

Recognizing Satan's Kingdom

by Derek Prince

Derek Prince's sermon explores the structure and nature of Satan's kingdom, emphasizing the importance of spiritual warfare and revelation in understanding this conflict.

Duration: 58:32

Scripture: Ephesians 2:2, Ephesians 6:12

Topics: "Spiritual Warfare", "Satanic Influence"

Description

This sermon delves into the identification of witchcraft as the universal religion of fallen man, exploring the invisible spiritual kingdoms of God and Satan. It emphasizes the need for believers to understand the spiritual realm, engage in spiritual warfare, and recognize the influence of rebellion and pride in Satan's kingdom. The sermon also highlights the resurgence of witchcraft in modern times and the importance of prayer, humility, and submission to Jesus in overcoming the enemies we face.

Transcript

In this four-part series entitled *The Enemies We Face*, Derek Prince identifies witchcraft with its many forms and manifestations as the universal religion of fallen man. He explores this theme and gives practical strategy for achieving victory over these enemies. Now, *The Enemies We Face, Part One, The Structure of Satan's Kingdom*.

This is the first of four successive talks on the theme of *The Enemies We Face*. I trust that all of us who are committed to Jesus here this evening do realize that we face enemies, because it's a very dangerous situation to have powerful and active enemies working against you and not even be aware that you have those enemies. The enemies that we face are not persons of flesh and blood, but they are invisible spirit beings.

The themes that we're going to deal with in these talks concern things which are not discerned by human senses. The Bible speaks about things which eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man. Things that are invisible and spiritual.

The things we're going to talk about can only be understood through the Scriptures. There is no other source of reliable information. A lot of people imagine or think that the things we see, touch, hear and taste are the truly real things.

Actually all through the ages philosophers have come to the conclusion that they are not truly real. They are temporary, they are impermanent and they are very often deceptive. You cannot rely on your senses.

It's amazing how many different philosophers down the ages have come to that conclusion. The Bible says the same. Paul says the things which are seen are temporary.

The things which are not seen are eternal. In other words the things of the sense world are only temporary. They are only partly real.

They do not endure. But the things of the spiritual world that we cannot see, that we cannot perceive with our senses are the truly real things. They are the things that endure.

So when we come to a theme like this we have to begin by making a mental adjustment and saying to ourselves I'm not going to limit myself to the things that I can see and touch and hear and taste. But I'm going to open my heart and mind to the revelation that's given me in Scripture through the Holy Spirit to things that are of a different world. Paul prayed for the Ephesian Christians that God would give them a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him.

And I pray that for us here that God may grant us as we open our hearts to his word a spirit of wisdom and revelation. Because we're dealing with things that can only be known by revelation. What we're going to deal with in essence is two kingdoms, two opposing kingdoms that are at war with one another.

But they're not natural kingdoms such as Britain and Sweden or other nations. But they are invisible spiritual kingdoms. One is the kingdom of God and the other is the kingdom of Satan.

I'd like to begin by reading from Matthew chapter 12 just two verses. 26 and 28. Jesus had been accused by the Pharisees that he was able to drive out demons because he was in league with the prince of the demons who was called Beelzebub.

And he pointed out to them that was a very illogical explanation and it couldn't possibly be true. In pointing it out to them he said these two things. First of all in verse 26 if Satan casts out Satan he is divided against himself how then will his kingdom stand? So Satan has a kingdom as Jesus himself has indicated.

A lot of Christians I think find it difficult to understand that. But here it is clearly stated. And then two verses further on Jesus says that if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God surely the kingdom of God has come upon you.

There's the other kingdom the kingdom of God. So here are two invisible spiritual kingdoms. The kingdom of God the kingdom of Satan.

And Jesus points out that there is one particular aspect of his ministry that brings the two kingdoms out into the open and that is the driving out of demons by his power and authority. The demons, invisible spirit beings represent the kingdom of Satan. Jesus and then those who are his servants and follow his ministry represent the kingdom of God.

And in the driving out of demons the visible clash of the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan is brought out into the open. Also the fact that Jesus and his servants can drive out the demons of Satan is convincing evidence that the kingdom of God is more powerful than the kingdom of Satan. Personally I believe that's why Satan particularly dislikes and opposes the ministry of deliverance.

Because it brings out into the open things which he would rather keep secret and it also demonstrates that the kingdom of Jesus is more powerful than his kingdom. Now I want to speak in this talk about the nature and the structure of Satan's kingdom. And we'll turn to Ephesians chapter 6 and verse 12 which is I think the main verse that brings this out.

And again I want to remind you we are now talking about things you cannot perceive with your senses. What I'm reading is the New King James which is like the Old King James but a bit modernized. Ephesians 6 verse 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

The word places is inverted commas. It's put in by the translators. I think it's better to say in the heavenlies.

Somebody commented once that most of the church has punctuated that verse wrong. The way they read it is like this. For we do not wrestle.

Full stop. That's not what he's saying. I want to give you the Prince version of this particular verse.

I studied Greek since I was 10 years old. I'm qualified to teach it at university level. I don't say that to boast but at least it gives me a right to my opinion.

I may not be right but I'm entitled to an opinion. I'd like to begin by taking a phrase from the Living Bible which says, our wrestling match is not against persons with bodies. I think that's very vivid.

It's extremely important to understand that we're dealing with persons. Until we grasp that we're really like a blindfolded boxer. We are dealing with persons but they are persons without bodies.

Spirit beings. Now we'll go on. For our wrestling match.

Again I want to point out that this is a very intense conflict. I think of all the forms of interpersonal conflict wrestling is the most intense. It's one person totally pitted against another person.

And it's no accident that Paul uses that phrase for our warfare against Satan's kingdom. It is total warfare. Our wrestling match is not against persons with bodies.

Now here comes the Prince version. But against rulerships with various areas and descending orders of authority. Against the world dominators of this present darkness.

Against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenless. What I want to point out to you is that Satan's kingdom is no jumble. It's a highly organized kingdom for which he gets no credit.

Because he was, I believe, and we'll deal with this in a few moments, one of the chief angels in charge of a large section of the angels. And as such he had a divinely given organizational system. And when he rebelled against God and led his angels in rebellion they simply took the system with them but turned it against God.

So don't imagine that Satan doesn't have a highly organized kingdom for which, as I say, he gets no credit. The credit goes to God. But let's take into account the fact that he is no simpleton.

He's a very astute, powerful and evil being. Let's now go briefly through the revised version or the amplified version that I gave you. We're against rulerships.

I say rulerships because the Greek word is abstract. It's not rulers, although most of the modern translations say that. It's rulerships.

There's a certain level of a spiritual authority in Satan's kingdom which is the level of rulerships. And under these rulers are sub-rulers with various areas of authority. And under them are sub-sub-rulers with smaller areas of authority.

So one ruler has a major area of authority. Under him are lesser rulers each of whom has a small area part of that. Under them are sub-lesser-lesser rulers that have smaller areas of authority.

All right, that's the first picture. And in a little while, by turning to the Old Testament, I'll give you some very clear examples of how it functions. Then it says, Against the world dominators of this present darkness.

I deliberately chose to use the word dominate because it's a satanic word. God never dominates. Where you encounter domination, somewhere behind it is Satan.

And Satan's ambition, desire and strategy is to come to the place where he dominates this entire world. But he will dominate it with a system of darkness. You see God's kingdom is a kingdom of light.

Satan's kingdom is a kingdom of darkness. Those who are in God's kingdom know whom they are serving and they see pretty clearly what they are doing. Those who are in Satan's kingdom, most of them do not even know whom they are serving nor do they know what they are actually doing.

And then the third phrase is against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenless. Whole armies of wicked, powerful, rebellious spirit beings in a realm which is called the heavenless. It's been a sort of accepted tradition in the church that Satan is in hell.

Most people think of it that way. My comment on that is it would be nice if it were true, but it isn't. And there is no warranty whatever in the Scripture for assuming that.

Now we'll come back to that in just a few moments, but let's consider briefly how this satanic kingdom came into being. I want to turn to Isaiah chapter 14 and read a few verses there. These verses deal with a being called Lucifer.

The word Lucifer, which is from a Latin root, means the one who brings light, the shining being. The Hebrew is Ayelet HaShachar, which is the morning star. At any rate, whichever form of name you use, it means a very bright, shining, glorious person.

And I believe myself he was what's called an archangel. Now the word arch, again from a Greek root, don't worry about all that, means ruling. So an archangel is a ruling angel, an angel who rules others.

The same word occurs in archbishop. An archbishop is a bishop who rules other bishops. And here we have, I believe, a picture of one of the main archangels in God's heavenly hosts.

His name was Lucifer. He was called that because he was so glorious and so beautiful. But he made a sad error.

He turned in rebellion against his creator and sought to make himself equal with God. Very interesting, we have a comparison between Lucifer on the one hand and Jesus on the other. Lucifer was a created being not equal with God.

He sought equality with God and fell. Concerning Jesus, it says in Philippians chapter 2, he did not think equality with God was something to be grasped at. He had it by divine right.

But he humbled himself and God exalted him. Now let's look at this little picture here. Beginning in verse 12.

How are you fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning, morning star? How are you cut down to the ground, you who weaken the nations? Now we get the motivation of Lucifer's rebellion. And in the following verses we get the phrase, I will, five times. It's the will of the creature set against the will of God.

The key word is rebellion. For you have said in your heart, and remember that God knows what we say in our hearts. You have said in your heart, I will ascend into heaven, I'm going up.

I will exalt my throne above the stars of God. I will also sit in the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north. I will ascend, you notice the whole thing is going up.

I will ascend above the heights of the clouds. I will be like the Most High. The Most High is Almighty God.

And the word means also, I will be equal to God. So Satan's ambition was to elevate himself to a position of equality with God. He was motivated because he was so wise and so beautiful and so glorious that he said to himself, well I could be God.

My personal opinion, and this is just an opinion, is that he motivated the angels who were under his charge to join him in rebellion. And I just picture this, if you can imagine this kind of thing going on in heaven. And all this started in heaven, believe it or not, but it did.

I can imagine going around to the angels that were under his charge and saying, now you really have talent. You're unusually gifted. God doesn't really appreciate all that you have.

But if I were in charge, you see, I'd give you the position that you really deserve. And apparently, again this is not necessarily, it's a matter of inference, he undermined the loyalty of one third of the angels to God and drew them with him in his rebellion and in his fall. And so God says, you shall be cast down to the sides of the pit.

Let us look also in Ezekiel chapter 28 where we get another picture of this same remarkable being. Ezekiel chapter 28 has got two sections. Each of them is a lamentation or a pronouncement of woe.

The first is on the prince of Tyre. The second is on the king of Tyre. Now if you study the chapter in detail, which we do not have time to do, you'll find that the prince of Tyre was a human being.

It's very clearly stated he was a man, even though he claimed to be God. On the other hand, it's very obvious as we read the description of the king of Tyre that he was no human being. And we have here a little interesting picture of how Satan's kingdom operates.

We have the human ruler, the prince of Tyre, but behind him in the unseen realm we have the satanic ruler, the king of Tyre. And in a sense the human ruler is really not much more than a puppet who moves

as the strings from the unseen realm dictate his moves. When you begin to see these truths, history and politics take on a very different meaning.

I think many, many of the great, so-called great men of history were simply satanic puppets who were moved by invisible strings from the kingdom of Satan to do the things they did. Anyhow, let's look at a little of what the word of God says to this second being, beginning in Ezekiel 28 verse 12. You were the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.

You were in Eden, the garden of God. Every precious stone was your covering, the sardius, topaz and diamond, beryl, onyx and jasper, sapphire, turquoise and emerald with gold. A totally glorious, resplendent being.

The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes was prepared for you on the day you were created, also a master musician. Now there are quite a lot of Bible teachers who believe that Satan, let's say Lucifer, he hadn't changed his name then, Lucifer was responsible for orchestrating the worship of heaven. I think it's important to know that Satan as he is today knows a lot about music and he uses music as one of his means to captivate people.

Going on in verse 14, you were the anointed cherub who covers, who covers what? The throne of God. See the scripture makes it plain that there is a cherub or there are cherubs who with their outstretched wings cover the very throne of God. What a position of honor, glory.

You were on the holy mountain of God. You walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones. This is no human being, you can see that.

You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, and God reminds him, you were created. You're not God, you're a created being. You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created till iniquity was found in you.

I prefer to use the word rebellion, till you became a rebel. And then we read in verse 16, by the abundance of your trading. Now the same word in the book of Proverbs is used of a tail bearer.

It's used of a trader because a trader goes to and fro presenting his wares and selling them. But it's used of a tail bearer because a tail bearer goes to and fro telling tales. Now that's why my thought is that Satan went around just telling his angels, Well look, you see if I had that position you'd really be appreciated.

I mean I would promote you. You would get the authority that you really deserve. So that's just my opinion.

But let's say by the abundance of your manipulations, your scheming, your plotting, you became filled with violence within and you sinned. Therefore I cast you as a profane thing out of the mountain of God. And I destroyed you, O covering cherub from the midst of the fiery stones.

Notice the therefore. What does the therefore indicate? God's judgment on rebellion. And then we get the real motivation of Satan, of Lucifer.

Let's call him Lucifer until he becomes Satan. Verse 17, Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty. You corrupted your wisdom because of your splendor.

What was the initial motivation of Satan? What was the first sin? Crime, that's right. We need to remember that always. The first sin in the universe took place in heaven, not on earth.

It wasn't drunkenness. It wasn't adultery. It wasn't even lying.

It was pride. And believe me, it's still far the most deadly and dangerous of all sins. And lots of churchgoers who wouldn't commit adultery or get drunk are very easily enticed into pride and don't even realize how dangerous it is.

Now I want to deal with a question that comes up in many people's minds. They say, well if Satan was cast out of heaven how can it be that he's still in the heavenlies? The answer is very simple. There's more than one heaven.

The heavenlies are plural. In the first verse of the Bible heaven is presented as plural. In the beginning God created the heavens plural, the earth singular.

And if you trace it all through the Bible heaven is presented as plural. We'll just look at two scriptures, 2 Corinthians chapter 12, verse 2. Paul is talking about people who've had remarkable experiences in the supernatural realm. And he says, I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago, whether in the body I do not know or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows, such a one was caught up to the third heaven.

Now before I became a preacher I was a logician. Somebody once misheard me say I was a magician, but that's not so. And logic has still stuck with me.

And my logical mind tells me if there's a third heaven there has to be a first and a second. You cannot have the third of anything without the first two. So if there is a third heaven as Paul indicates then there are at least three heavens.

Heaven is plural. One other scripture just to confirm that in Ephesians chapter 4, verses 9 and 10. Speaking about what happened between the death of Jesus on the cross and His resurrection and ascension.

It says, Now this, He ascended. What does it mean that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? This is talking about Jesus. He also who descended is the one who ascended far above all the heavens that He might fill all things.

You notice the phrase all the heavens. Again it is not correct to use the word all of less than three of anything. That's the minimum.

Years ago when I was principal of a college for training African teachers in Kenya one of my students came to me and said all my parents have come to see me. So I said I understand what you mean but you can't say that because in English you cannot use all if there are only two. It has to be at least three.

And so when Paul says Jesus ascended far above all heavens again the minimum that will qualify is three. Personally I think that's the total. That's my personal opinion.

You do hear people say sometimes not so often these days I was in the seventh heaven. I would suggest you probably better not use that. I understand the phrase comes from the Quran, the Islamic book.

And I don't think there's any biblical authority for more than three heavens. So if you're feeling really happy it's all right to say I was on cloud nine because the Bible indicates there's a lot of clouds. Now I'll offer you an opinion.

This is simply something that seems probable to me. You don't have to believe it. You can go to heaven without agreeing with me.

But you may get there sooner than I do. I believe the third heaven into which this man that Paul knew was caught up is the heaven of God's presence God's dwelling. And there it says he heard unspeakable words the very words of God himself.

Now I'm inclined to believe the first heaven is the visible heaven that we see. So the second must be between the first and the third. Somewhere between our planet and the heaven of God's dwelling there is another heaven.

This is again my opinion. I think there are a lot of things in the Bible that confirm it and in our experience. So between us and God is a satanic kingdom.

I think this has got a lot to do with things that happen in our lives. I'm sure you've heard the phrase praying through. Praying through what? I know when I first sought the Lord as a person who didn't know him I tried to pray for an hour and couldn't utter a word.

Yet I was earnestly seeking him. And then somehow I broke through. I believe looking back I broke through satanic forces that were opposing me coming into direct personal contact with Jesus.

That was the turning point in my whole life. So don't laugh at the old time Pentecostals who talk about praying through. Some of their methods may be a little bit unconventional but the truth is there.

This is part of our spiritual warfare. I'll give you a few examples in just a few minutes. But I think if you begin to realize that there is an opposing kingdom between you and God it will make a lot more sense in your spiritual experience.

It will teach you lessons in prayer. I want to turn now to the book of Daniel which contains a great deal of useful information in these areas. I want to take an incident in the life of Daniel which I believe illustrates the principles that I'm trying to bring out.

The chapter that I want to turn to is chapter 10. If you are really interested in your own time you need to study this chapter carefully. But to economize on time I'm not going to read the whole chapter.

I'm going to just give a brief background. At a certain point when Daniel was a very mature believer he gave himself to fasting for 21 days, three weeks with what has become called a Daniel fast. He didn't abstain from all forms of food but he ate only very simple, basic food and he took no wine, no fancy drinks.

As it says in the Living Bible, of course no desserts. And he was earnestly seeking God for an understanding of the future destiny of his people, the Jewish people. And for three weeks he prayed and nothing happened.

See this is an illustration of what I'm talking about. And then a marvelous, mighty, heavenly being came with the answer to his prayer. So powerful was the presence of this being that the other people with Daniel simply fled in terror.

And Daniel was left absolutely bereft of physical strength just almost like John later when he saw Jesus after the resurrection and ascension. He said, I fell at his feet like one dead. But this angel had come with the answer to Daniel's prayer.

He had been sent from God. The point that I want to emphasize is the first day Daniel started to pray the angel was sent. But he didn't arrive till three weeks later because on the way from God's throne to Daniel's presence on earth he encountered satanic opposition.

The opposition he encountered was not from human beings. No human being could withstand an angel like that. It was not on earth.

It was not in God's heaven. But it was in some area between the heaven of God and earth. I believe the area of Satan's kingdom.

In other words the angel had to break through Satan's kingdom to arrive with the message that God had sent him with. And this is what he says. And he's going to be talking about certain beings.

One called the Prince of Persia. Others called the Kings of Persia. And later the Prince of Greece.

And as you look at these you'll find that none of them are human beings. They are all angelic beings. Satanic angels who did their best to oppose the coming of the angel to Daniel.

Let me point out something that I think is thrilling. Daniel's prayer set all heaven in motion. It set the angel of God on his way and it stood up the angels of Satan to oppose.

And Daniel had to pray through. He had to hold on for 21 days before he got the answer. So dear brothers and sisters, sometimes when you're praying and you don't get an answer it's not because you're praying for the wrong thing.

In fact it's because you're praying for the right thing. But there's opposition. And one of the things that we'll be seeking to look at in these talks is how to overcome the opposition.

How to pray through. How to break through. How to win the victory over these forces.

Anyhow, let's look at what the angel said to Daniel. In verses 12 and 13. That's Daniel 10, verses 12 and 13.

Then he, the angel, said to me, Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand and to humble yourself before God. How did he humble himself? By fasting. Bear that in mind.

Fasting is an appointed way to humble ourselves before God. From the first day that you set your heart to understand and to humble yourself before God your words were heard and I've come because of your words. In other words, God sent me the first day you started to pray.

Why didn't he arrive? Not because the journey from God's throne to heaven takes an angel 21 days. That's not the reason. Now verse 13.

But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me, resisted me 21 days. Who is the prince of the kingdom of Persia? Probably Satan. But at any rate, it's the satanic angel whom Satan has sent over the Persian empire to work out God's purposes.

I mean, to work out Satan's purposes. Resist God's purposes in the Persian empire. Now let me pause for a moment.

Why was the Persian empire important at this time? Well, if you study the history of Israel there were four successive Gentile empires that dominated the Jewish people after they had turned against God in rebellion and been exiled from their own land. The first was Babylon which took them into exile. The second was Medo-Persia or Persia which was the one that was in power in Daniel's time.

The third was Greece. The fourth was Rome. And all God's purposes for the human race centered in the Jewish people because only from the Jewish people could come the Messiah and the Savior.

And because God's purposes centered in Israel Satan's opposition likewise centered in Israel. In other words, when you're in the center of God's plan that's when you'll have the most satanic opposition. It's important to bear that in mind.

So, what Satan was seeking to do was keep the Jewish people, Israel, under bondage and away from returning to their own land. What Daniel was praying for was the return of Israel to their own land. So this satanic prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood him.

And then the angel goes on, and Michael, one of the chief princes or one of the archangels, came to help him. So this angel couldn't break through on his own. This is really a fascinating picture.

And why did Michael come? What is Michael's particular job amongst the archangels? He has one very important assignment. Keep your finger in Daniel 10. Turn for a moment to Daniel 12, verse 1. Daniel 12, verse 1. At that time Michael shall stand up, the great prince, that's the archangel, who stands watch over the sons of your people.

Who are the sons of your people when Daniel is being addressed? The Jewish people, that's right. So any time Michael is in the center, you can be sure the Jewish people are center stage in history. Because his particular task is to watch over them, protect them from Satan's attempts to destroy them, which have been, as we all know, very numerous.

Going back to Daniel 10, verse 13. The angel concludes with, I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia. Now kings is plural.

And I think contrary to our usual usage, the prince was the supreme ruler, the kings were under him. So there was one prince and under him a number of kings. That's what I say.

Rulers with various areas and descending orders of authority. What were the jobs of those kings? We have no word from God. But I personally believe that, for instance, if let's take Great Britain.

Satan has a prince over Great Britain, which I don't doubt he has. By no means do I doubt that. Under that major prince there are lesser rulers who probably dominate each of the main cities of Britain.

As a preacher going around, I've learned by experience to put out my antennae when I come to a city and try to discern what is the particular satanic power over that particular city. Then in the Persian kingdom there were many different ethnic groups. And I'm inclined to believe that there is a satanic power over each major ethnic group.

If I can say this without offending anybody, I think that's particularly obvious in the case of the American Indians, which is a very tragic story. Because in all the spiritual and material blessings that have come to America, the American Indians have hardly tasted any of them. And they are extremely deep in witchcraft.

And I personally believe that that particular satanic person to whom was assigned the task of keeping the American Indians in darkness and bondage has prevailed basically up to this time. We could go with many other ethnic groups but time doesn't allow us. Then of course there were also in the Persian empire a lot of different religions.

And I'm inclined to believe each religious group or cult or sect had a particular ruler over it. So here was God's angel being resisted by a whole group of satanic angels opposing his coming to Daniel. However when Michael came he broke through, delivered his message, but he said to Daniel, I want to tell you what's going to happen when I go back.

So we go on now to verse 20 of Daniel chapter 10. Then the angel said, Do you know why I've come to you? And now I must return to fight with the prince of Persia. In other words the battle with the prince of Persia isn't finished.

What would happen to the Persian empire when the prince of Persia had been dealt with? In all probability it would collapse, which it did a little later. But it wasn't the last empire. And so he says, And when I have gone forth, indeed the prince of Greece will come, the satanic ruler over the next major empire.

Under Alexander the Great the Greek empire totally crushed and defeated the Persian empire and assumed dominion over a tremendous area of the earth's surface. Alexander in 10 years conquered from Greece in the west to India in the east, including also the area, the south coast of the Mediterranean, one of the most tremendous feats of military conquest. But there was another person.

There was a prince behind him. I'm really inclined to believe that most of the major events of human history can only be fully explained in those terms. And then he says, the angel in verse 21, But I will tell you what is noted in the Scripture of truth.

In other words, I really came to tell you what the Word of God says. And you'll find the next chapters contain that. And he says, No one upholds me against these except Michael your prince.

And then he goes on in the first verse of the next chapter which is part of the same talk. Also in the first year of Darius the Mede, I, even I, stood up to confirm and strengthen him. Now Darius was the first Medo-Persian ruler that crushed the Babylonian empire and moved in and took its place.

And Darius and Cyrus after him opened the way for the Jewish people to begin to return to their own land. So in a certain sense, the defeat of Babylon by Darius was a major spiritual victory in the purposes of God. And this angel says, I was the one that strengthened Darius.

Again we see that human rulers and human commanders don't operate in a vacuum on their own. Behind them are unseen angelic forces, both divine and satanic. The angels of God strengthen those rulers and men who will forward the purposes of God on earth.

The angels of Satan resist those men. That's a very major reason why Christians should pray for the rulers of their nations. If it's possible, they should inhibit the activity of satanic angels and release the activity of God's angels.

But remember this particular situation, nothing happened in a Daniel prayer. I don't know of anything that challenges us more to prayer than this revelation. And it seems to me, although this may seem strange, that Daniel's prayer was one of the forces that enabled the angel of God to break through.

So brothers and sisters, maybe you've been underestimating the possibility of what your prayers can do. Now, so Satan, fallen from being Lucifer, having set up his rival rebellious kingdom in the heavenlies, rules there over a host of rebellious angels. The key word to describe Satan and those who are with him is the word rebel.

Rebellion against God. Now, Satan also has a lower, shall we say stratum of his kingdom, on earth. And again, the key word that describes those over whom he rules on earth is the word rebel.

This is made plain in Ephesians chapter 2. We're talking now not about Satan's kingdom in the heavenlies but those over whom he rules on earth. Ephesians chapter 2, and these words are addressed to Christians. And you, God made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins.

Now he describes how people live before they are converted and come to serve God. In which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air. Who is the prince of the power of the air? Satan, that's right.

The spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience. What's the word that describes the sons of disobedience? Rebels, that's right. Anyone who is in rebellion against God automatically comes under the control of Satan.

Understand? It's not enough to go to church and sing hymns. You have to lay down your rebellion against God and submit yourself to Jesus. That's when the change comes.

Lots of church goers are still rebels. And as rebels they are actually being controlled by Satan. Now Paul goes on saying in verse 3, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves.

Any of us disagree here? One thing I know is I certainly did. I have no doubts about where I was before the Lord found me. I was a rebel and in the kingdom of rebels.

I didn't know it. I thought I was very clever, very successful. I thought I had all the answers to everything until I started to read the Bible and then I discovered I didn't.

I can't go into that but I just want to say Paul said we apostles including I Paul we were all in that category. Rebels being manipulated by Satan through spiritual power which we didn't understand. We didn't know who was pulling the strings.

We just moved as their strings were pulled. Among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind. Notice it's not only the desires of the flesh but our minds are alienated and enmity with God until we surrender.

The intellectuals are some of God's most fervent enemies. And then he says we were by nature the children of wrath just as others. So that's a description of the lower stratum of Satan's kingdom.

Humanity on earth, all human rebels regardless of their race or their denominational label unless they are truly submitted to Jesus Christ God's appointed ruler are rebels and Satan by spiritual power controls them. Now there's a very interesting phrase there it says he is the ruler of the power the realm of authority of the air. I can't dwell on this but there are two main Greek words for air.

One is air from which we get the word air. The other is ether from which we get the word ether. Now I'm not concerned with the words that come from them but the fact is that air is the lower air contiguous with

the earth's surface.

Ether is the higher, rarer air. Which word do you think is used here? The lower air. In other words, Satan rules the surface of the earth.

That's his realm. There's a lot of interesting speculations because when Jesus comes it says we will be caught up to meet him in the air. Which air? The lower air.

Although we can't go into all that there's a lot we could theorize about that but we'll restrain ourselves. I just want to give you one remarkable picture of Satan which you may never have noticed. In the book of Job chapter 41.

Now the whole of this chapter deals with a creature named Leviathan who is some kind of marine monster. And we don't know very much about Leviathan but do you think that the Bible which is so economical would devote 34 verses just to a marine monster? No. The truth is Leviathan is a type or a picture of Satan.

You can study this carefully and see this. I only want to point out to you the closing statement in Job 41.34. He beholds every high thing, he's extremely proud and he is king over all the children of pride. That's Satan.

Wherever pride enters the human heart well that's the influence that caused Satan to rebel against God. Pride brings us under the control of Satan. It doesn't matter whether we're Pentecostals, Baptists, Catholics.

That's not the issue. The issue is what's our heart attitude toward God. And unless we have a heart that is truly submitted and surrendered to God through Jesus Christ we can use all sorts of nice religious language and lay claim to all sorts of titles.

But the fact is we are under the king Leviathan because he's king over all the children of pride. How many sermons do you hear against pride? You don't need to answer me. You see basically I think the church today is majoring on minors.

I know when I was a pastor years ago I used to be right down on people smoking. That was terrible. The problem was we wouldn't have people in our congregation at that time that smoked.

But we didn't say anything about people that quarreled with their wives. And I felt such a hypocrite when I told a young man that he couldn't be a member because he smoked. And I knew there were people in the congregation that were very wrong in their attitude and relationship to their wives or to their husbands.

See things like smoking and drinking and drunkenness are just little branches on the tree. But you know what the root is? And the gospel of Matthew in introducing the gospel causes John the Baptist to say now also the axe is laid to what? The root of the tree. That's right.

That's what we should be aiming at. All right now I want to give you just a little closing summation of Satan's ambitions, his purposes. He has very definite purposes.

He has two main ambitions. To dominate the whole human race. You remember that one of the phrases used in Ephesians 6.12 was the world dominators in this present darkness.

And his second purpose is to receive worship. You need to understand this. You see he laid claim to equality with God but was disqualified.

But he hasn't given up the claim. And there's one way he can still assert the claim. What is that? By receiving worship.

Because worship is due only to God. So whenever Satan receives worship he's saying there you are you see I'm still God. And when you really analyze everything that Satan does his ultimate purpose is to receive the worship of the whole human race.

And in my judgment from a prophetic perspective he's very near to achieving his ambition. Satan and his angels in the heavenlies were I believe the gods of paganism. All gods recognized and worshipped by all pagan societies and races are just different ways of describing Satan and his angels.

Zeus, Hermes, Poseidon all the Greek gods that I used to know so much about and care so little about now. Just different labels for Satanic angels. And as you look through all the cultures of human race you see different titles but the same beings.

And when they worship what are they worshipping? Satan and his angels. And there's one particular way that a fallen man has to relate to the Satanic kingdom. The generic word is witchcraft which is prevalent in all pagan societies under different forms.

You hardly go to any major section of the human race which still has some kind of pagan background without encountering a person who's called the witch doctor. You find a different name in different languages but the same person. The witch doctor in a certain sense is Satan's priest.

He's the one who enables people to get in touch with Satan's kingdom. Why do they want that? Two main reasons. First of all they're terribly afraid of the disasters that Satan would bring upon them and most of their sacrifices and their rites are to propitiate these very cruel and temperamental beings.

And secondly they want power and witchcraft is a means to power. I tell people in foreign mission fields don't ever go to Africa or India and tell people that Satan isn't real because they all know he is. Demons are real, they know them well.

What you have to tell them is demons are real but Jesus is real and he has defeated the demons and he gives us power to defeat them. So ultimately witchcraft as a religious practice is an expression of man's rebellion against God. Witchcraft is the natural religion of fallen man and it permeates the whole human race.

It's not something very strange or unusual. And the last thing I want to say and it's important is in our days witchcraft is making a determined comeback. It's like where Christianity came these satanic beings were forced back but they were never totally defeated and now they're saying it's our turn, we're coming back.

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