***Victory in the Angelic Warfare

RV156-02***

We now begin a new section in Revelation 12:7-12. Our subject is "War in Heaven." This is segment number one.

**Saddam Hussein**

The news media yesterday reported that Saddam Hussein of Iraq has expressed his willingness to discuss the Kuwait invasion with the American secretary of state, James Baker. He is on his way to do just that. However, Hussein qualified his expression of willingness with the contingency that the discussion would also include a consideration of the Palestinian-Israeli problem. By that, he means the existence of the nation of Israel as a nation, and the presence of the Jews in territories lost in the defensive wars of the Jewish people. He wants these areas, like Jerusalem and the West Bank, to be returned, and his bringing this into the picture at this point indicates to us again that his ultimate concern and interest in the whole invasion of Kuwait, and the planned invasion of Saudi Arabia, was his hatred of the Jewish people. His ultimate goal was to do what the Arabs have wanted to do for so long – to get rid of the nation of Israel, and to destroy the Jewish people.

Saddam Hussein has built up this huge military force, and it is a huge one. He has superior, superb armaments. He has soldiers which have been tested and tempered in actual combat. The Americans have a volunteer army: one out of one hundred, if any, have ever been in a war situation, let alone in a combat situation. This formidable foe, had he played his cards right, so to speak, might have pulled it off. He might have put himself in a position where the nations of the world were in his hand. Had he taken Saudi Arabia, he would have controlled 50% of the oil, and the world would have been in his control. He could have freely moved against Israel.

It is no small thing that, when the American secretary of state comes to speak about the subject of getting out of Kuwait, Hussein has put on the table: "OK, but let's get rid of the Jews. Then I'll respond to your request."

This evil agent of Satan claims to be pursuing the will of God in his goal of removing the Jewish people from Palestine. So, once more, we see how hazardous is the continued existence of the nation Israel, and of the potential suffering of war that they face once more. Israel is not a secure nation. The Jews have a homeland, but it is not a certainty that they can retain it. It is very important that we understand that, and that we have that picture in our mind, because that's why the unbelievable will happen. That's why the Jews will make a treaty with the antichrist – a man that ordinarily they might have some great reservations about. But here's a man that will demonstrate that he can control the Arabs, and he can make possible the restoration of their religious ceremonies; their temple; and, the whole thing, and the Jews will go for it.

**Anti-Semitism**

The apostle John, in his vision in Revelation 12 that we've been looking at, sees the Jews as the objects of Satan's hatred from the time of Abraham. The evil and the destiny to the lake of fire brought on the human race by Satan was to be removed by the God-man (the Jew) Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus and the Jewish nation in time is to replace Satan in ruling the nations of the world, which is what Satan does now. When the kingdom of Jesus Christ is set up on this earth, Satan will be banished into the pit of the abyss for 1,000 years, and then removed into the lake of fire. He reads the Bible; he's a good student of Scripture; he knows prophecy; and, he knows the plan that God has outlined for him. He is doing everything in his power to frustrate this plan at some point in order to stay out of the imprisonment of the pit of the abyss during the millennium; and, of course, ultimately, to stay out of the lake of fire – hell itself.

Satan was, of course, not able to prevent the birth of Jesus Christ. He was not have been able to prevent the fulfillment of His mission of atonement on the cross. Therefore, he is facing the fact that he must destroy all genetic Jews in order to prevent the next event, the Millennial Kingdom of Christ, from being set up on this earth. If there are no living Jews descended from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, then there can't be any millennium, as God promised, for the Jewish people ruled over by David's greater son Jesus Christ.

**The Jews of the Tribulation**

The climax of Satan's anti-Semitism will be through the antichrist, and it will take place here at the mid-tribulation era, which is where we have arrived in our study. When the antichrist, in the mid-tribulation, breaks his treaty of support with the Israeli government, he will demand that the Jews worship him as God in their temple. Jesus predicted this event, and he warned the Jews who were alive in the mid-tribulation to flee immediately to a place of safety – a place of survival in the mountains. This will be the place where a million Jews will go for refuge, for that is apparently the number that will survive the persecution of the antichrist.

**Petra**

The place these Jews will go is probably to the ancient city of Petra, which means large rock. It is in southern Jordan, 50 miles south of the Dead Sea in the territory of ancient Edom. The Bible predicts that the antichrist will not control this particular territory. You read about that in Daniel 11:41. He will not control the territory that now constitutes Jordan. That was the ancient lands of Amman in the north, and of Moab and of Edom in the south. It's a desert area in Edom where the city of Petra is located. There are few roads, but a rugged mountain train. It is a dead volcano, and it is made up of rose-colored sandstone.

The only entrance into Petra is a narrow, winding, two-mile-long canyon with walls on each side that rise from 200 to 1,000 feet. Sometimes the canyon itself closes down to something like eight feet wide. It widens, and then it is small again. It is not a place in which an army can come charging through so easily. It is a highly defensible position. The thing is two miles long. When you get to the end of that two miles, you finally come to the last little break, and there what must have taken the breath away from the people who first walked in here. They began to see these structures that had been carved out – caverns for living spaces. It was a whole city structure that was suitable for thousands and thousands of people to live in. And they could walk out into an open area in the volcano of this rose-colored sandstone.

Within Petra are various structures which are carved from the sandstone. One of them was called the treasury building. It is 90 feet tall, and it actually served as a tomb for the kings. It took considerable skill and ability and capacity to carve something like this out of the sandstone, because you started with just a block, and it's there, and you're working around what is actually on site. They had, of course, a religious system there. There are still some ruins that are left of the Ad Deir temple areas, but it was a large structure indeed of itself. When the Romans had it, the Romans were big on athletic and games and contests of various kinds. So, they built a stadium which was capable of seating 3,000 people. You can go there today and see all this, including the seats of the stadium.

So, you know that this was a magnificent civilization, and certainly a magnificent structure. Once you're in it, you are secure. Undoubtedly, God is going to do something for the overhead protection of the people, but no one is going to come charging into this place with an army of any size. There's no way to get into it. So, this is probably the place where the Jews indeed are going to go for their security. I think it would be a fascinating place to visit. It's one of the places in the world I hope to see someday. That would be indeed a great inspirational educational trip in itself.

This place is easily large enough to house a million Jews, and we're told that God is going to supernaturally feed them for the three-and-a-half year period that they will be in his protective care there, just as He fed them in the wilderness for 40 years, during the Exodus generation.

**The Balfour Declaration**

The Jews of the modern world have sought safety, of course, in the homeland, in the Promised Land of Palestine. This effort, as we told you, was begun in 1897 with the World Zionist Organization under Theodore Herzl. The British government, in gratitude for the help of one of the Zionists in producing a substitute for producing explosives in World War I, signed what was called the Balfour Declaration on November 2nd, 1917, in which the British government expressed favor of establishing a homeland for the Jews in Palestine. This was later reinforced and reiterated in 1922 by the League of Nations, the forerunner of the present United Nations.

The Arabs, of course, objected vehemently, immediately, and they pressured the British in time to restrict the immigration of the Jews before World War II into Palestine. After World War I, the League of Nations placed Palestine under British supervision, called the British Mandate, and the British tried to keep peace between the Arabs and the Jews, but things only got worse. On November 19th, 1947 the United Nations voted to divide Palestine west of the Jordan River between the Arabs and the Jews, to form two countries with Jerusalem as an international city. It would have been a spotty, broken-up country.

The result after the war for independence was that the Arabs stayed in the West Bank, and Israel secured the rest. So, the intention of the United Nations was to settle this just by dividing the country. But it was not the kind of a division that anybody could defend once you had it. It had to be something that the Arabs would accept and that the Jews would accept. If anybody wanted to fight over it, they were in an impossible situation of trying to defend territory that was chopped up in this way.

**Israeli Independence**

On May 14th of 1948, the British left Palestine in disgust, and with great resentment toward the Jews, who had fought them, because the British had sided with the Arabs in keeping the Jews out of the land. Well, immediately on May 14th, 1948, when the British left, the Jews declared through their Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion, that the state of Israel was now in existence. On that same day, President Truman of the United States recognized the nation. The next day the state of Israel was attacked by five surrounding Arab nations. That brought on a series of Jewish survival wars.

**The Israeli War for Independence**

The first of them was the war for independence in 1947 and 1948. The Jewish population of 650,000 faced an Arab population of 1.1 million people. The seven Arab armies and their enormous military matériel came swooping in upon the Jews. But the Jews secured a resounding victory. Wonder of wonders, nobody thought they could do it, including the United States. They did it at the cost of 6,000 dead, which was 1% of their population at the time. This would be like having a war in which the United States lost 2,500,000 people dead. You can see what an enormous blow this was to the population. However, the Jews still had a very clear memory of what they had suffered under Hitler, and they said, "Never again."

Well, an armistice was signed with Egypt on February 24th, 1949. This was followed by other Arab countries. This then settled the borders of Israel as they finally existed in the new nation. Israel was one connected country, but the West Bank was stuck in there. The Golan Heights was there for Syria, and the Gaza Strip was there on the Sinai Peninsula, belonging to Egypt, both of which were high points – the high ground from which Israel could easily be attacked, and the Arabs promptly proceeded to shell them immediately in that way.

Well, when this war for independence was finally settled, there was a large Jewish refugee population that resulted, because the Arabs kicked the Jews out of all of their countries, and the Jews came flocking to Israel. Well, the Jews dealt with that problem immediately. They simply absorbed these Jewish refugees into the new state of Israel. At the same time, there was an Arab refugee group that developed, because many of the Arabs fled from the territories that the Jews now possessed. But the Arab nations, instead of absorbing these people, set up some squalid refugee camps for them so that generations could continue being born in these camps, which is the way it is today, in order that they could use these refugees as a pawn in future attacks upon Israel (reasons to attack Israel) – that here were these poor people who needed their nation, and it had been taken away from them by the Jews.

**The Sinai War**

In 1956 the Jews faced another war: the Sinai war. The Arabs had infiltrated Israel. They were carrying out terrorist raids. Egypt decided to seize the Suez Canal from England, and they denied Jews access to that shipping lane. England and France saw this move of taking the Suez Canal as a threat to their national interests, so, they, with Israel's help, attacked Egypt. The campaign went well. They were close to victory. Then the United States and Russia got on the phone and told Israel and England and France: "Knock it off, or we will come in and stop you." So, the mission was aborted, but the Jews received a little more elbow room in spite of that.

**The Six-Day War**

In 1967, they faced the Six-Day war. Egypt attacked Israel with overwhelming Arab forces, but Israel's, one-eyed, brilliant general, Moshe Dayan, stepped in. He is that man you see with the patch over his eye. When he was in one of his earlier military expeditions, he was looking through binoculars, and a sniper bullet hit his binoculars, and he lost an eye in that incident. Moshe Dayan was a soldier tempered in war. Under his leadership, Israel defeated the Arabs quickly in six days, and they expanded their territorial holdings that now included the West Bank; the Golan Heights; and, the Gaza Strip, and they took the Sinai Peninsula as well.

The Arabs were devastated once more, and the Jews were delighted. They were back in Jerusalem; they had the temple ground; and, they had the Wailing Wall. Again, they were on the point of executing the biblical doctrine of warfare that says that the way you stop your enemy from making war is that you destroy his ability to make war; you destroy his personnel; you destroy his matériel; there is no more war; and, peace is the result. And again, the United States and Russia stepped in, and they stopped the Jews.

**The Yom Kippur War**

In 1973, Israel faced the Yom Kippur War – a surprise attack by a million Arab soldiers on their holy holiday. The Jews fought desperately against great odds, and in a week, they had the Arabs on the run again. The unbelievable once more had happened. Obviously, God and Michael, their guardian angel, were doing their work of protecting the Jew from being exterminated. This time, the Jews enveloped the Arab armies, and they were going to finish them off for good. Again, the United States and Russia stepped in and forced Israel to stop from destroying the encircled Arab aggressors.

Now, what Saddam Hussein intended was to follow in this pattern of periodic attacks against Israel in order to destroy it. He is the latest one in the planned effort to stop Israel; to destroy the nation; to put it out of existence; and, to terminate the Jewish people. So, he is using them as a bargaining chip today. When Baker gets to speak to him, you can be sure that the first thing that Saddam Hussein will bring up is: "What are you going to do about the Jew who is sitting there in all of these occupied territories," as if they shouldn't be there as the result of the aggression? But now the Jews have a country that they can defend. I'm sure that that's what the Arabs hate particularly.

Well, the Jewish people are still not secure in their homeland after all of this, and they are ready to welcome a protector such as the antichrist, who will be able to ensure peace for them from further Arab aggressions.

**War in Heaven**

So, now we read, Revelation 12:7: "There was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. The dragon and his angels waged war." Here, in the very near future of not very many years (I expect), will come again an attempt by conflict (by war) to finally destroy the Jewish people, and to destroy the state of Israel, even as it has been practiced with the brief review I've given you. The story we have here is that there is a case of war. This is the word for military combat. It is something that takes place as per the context and the series of events here at the midpoint of the seven-year period of tribulation.

**Michael, the Archangel**

This war, of all places, is in the "ouranos," which is heaven. This is referring particularly, believe it or not, to the third heaven, God's throne room. It may include, of course, the second heaven, which is outer space, the interstellar spaces. It is a future conflict. It has not yet taken place. The general on one side is Michael the angel whose name means "one like God." He is the supreme angel. In Jude 9, he is called the archangel of God. That means that he is the supreme angel in all of God's creation today.

**Angels**

Angels are beings with superhuman capacities, and they are organized (and, in fact, created) with varying powers and varying levels of authority. In Ephesians 1:21, we have this pointed out to us when Paul says, "Far above all rule and authority and power and dominion." These are ranks, like lieutenant, and captain, and major, and colonel, and general. There are certain angels that belong to the rank of rule. There are certain angels that belong to the rank of authority. Other angels have the rank of power. Others have the rank of dominion. Paul points out that the time is going to come that far above all these angelic hosts: "And every name that is named, not only in this age, but in the age to come, they're all going to be under the feet of Jesus Christ."

So, we have here the picture of angels in a combat situation within the presence of the second and third heaven. They are being led by their chief leader, Michael. The combatants are angels. The Greek word for "angel" is "aggelos." "Aggelos" refers to spirit beings whom God created as his servants. Here, when it says, "Michael and his angels," it is referring to the angels which have remained loyal to God. Two-thirds of the angels went with God, and one-third went with Satan's rebellion. These holy angels form an army. They are the ones that are referred to when the Bible speaks about the "hosts" of God. You can translate that word as the "army" of God. These angels constitute God's army, and Michael is their commander-in-chief.

**War**

The angels are beings with superhuman capacities, and they have the capacity here to wage war. The Greek word looks like this: "polemeo." "Polemeo" refers to a military action. It is at a point in time (mid-tribulation). The angels do the fighting. In the Greek Bible, it is in the infinitive mood, which is used here to give an explanation of the previous word: "there was war in heaven." It explains "war in heaven" by saying that "Michael and his angels" are waging war. They are the ones who are involved in the war.

Who is the person that they are fighting on the other side. It is that old guy named "drakon." That is the "dragon," referring to Satan. This is indicated to us in Revelation 12:9 – that Satan and the dragon are the same individual. The name "Satan" means "adversary," and Satan is the archenemy of God, with whom Michael and his angels are doing battle.

"There was war in heaven, specifically Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. And the dragon also has 'aggelos' (angels)." His angels referred to those beings who were not loyal to God. These are the demon angels – a third of the angels who followed Satan in his attempted coup d'etat. These evil angels also, however, have ranks of authority and capacities and powers. They have superhuman abilities, and they carry out Satan's work as his army.

So, you have in existence a real army. Michael is commander-in-chief of the holy angels of God (the hosts of God – the army of God). On the other hand, you have Satan and the demon angels with Satan as the commander-in-chief. Both sides have enormous capacity. Angels are terrifically powerful beings. They can fight, and they can achieve things by this kind of warfare and conflict.

**Satan**

This is easily understood when we remember a little bit about the history of Satan: namely, that he was created by God. He is not divine. He is not eternal. He came into time. He came into being at a point in time. He was created by God, but he was created with maximum wisdom and beauty, and he was appointed the archangel over God's angelic hosts. Satan at that time was a splendid being; loyal to God; sinless; and, actually served in a threefold capacity. He was God's prophet in delivering God's Word to the angels; he was God's priest as he led all the angels in worship of God; and, he was God's king in governing God's angels.

I stress that so that you will understand that at one time Satan (or, as his name was at first – Lucifer, the son of the morning) was a terrific; brilliant; God-fearing; and, God-devoted individual. There was only one thing he could do wrong. There was only one sin, and that would be negative volition toward the will of God. That was the same problem that Adam and Eve faced. There was only one sin that they could commit in the Garden of Eden, and that was negative attention to the command of God, relative to that tree.

So, here, Satan reminds us of the fact that no matter how far you and I go in the Christian life; how much we mature; how much we develop our spiritual maturity structure; or, how much we can take in stride the temptations of the world; of our sin nature; and, of the devil, and how well we may be serving the Lord, that doesn't ensure that we're always going to do that. We can all think of people who at one time have been splendid soldiers of Jesus Christ, who now become spiritual casualties, and they no longer sit in this auditorium or in this ministry with us. Don't ever become smug.

That's why the Yom Kippur War was so devastating for the Jews. They had been so marvelously victorious in their previous military encounters, that they leaned back, and they became smug and overconfident.

Satan operated in a heavenly Eden as a magnificent, sinless creature serving God until one day he begin exercising negative volition toward God in his mind. And it came into his mind that he could be like God – that he had such power and such capacities that he could actually push God off the throne and make himself the supreme being of the universe. Ezekiel 28:15 indicates that to us, where we read (speaking of Satan), "You were blameless in all your ways from the day you were created, until unrighteousness was found in you." This was the crime of the devil – his negative volition toward the fact that he was under God's authority.

Well, God passed judgment on Satan for his sin in heaven? He removed him from his position as the archangel of the angels of God. Satan was left only with the support of the demon angels. In time, God said that Satan is even to be denied access to heaven itself. That was not the case immediately, and it is not the case today. Satan can walk into the third heaven, and he does. We'll see some of the reasons he does it. Satan has access into the very presence of God. However, in time, God said that he will be denied that access; he will be thrown out completely; and, he will be thrown down to the earth.

We have that indicated to us in Ezekiel 28:16-17: "By the abundance of your trade, you were internally filled with violence, and you sinned." He is speaking about Lucifer: "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."

So, God said, "You can no longer be the archangel. You're no longer in charge. You will, in time, be denied access into My very presence here in heaven. And I will cast you down to the earth, and all the nations, and all of humanity, will look at you as a whimpering simpleton, groveling in the dust someday." This is a judgment which was decreed by God, but it was not immediately executed. It is to be carried out right here in Revelation 12:7-9, at the middle of the tribulation. These verses specifically describe for us that when this battle is over, Satan and his demons lose, and now Satan is booted out of heaven. This is the first step toward God's ultimate purpose for him of spending eternity in the lake of fire.

Revelation 20:1-3 tell us that from off the earth, at the end of the tribulation (at the end of this three-and-a-half year period), Satan will be chained in the pit of the abyss.

You may remember the demons which were cast out of the man at Gadara. They were fearful when Jesus spoke to them, and they said to Him, "Are you going to send us before our time into the pit?" They didn't want to go into the pit. They do not want to be incapacitated. They didn't want to be incarcerated yet in the horrible place of the pit of the abyss. It's a terrible place. It's a place of suffering. They pled to permit them to go into the pigs, which they did. The pigs couldn't take it either. So, they killed themselves by running over the cliff. But the demons, at least, escaped the pit of the abyss at that point in time, and were free to continue their work.

But the time is going to come when Satan will be thrown out of heaven. He's now on the earth. From the earth, he goes into the pit of the abyss, at the end of the tribulation. For 1,000 years of the millennium, there's no devil to tempt anybody. Revelation 20:1: "And I saw an angel coming down from heaven with the key of the abyss, and a great chain in his hand, and he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for 1,000 years, and threw him into the abyss, and shut it, and sealed it over him, so that he should not deceive the nations any longer until the 1,000 years were completed. After these things, he must be released for a short time."

He will be released for a short time. That will cull out all of the children who were born in the millennium who are not true to Jesus Christ (who are not born again). They will rally to him for a final effort against God, and then the final stage of God's plan for Satan will be executed. I remind you again that he knows all about this.

In Matthew 25:41, we're told of the special place that God has prepared for him: "Then He will also say to those on his left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones (that is, unbelievers), into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels." God prepared a place called the lake of fire in which to incarcerate the devil and his angels.

In Revelation 20:10, we have that executed: "And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also, and they will be tormented day and night, forever and ever." At that point in time, Satan goes from off the earth into the lake of fire forever.

So, the procedure is as follows: He currently has access into heaven. He will be denied complete entrance into heaven. He will be cast out and restricted to the earth. He will be placed in the pit of the abyss for 1,000 years. He will be given a moment of freedom for the unbelievers to rally to him and to be destroyed with him. Then, with them, he will be cast forever into the lake of fire.

Satan, who knows all this, has tried to keep this a secret from people. He does not like people to know that he's a doomed loser. He likes to portray himself as the sophisticated, derogare man of the world who is able to do things for people, and that he is going to win in the long run. I have very often heard people on programs discussing their devotion to Satan because, while he's had a hard time, he is the god who is going to win. And they sincerely do believe that. He hides the reality of his very existence from some people. He hides what his destiny is going to be with a lot of disinformation. He portrays himself in a way such that people just laugh at him. He portrays himself as a cartoon-like character who is colored red; who has horns and a tail; who carries a pitchfork; and, who smells like burning sulfur. Who would take that seriously?

People are led to believe that Satan does not exist, or that he is just some kind of an impersonal symbol of evil that has been created. Satan conveys a picture of himself as the king of hell, gleefully ruling over his inmates. That has come from literature, not from the Bible. That has come from the writings of men like John Milton and Dante that portray Satan as a king ruling in hell. Satan will have no authority in hell. He'll only have suffering along with everyone else. Satan is doing his best to stay out of hell. That's the one place he doesn't want to go. At least, he's going to delay his entrance into that place as long as possible. He is a loser, but he gains a following by putting on a good front. ...

Some Christians think that because Jesus defeated Satan at the cross that Satan is actually no longer free, but is bound up in some imprisonment. That's not the case. The work of Satan is what surrounds us every day of our lives. Today, Satan leads his demons in spiritual warfare which is directed against born-again believers in Jesus Christ. Satan today is as real as ever. He's alive; he's well; and, he is free to roam about in heaven and earth. He is doing that in order to find somebody whom he may destroy, and somebody whose life he may bring down – primarily, those of Christians.

1 Peter 5:8 says, "Be sober, Christians. Be of sober spirit. Be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour."

In Ephesians 2:2, he is described as the prince of the power of the air; that is, the first heaven – the atmospheric heaven around the earth. He is a ruler of demonic forces – the forces of darkness and of wickedness.

This is the way Ephesians 6:12 describes him according to what we Christians struggle with daily in the spiritual warfare: "Our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in (notice) the heavenly places." Where is Satan doing his work? In the atmospheric heaven, the first heaven, and also in the very third heaven of God Himself.

There are times, as you know, when Satan has to report in to God. Some people are shocked by the thought that Satan can walk into God's heaven, but he does so, and is required to do so. He is not a sovereign being. So, periodically he comes in; he has to face God; he has to answer questions; he has to give a report; and, he tries to make it as insulting to God as he can.

**Job**

You have an example of that in Job 1:6-12: "Now there was a day when the sons of God (angels) came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them (both God's angels and demon angels report in). The Lord said to Satan, 'From where do you come?' Then Satan answered the Lord and said, 'From roaming about on the earth and walking around on it.'" Do you believe that? Yes, he's walking around on this earth. And the Lord said to Satan, 'Have you considered my servant, Job? For there is no one like him on the earth – a blameless and upright man, fearing God and turning away from evil.'" Blameless does not mean that Joe was sinless. But it did mean that when Job did sin, he confessed it, so before God, he was in total fellowship.

"Then Satan answered the Lord, 'Does Job fear God for nothing? Haven't You made a hedge about him, and his house, and all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But put forth Your hand now, and touch all that he has. He'll surely curse You to Your face.' Then the Lord said to Satan, 'Behold, all that he has is in your power, only do not put forth your hand on him.' So, Satan departed from the presence of the Lord."

In this confrontation, Satan is ridiculing and belittling Job: "Sure, he's true to You. That's because you made him so rich." God said, "Well, let's find out. You can do anything you want to him, only you can't kill him. You don't touch him. You don't hurt him." You know the rest of the story of how things progressed. And Job went through some intense suffering.

Well, this is the sort of thing you say that is going on all the time. Job's experience is not unique. It is your experience as well. Christians of the church age are engaged daily in spiritual warfare with Satan and his demons, as Ephesians 6:12 points out. The human agents with whom we are in conflict in spiritual battles are all empowered by Satan. A Christian cannot be indwelt by a demon, but a Christian who is out of temporal fellowship can be influenced by a demon to do great evil. We call that being demonized, and it is important that we understand that. Satan can never move into your body in which the Holy Spirit dwells, but Satan can so influence you (and this is what he's trying to do all the time) that you are actually under his direction. You are demonized. 1 John 4:4 tells us that the power of the Holy Spirit is always greater than any power that Satan has over us.

Satan enters the third heaven with glee to accuse Christians (members of the royal family of God), and to call to God's attention, before God's heavenly court, the sins of which you and I are guilty – Any particular deals with those that are the most vicious, prominent, horrible sins that Christians can perform, and that Christians who shouldn't be performing things like that.

In Revelation 12:10, which we will get to in time, we read, "Now the salvation, the power, the Kingdom of our God, and the authority of His Christ have come (at the point where Satan has now thrown out of heaven permanently) for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, who accuses them before our God, day and night."

Day and night, Satan has a series of his billions of demon angels who keep rotating into God's throne room to say, "Now, have you been watching what so-and-so has been doing down at Berean church? What do you think of him? You talk about integrity, God. You talk about justice. Look what you did to me. Look what you did to my demons. You didn't even give us a second chance. You prepared a place for us to suffer in forever. What are you going to do with this dude? How about Mrs. so-and-so over there? Have you heard what she said? Have you been looking into her mind, and observing the things that she's been thinking about – this sweet Christian that everybody is so impressed with down at Berean church? Hey, have you listened to the language of this guy at home? Have you been watching his treatment of his children; his wife; and, the people he does business with? Now what are you going to do about that?"

Day and night, this accusation of believers continues before God's court? But every time, God the Father points to the wounds of His Son sitting next to him on the throne, and said, "These wounds have covered that sin. It is forgiven. And I am fair and just when I forgive it, because the penalty of death has been paid for that sin. And the Christian who admits it to Me also comes back into my temple day-by-day fellowship." You would think that the devil would get tired of this? But I guarantee you, this is one thing you know about Satan. He never gives up. You can bash him down one time, and he'll pull off, while he reevaluates the situation. He will regroup with his demons, and he will hit you again on the same thing. He never gives up.

We will close with this happy note concerning God's host of holy angels. I remind you that God's host of holy angels act as your protectors and defenders. Those of you who know doctrine, and are willing to act upon it, and live by it, and keep yourself in temporal fellowship by not acting arrogantly, and admitting where you have stepped out of line, and not lying to yourself, but calling yourself for what you are, you will have this protective care, and Satan and his demons, with all of their enormous power, will not be able to touch your body; your soul; your spirit; or, anything. Like faithful Abraham spilled over the protective blessings of God on unfaithful Lot, so your faithfulness will spill over those who are close to you.

One of the grandest examples of this (that we're not just giving you a rosy picture which is not true) is to be found in 2 Kings 6:8 in the case of the great prophet of God. The Syrian king, the king of Aram, is preparing for war against Israel. And every time he makes a move, the Jews are there, knowing ahead of time what they're going to do. And the king begins to suspect that he has a traitor in his midst in the councils of war: "Now the king of Aram was warring against Israel, and he counseled with his servants saying, 'And in such-and-such a place shall be my camp.' And the man of God sent word to the king of Israel saying, 'Beware that you do not pass this place, for the Arameans are coming down there.'"

Everything that was spoken in the council of war of the King of Aram was transmitted by Elisha to the King of Israel, who then knew how to act. Talk about an intelligence system! This was the best in the world. "And the king of Israel sent to the place about which the man of God had told him. Thus he warned him so that he guarded himself there more than once or twice. Now the heart of the king of Aram was enraged over this thing. And he called his servants, and said to them, 'Will you tell me which of us is for the king of Israel?' And one of his servants said, 'No, my Lord, O King, but Elisha the prophet, who is in Israel, tells the king of Israel the words that you speak in your bedroom." I'm glad that that doesn't happen too often.

"So, he said, 'Go and see where he is, that I may send and take him. And it was told him saying, 'Behold, he is in Dothan.'" The king of Aram says, "I know how to deal with these dudes. You just tell me where he is. What is this Elijah?" They say, "Well, he's in Dothan. He's got a little place there out in the country where he stays with his servant." He says, "OK, I'll take care of him." He puts a contract out on Elisha.

**Chariots of Fire**

"So he sent horses and chariots and a great army there. They came by night, and they surrounded the city (a night infiltration). Now when the attendant of the man of God (Elisha's servant) had risen early and gone out, behold, an army with horses and chariots was circling the city, and his servant said to him, 'Alas, my master, what shall we do?' So, he answered, 'Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them.'"

That's the word to remember. What is your crisis in life? What is the attack of Satan upon you? What is the point of pressure that he brings? Whatever it is, it's not more than you can cope with. The Bible says, "It is never more than you can bear, and it is never more than you can win out over, because greater are those who are reinforcing us than those who work with Satan." But this was not very comfortable to the servant. He wanted to see something more definite.

"So, Elisha prayed and said, 'O Lord, I pray, open his eyes that he may see.' And the Lord opened his servant’s eyes, and he saw, and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha." That's what you and I must remember – that we are surrounded by chariots of fire. These chariots of fire were the angels of God. Angels are fiery creatures, and they appear in these fiery ways. They are the angels sent to protect us. They are the ministering spirits of God. Every day of our lives, however badly we may stumble, and whatever our circumstances relative to sin is, you and I are surrounded by chariots of fire. And those who stay in temple fellowship have the benefit of those chariots.

Well, here the result was that, when this military force came down to destroy Elisha and his servant, Elisha said, "Strike this people with blindness, Lord, I pray." So, they all became blind. And Elijah said, "This is not the way. Follow me. I'll lead you to where you want to go." Elijah was tricky. He led them right to Samaria, to the king of Israel. He says, "King, here they are." He not only protected them, but he brought them to victory. He is not only going to protect you from getting hurt, but He's going to bring you to victory over the inroads and the threats of Satan. And you know the rest of the story. He treated them with proper respect as prisoners of war. He gave them a meal, and told the king of Israel, "Send them back to their king. I think they've learned a lesson, and they won't give us any more trouble." And peace came.

Satan is getting ready to make his final move in heaven, and he will experience a great defeat. In the meantime, he is after you and me, since he can't strike Christ. But we are surrounded by the chariots of fire. This is not true of the Jewish people today. There's nobody protecting them from the attacks and the inroads of Satan. They get a full blast every time. You and I never get hit unless we open the door with our lack of temporal fellowship. Then the integrity of God requires that the chariots of fire stand back, and Satan is permitted to hit us. Which way do you want it to go? It's up to you.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1990

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