**Know Your Enemy: NOT Deceived!**

Prepared by Nathan L Morrison for Sunday July 23rd, 2023

Text: II Corinthians 2:10-11 Scripture Reading: I Peter 5:8-9

### Intro

1. One of the best ways to defeat an enemy is to know them.
   1. “The wise warrior knows the enemy as well as they know themselves.” (J.R.R. Tolkien)
2. But one must recognize he/she has an enemy before a strategy to beat them can be formed!
3. The Scriptures tell us we have an enemy (adversary) in Satan!
   1. I Peter 5:8: Satan is our adversary – opponent, archenemy*.*
4. There are two figures in the Scriptures that are described as lions but have distinct and different traits from each other: Jesus and Satan
5. Lions in the wild
6. Alpha male lions own a pride and are very territorial. In an undisturbed environment, it is said that the biggest reason for male lion deaths is other lions.
7. If another male (or more) challenges the alpha lion, the lion king must fight to hold on to his pride, which can have up to 37 or more female lions.
8. If the challenger succeeds, he will most likely kill the cubs and other young males the alpha may have sired.
9. For a lion king, there is no such thing as retirement – He must fight for his throne or be cast aside.
10. An adult lion's roar can be heard up to five miles away and is done for many reasons, including marking territory, talking to pride members, and for catching prey.
11. Lions often creep up silently on their prey when hunting. They break this silence with a large roar when just close enough to their intended target. The sound of the roar confuses and scares the prey. The prey cannot react correctly in the midst of this confusion and fear. The result is that the prey becomes easily trapped and caught by the lion.
12. The Scriptures present to us a “Battle of Lions!”
    1. Jesus, also seen as a lamb of sacrifice to save the world from sin (John 1:29), is the King from the line of David, and the Lion of Judah (Mt. 25:31, 34; Heb. 9:28; Rev. 5:5).
       1. While a lion fights to protect his pride, the church is the bride of Jesus, and so all those who obey the gospel through baptism are added to the church and become part of His body and bride *(I Cor. 12:13; Eph. 5:23)* that He saves!
       2. Jesus’ roar is to His bride and is reassuring and one of hope and peace.
    2. Satan, though described in various ways and creatures, is also described as a roaring lion seeking someone to devour (I Peter 5:8).
       1. Though the world was created by Jesus (Col. 1:16), Satan is described as “the prince of this world” (Jn. 12:31) and “the god of this world” (II Cor. 4:4), and as such he fights with Christ for control of souls!
       2. Satan’s roar is to confuse, frighten and deceive!
13. The Scriptures also tell us Satan has an agenda:
    1. II Cor. 11:3: To control the heart (minds) of man.
    2. II Cor. 11:13-15: He works through agents.
    3. Eph. 4:14: His doctrines are to deceive men *(to hold to a form of godliness; II Tim. 3:1-5)*
14. The fact that Satan schemes is revealed in II Corinthians!
    1. II Cor. 2:10-11: Satan schemes and we aren’t to be ignorant of them! *Stand against them!*
    2. II Cor. 4:3-4: He is also identified as “the god of this world (age)” who blinds the minds of the unbelieving so they will not see the light of the gospel!
       1. We live (in a sense) behind enemy lines!
    3. His schemes are to destroy and to confuse.
15. Part of knowing our enemy is to know his schemes and to NOT be deceived by them!

#### ***Subvert*** the ***Word of God***

* 1. *Genesis 3:1-19:* Adam and Eve fell from God’s grace because of deceit! *(II Cor. 11:3)*
     1. Eve heard, believed, and obeyed a lie! *(Gen. 3:6)*
     2. Adam listened to his wife and also sinned *(Gen. 3:17).*
  2. II Cor. 11:14-15: Satan, through his servants, perverts God’s word.
     1. II Cor. 3:12-16; I Tim. 1:3-4: Mixing the gospel with the Old Law. *(Acts 15)*
     2. Gal. 1:6-9: Perverting the gospel.
  3. Many problems today result from same kind of perversion:
     1. Plan of Salvation: (“What about the thief on the cross?;” Say Sinner’s Prayer)
     2. Acceptable worship: (Sabbath; Instrumental music; Communion on Friday, or other special events)
     3. Identifying God’s people: (Premillennialism – Jews still God’s people; *Mt. 21:43; Rom. 2:28-29; Gal. 3:27-29)*
     4. Giving to God: (Materialism – Bazaars to raise money, etc. – *Lk. 12:15-21:Beware of every form of greed; Life doesn’t consist of possessions)*
     5. One church *(Eph. 4:4-6: “One body”):* (“One church is as good as another”)
  4. By subverting the word and people believing the lie, Satan wins; all the while people think they are saved so why should they change? (Matthew 7:21-23)
  5. The Truth is in Jesus & His word – we must not only know it but practice it! (Adam & Eve knew it, yet sinned!)

#### ***Set Mind*** on Things ***on Earth***

* 1. Colossians 3:2: Saints are not to set their minds on the things of earth, but above to Heaven.
     1. II Cor. 4:3-4: Satan is called the “god of this world (age).”
     2. He tempts saints to focus (set our minds) on the things of the earth! (Mt. 13:22; Lk. 8:14: When one focuses on things below on earth they become unfruitful!)
     3. The “Prosperity Gospel” is very popular because it teaches people to set their minds on things of this world all while feeling spiritual!
  2. God’s people live for present and future.
     1. II Peter 1:3; *Heb. 6:9-20:* Intend to obtain God’s promises.
     2. II Tim. 4:7-8; Js. 1:12: The “Crown of life” waits.
     3. Colossians 3:1-3: Seek things above.
  3. Those seeking immediate gratification in life (their reward now) will have the reward they seek but miss out on the eternal reward!

#### ***Seduce*** the ***Saints***

* 1. Satan wants souls (YOU!) – *I Pet. 5:8: “Someone to devour”*
  2. Luke 22:3-6: ***An apostle*** of Christ (Judas) was seduced by his greed (material things).
  3. Luke 22:54-62; Galatians 2:11-14: ***An apostle*** of Christ (Peter) cursed and denied that he knew Jesus *(Matthew 10:32-33);* later he was a hypocrite and led astray believers.
  4. Acts 5:3: ***A Christian*** couple was seduced to lie for the praise of men.
  5. I Corinthians 5:1-2: ***A Christian*** at Corinth involved in adultery.
     1. *I Cor. 5:1-8: Church was commanded to act.*
     2. *I Cor. 6:15-20:* God wants his people to know about fornication.
     3. Satan uses the temptation of the flesh to take down the mighty:
        1. Samson, David, preachers caught in adultery and fornication.
        2. When caught, gives enemies of God cause to blaspheme! *(II Sam. 12:14)*
  6. II Timothy 4:10: ***A Christian*** was seduced into forsaking Christ and Paul for the world.
  7. Revelation 2:20-23: ***A church of Christ*** in Thyatira tolerated members who were seduced into various acts of immorality by one of its members! (Not all participated – Rev. 2:24-25)
  8. When you think it can’t happen to ***YOU***, beware! *(I Cor. 10:12: Take heed lest you fall!)*
  9. Many Christians today become unfaithful to Christ -- seduced by Satan!

## Conclusion

1. Important to know one’s enemy: Satan is strong, even powerful, but only as powerful as you let him be in your life! *(I Cor. 10:13; Js. 1:14-16: Spiritual L.S.D.)*
   1. Christ already defeated him!
   2. Satan is strong, but not victorious! (Heb. 2:14-15)
2. Christians can resist Satan!
   1. The armor of God is given to prepare the Christian for battle:
      1. Eph. 6:10-13: The saint is to stand against the schemes of the devil!
      2. II Tim. 2:24-26: The challenge or work of the Lord’s bond-servant is to recover/rescue those overtaken by the devil.
   2. James 4:7; I Peter 5:9: Power to resist comes from God’s word *(Matthew 4: “It is written”):* “Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you!”
   3. Stand firm! (Ephesians 6:11, 13)
3. The Battle of Lions rages on: One roar is a call to obey and be blessed for eternity (Jesus), and the other roar is to confuse and deceive you into staying in sin (Satan).
4. Whose roar will you listen to?
5. Don’t be deceived by Satan’s schemes but “Resist him, firm in your faith!” *(I Peter 5:9)* and obey Jesus, the Lion of Judah who died to make you alive!
6. If you are not a Christian, you need to be. Satan already has you. Repent and be baptized!
7. If a Christian in sin, don’t wait till it’s too late! Don’t give Satan opportunity. Repent!
8. Whatever your requests, let them be made known ***NOW*** while we stand & sing!

**Sources:**

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