 Cor 3:16)

For all the power satan has, he is limited by God – as full expressed in the book and story of Job.

Remember the story of Job?

Satan had to first ask God for permission to harm Job.

Interesting, that this is echoed in the gospel of Luke where satan *asked* Jesus if he could sift Peter.

Luke 22:31 "Simon, Simon, Satan has *asked* to sift you as wheat.

The word *sift* does not mean *attack* – it means to test or deceive. (σινιαζω *siniazō sin-ee-ad'-zo* – Literally: testing and deceiving by an inward agitation to try one's faith to the verge of overthrow.)

So – what does this look like in reality?

It means recognising the way satan and his hosts attack us – that he uses human vessels who have allowed him to influence their minds.

Recognise that sometime when a person attacks you – it is nothing about the person, but the influence they have allowed upon their mind and attitude.

That's why we wrestle not against flesh and blood – but against principalities and powers!

Pray for yourself, pray God's covering and protection upon your loved ones.

Pray God's protection upon our city and nation.

But know also that prayer is only *part* of the equation.

If you really want to bind and loose satan's control over an area, you need to pray, but you need to also work at undoing the deception in the minds of those who have swallowed the deception.

You've heard the saying, all it takes for evil to prosper, is for good people to do nothing!

God calls some of us to pray, and others of us to correct speculations and every argument raised up against the knowledge of Christ.

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The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of this world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds (*λογισμος logismos – false assumptions and views about yourself, God and the world*). We demolish arguments and every pretension (*υψωμα hupsoma – incorrect thought processes*) that sets itself up against the knowledge

of God, and we take every thought captive to make it
obedient to Christ.
2nd Corinthians 10:4-5

If you are interested, I am happy to teach a whole message on this topic, about what true Spiritual Warfare is actually about!

Just be aware, that the devil does try to discourage us and block our progress as Christians.

Predominately he does this through trying to deceive us directly into our minds, or through other people who have allowed him to influence their thoughts and attitudes.

In fact, just as I wrote this very page – I was able to experience EXACTLY what I am teaching you about.

I was interrupted by a person who doesn't have good control of their mind.

You see, I have been really struggling with the workload and expectations placed upon me as a pastor.

People expect me to do everything, from changing the lightbulbs to raising the dead!

I am working this through with our elders, and working at how we can start getting people to take ownership for this church community, and stop expecting me to be responsible for everything.

When a person came to my office door – complaining that the vacuum cleaner didn't suck properly.

I suggested it might need emptying.

The person replied that emptying the vacuum cleaner was my responsibility to empty, as that is why I am paid to do.

Well- this person obviously didn't know that I own and collect firearms!!!!

But to be honest with you.

I recognised this for what it was, and said; "Thank you Lord – I must be doing something right to get that reaction!"

Those of us who are spiritual – are aware of the plans and procedures of the enemy! 1st Corinthians 14

But – here's the thing. Just because all elephants are animals, doesn't mean all animals are elephants!

Just because the enemy might influence a person to criticize or attack you – doesn't mean that everyone who criticizes or attacks you is influenced by the demonic!

Activity of demons:

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As satan's slaves, demons carry out his work on the earth – by all forms of temptation and deception.

Satan and his slaves can also inflict disease such as dumbness *inability to speak* (Mark 9:17) and deafness (Mark 9:25), as well as blindness (Matthew 12:22).

Satan can also cause convulsions (Luke 9:39), paralysis (Acts 8:7) and most commonly, opposition to the spiritual progress of God's people. (Ephesians 6:12).

However, here's the thing.

While all elephants are animals, not all animals are elephants!

Do you understand this?

While some incidents of *illness* in the Bible were credited to demonic activity, that doesn't mean that *all* illness is demonic.

By all means, pray for the healing of anyone who is sick – but not if they don't want you to!

I remember giving an alter-call one day, and having a man brought up the front in a wheel-chair for prayer.

It would be wrong to assume that he wanted prayer for healing.

So, I asked him – what would you like me to pray for you about?

He wanted prayer for his broken relationship with his father.

It is arrogant and presumptuous to think everyone wants you to pray for their healing.

It is equally presumptuous to think all sickness is demonic.

While it is true that God may choose to heal any person – or not to, there are some sicknesses that will not respond to medication or surgery.

But this still doesn't make them demonic!

I live with a chronic illness.

I cannot digest food properly.

I had major surgery around 13 years ago to reconstruct my stomach and oesophagus.

My illness got worse after surgery and does not respond very well to medication.

I have suffered so much spiritual abuse and toxic religion from Christians that I could preach a whole sermon about it!

I **don't** have a demon of bitterness or unforgiveness!!!!

I am **not** under a generational curse of Jezebel!!!!

If you really want to get a balanced to a doctrine of healing or deliverance, speak to someone who lives with a chronic or terminal illness!

Come and speak to me.

One thing I will tell you, is that

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....One of the most mature things you can learn to do – when reading the Bible and applying it to contemporary life – is to make sure you don't turn what is *descriptive* of an event, situation or condition in the Bible – and turn it into a

prescription to be followed in every other similar event, situation or condition today.

That's just sick thinking, bad theology and even worse exegesis!

Important areas to understand:

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1. The difference between the effects of sin on our lives – opposed to the personal oppression of the demonic realm.

Bad things happen to good people – that's just the effects of living in a fallen world that groans for the day of redemption! (Romans chapter 8.)

If we were to give it a percentage, I'd have to say that around 99.9% of what happens to us in daily life is *not* an attack of the devil at all –

...it's just what happens to us in daily life!

And, if we are to agree with the book of Job – this .1% can only happen to us if God allows it.

However, that doesn't mean we are to glibly accept every bad thing that happens to us as God's will – that's fatalism and wrong.

We are still to *resist* the works of the devil.

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2. Satan IS an angel, a disembodied spirit with a will and a purpose (To trick and deceive God's kids, and to get them to loose faith in the church and its leaders.)

Satan is not omnipresent, meaning he can only be in one place at one time. However, his slaves also roam the earth and do his bidding.

Satan or his slaves *can* and at times *do* physically impact the lives of God's kids.

However, the gospels make it clear that satan has the ability to speak into people's minds and thoughts.

That is why our *minds* must be under our control – as well as our *emotions*.

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3. Satan and his slaves pick on innocent kids at their most vulnerable and weak – causing them to *misinterpret* the world, their identity and their God.

Children are wet cement! They are also good receptors of what happens around them, but bad interpreters.

Satan can whisper into the minds of kids just as he can the minds of adults.

Whose job is it to counter these lies???

Many adults are still living with distorted and a child's interpretation of life. (We will look at the deception of satan a bit later.)

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4. When someone has a fascination with the demonic or blaming the devil for the bad things or sickness in their lives, at its worse it is transference of an authority figure who hurt/abused them – onto the devil, or at the other extreme simply a digestion of toxic religion and superstition.

Let it be said that superstition is rampant within the lives of many Christians, churches and ministries!

And why do people put up with this type of extreme brokenness or dysfunction from leaders of churches or ministries?

They do it because they are willing to *trade* or put up with the dysfunction this person or ministry lives by, for the sense of belonging, excitement or purpose they get from belonging to that ministry or church.

And that is why a cult *leader* can't exist without cult *followers*.

That's why many people live with the deep pain and dysfunction of an abusive relationship – because staying in the relationship meets *their other* needs, and they trade off these needs by putting up with the sin or brokenness of the leader, friend, spouse, employer or pastor.

Basically, choosing to live in darkness rather than in the Light.

Until – they wake up, desire truth and freedom, or the pain of staying in the situation is greater than the pain needed to leave or change – and then they take the easier way out – and leave or change!

When it comes to the attacks of the devil, of demonic oppression and possession – we need to understand that the works of the devil were totally disarmed at the cross!

Yes – he *can* still tempt us – but God in His grace and power *can* – and *will* cause even this to work together for our good if we continue to love Him. (Rom 8:28)

However, this presents a *challenge*, even a problem.

As my beautiful wife pointed out – how can the devil be completely disarmed, and yet still have power to influence and deceive us?

Surely that *doesn't* make sense!

Well – let me explain, as this is a point many Christians trip over and misunderstand.

In fact, it is summed up in a little phrase that goes like this:

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The war is over, but the *battle* continues!

This phrase will set you free and allow us understand how the war over sin and death has been won, but yet the battle continues, and why evil still haunts and affects us all.

One the one hand, we know that Christ is 'the only Ruler, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords (1 Timothy 6:15).

Power Point # 18

But for a time, until the 'Day of the Lord' is completed at the second coming, we must live under two kingdoms, the kingdom of Satan, and the kingdom of God.



Our situation is much like the Allies in World War II.

The decisive battle, that broke the back of the Nazi army, was fort and won by the Allies on June 6th 1944.

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This day is known as what?
D-Day. (Operation Overload.)



But even though the war was won, the battle continued for another eleven months until V-E Day (Victory in Europe), 8th May 1945, when Hitler committed suicide, and Germany surrendered.

The frightening thing about this, is that more lives were lost between D-Day and V-E Day, during this eleven month period, than during the entire WWII. The war had been won, but the battle continued!

Power Point # 20



For this world, the battle began in the garden of Eden, it was won on the Cross, and it will finish at the second coming of Christ.

For Christians, our D-Day was the first Easter 2000 years ago.

The Bible tells us in Col 2:15 that; **having disarmed the powers and authorities, Christ made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.**

That was the day of victory, D-Day for God's people!

But although the War is won, and Jesus is the victor, the battle continues, and our V-E-Day (Victory in Eternity!) will not happen until Christ's *second* coming.

Just as it was for World War II, with more casualties between D-Day and V-E-Day, so it is for Christians.

Between our D-Day when Jesus rose from the dead, and our V-E-Day when He returns, we will have battles and casualties, we will have sickness and violence – we will still be setting the captives free from prison camps and dark dungeons of despair and depression.

Just like when Jesus called Lazarus from the dead, calling him out of death and decay – he turned to those disciples around Him and said, 'Now *you* unbind him and *you* set him free!'

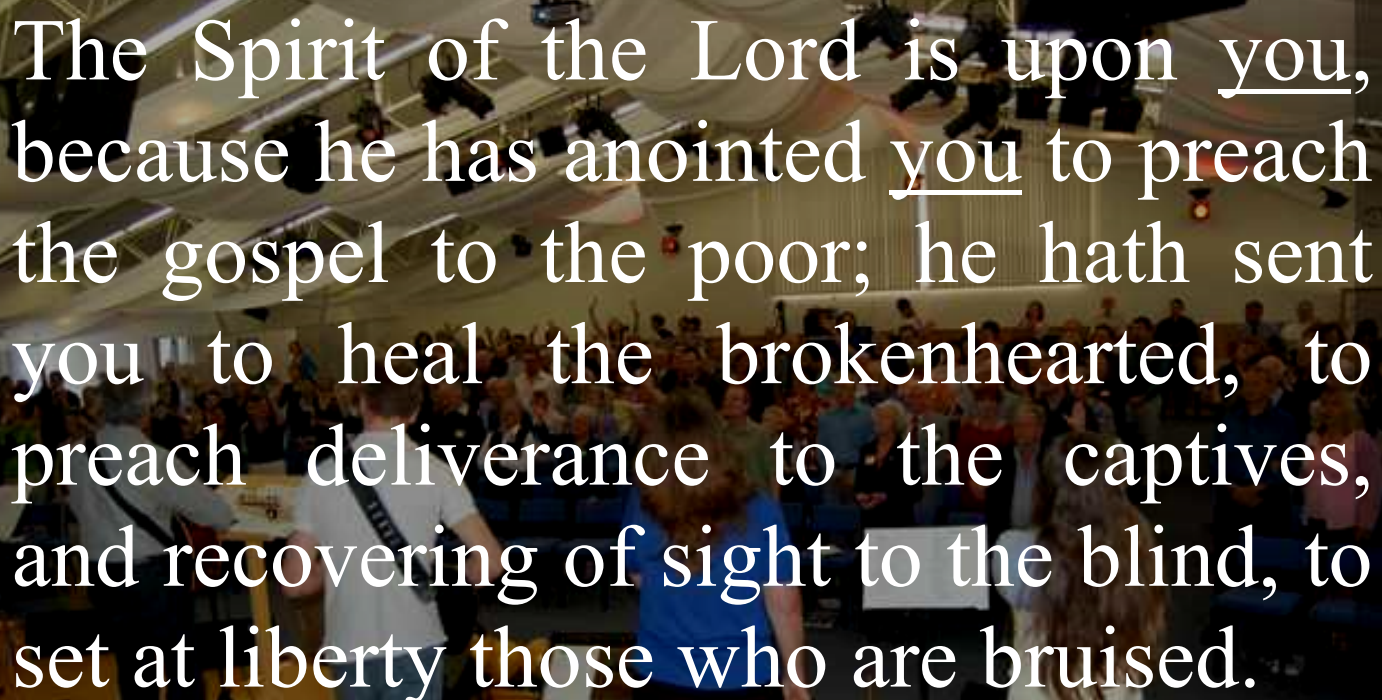
And each of us has a role to play in this, a task to complete in the current Kingdom of God. As a life-long follower of Christ, you are the *body* of Christ - you are also the *Bride* of Christ!

As pastors - our mission and job is to help prepare *you* to get *you* ready for the Bridegroom. I like to think of this being similar to *pre-marriage preparation* :-)

For us, that means that when we enter eternity and our work on earth is done, the Lord will ask of us - 'In what ways did your ministry, your teaching and your lives prepare My Bride for Me?'

Your task – is best described in the scripture verse below.

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The Spirit of the Lord is upon you, because he has anointed you to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent you to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are bruised.

Luke 4:18

As we come to a time of worship – it is tempting to allow our minds and attention to dwell upon the topic we have been studying.

The reality is, that the Bible teaches that to overcome evil – we must do *what*? We must do *good*! Romans 12:21

As Christians, we are at our best when we worship God – for only God is *truly good* – and we find our source of goodness *within* Him.

Let's allow this short video clip to encourage and inspire us to worship our loving heavenly Father this morning!

Slide # 22 – Video – Be still and know that I am God.