



A Defeated Foe

Recently, as I was studying the origin and operation of Satan, I was reminded of a line from a song I heard years ago. I can't really remember the entire song, but one line stands out graphically in my mind. The song says, "Me and the Devil had a tussle but I won." Well, there is only one reason we can expect victory in any contest with the Devil: Jesus defeated him through His death and Resurrection. With this knowledge, we can win every conflict and walk by faith in the light of Jesus' triumph.

IN THE BEGINNING

Satan was a spirit being created by God.¹ In the beginning, he was extremely wise, very beautiful and always upright in conduct. However, he chose to sin against God saying, "I will exalt my throne," and, "I will be like the most High."² God met his rebellion with divine authority, casting him to the ground. God DID NOT have a problem defeating Satan.

When Jesus died on the cross, he carried our sin and every consequence of sin, paying our debt

and defeating Satan. He died for us! He defeated Satan for us! After three days and nights in hell, he arose triumphant, and the Word of God records that He had spoiled principalities and powers.³ Although the word "spoiled" is foreign to us in this context, we can grasp the depth of its meaning by studying the translations of various Bible scholars.

Why are we wrestling against a defeated foe? ~

For instance, the New Living Translation writes that the evil rulers were disarmed. The Message Bible says they were stripped of their power.

In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus used a similar analogy. When discussing the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan, He noted that there was a strong man, guarding his palace, who would be overcome by someone stronger. The stronger man, an obvious reference to Jesus Himself, would take the armor of the weaker. Of course, the weaker one is Satan.⁴ This example from our Lord is captured by the apostle Paul when he said Satan was spoiled, disarmed, and stripped of power through Jesus death on the cross.⁵

Jesus's magnificent victory was for man's

benefit. Our omnipotent God ruled over Satan, casting him out of heaven because of His rebellion. Satan's plan to overthrow God was NOT a challenge to Almighty God. Yet, on earth he tempted Eve, and she and Adam yielded to his evil scheme. Then Satan, sin, and spiritual death became man's problem. A problem man could not solve until after the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It was the precious blood of Jesus that conquered Satan and set man free.

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. (1Pe 5:8-9)

WRESTLING WITH THE DEVIL

When the apostle Paul wrote to the church at Ephesus, he declared that they were wrestling against principalities, powers, rulers of darkness and wicked spirits in high places.⁶ This Word from the Lord might confuse us. Why are we wrestling against a defeated foe? The answer is quite simple. Satan has been defeated. He has not been eliminated.

Today, we are an occupational army, not a combative force. When World War II ended in Europe, the Potsdam Agreement called for the division of Germany into four zones. The original plan was for each nation to occupy their zone so that a militarized Germany could not re-emerge. With time, the fundamental aspects of this plan changed, but the overall objective remained the same. The military forces provided by these nations were not combative in nature. They were occupational forces.

Similarly, we are God's occupational army, enforcing the victory purchased by our Lord Jesus Christ. We are not trying to defeat Satan. He is a defeated foe. Germany was a defeated foe, and the military might in that nation worked to maintain the hard-fought victory.

Now, we are God's occupational army. We recognize Satan's deceptive tactics and stand against him as conquerors through our Lord Jesus Christ.

A ROARING LION

God's Word declares that Satan roams about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour.⁷ This means that he is looking for someone who can be deceived and devoured by his evil tactics. But, every man can overcome the onslaught of this defeated foe when he understands the authority given him by the Lord Jesus Christ.

When a male lion roars, he is defending his ownership of certain territories and his place in their social structure, called a pride. The lioness does most of the hunting, but notice, she does NOT roar when stalking prey. The roar of the lion is strictly territorial. The male lion, roaring mostly at night, is saying, "This is my land. This is my pride."

When Satan roars, he is attempting to deceive us, causing us to bow before him and surrender to his SUPPOSED authority. Authority he lost when he was disarmed by Jesus. But, we belong to God! We are sons of God who live and move and have our being in Him.⁸ We do not live in Satan's darkened kingdom.

Therefore, we boldly meet the roar of Satan with our confession of faith. We declare, "I am born of God! God lives in me and I am led of His Spirit. In Him, I am more than a conqueror." When we confidently confess God's mighty Word of Power, we overcome. We win because God our Father performs His Word in our lives. We are so grateful! Daily we give thanks to God who always causes us to triumph!⁹

¹Ez 28:13 ²Is 14:13-14 ³Col 2:15 ⁴Lk 11:21-22 ⁵Col 2:15
⁶Eph 6:12 ⁷1Pe 5:8 ⁸Act 17:28 ⁹2Co 2:14