

# The Landlady From Heaven and the Tenants From Hell

by Ian Paisley

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of genuine repentance and salvation, highlighting the dangers of a 'swept and garnished' house that lacks the true cleansing power of the blood of Jesus.*

**Duration:** 32:16

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, Matthew 12:30, Matthew 12:43, Matthew 12:45, Luke 11:21, Luke 11:24

**Topics:** "Spiritual Warfare", "Gods Grace"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher reflects on a personal experience from many years ago, where he felt the power of his Savior defeating Satan. He emphasizes the importance of being led by God's grace and being cleansed of sin. The preacher then reads from the Gospel of Matthew, specifically focusing on a passage about an unclean spirit returning to a man after being cast out. He warns the congregation about the dangers of drifting away from God and urges them to heed the Savior's call before it's too late. The sermon highlights the power of the Holy Spirit to overcome Satan's schemes and emphasizes the need for reliance on Christ.

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## Transcript

Pick up the authorized version of the Word of God before you in your pew and turn to the first gospel, the gospel according to Matthew, the first book of the New Testament. And we're reading at the chapter twelve of Matthew's gospel, and we're reading from the verse forty-three. The forty-third verse of the twelfth chapter of the gospel according to Matthew.

When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out. And when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished.

Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there. And the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so, it shall be also unto this wicked generation.

Now turn over with me in your Bible to the third gospel, to Luke's gospel, chapter eleven. And we're reading at verse twenty-one. Twenty-first verse of the eleventh chapter of Luke's gospel.

When a strong man arm keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace. For when a stronger than he shall come unto him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour. Wherein he trusteth, and divideth his foils.

He that is not with me is against me, and he that gathereth not with me scattereth. When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places seeking rest and finding none. He saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out.

And when he cometh, he findeth it swept and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there. And the last state of that man is worse the first.

Amen, and God will bless and stamp his holy word with his infallible and unchanging blessing. We have recorded for us from the lips of the incarnate God, a most intriguing revelation of the battle for man's soul, as old John Bunyan would have put it. This story is marked with solemn in simplicity, with fiery intensity, and with mysterious knowledge.

Only the Lord Jesus Christ himself could release the history contained therein. There is an intensity here which characterizes all the dealings between Christ and the prince of devils, as the Puritans called him, the dunghill deity of the prince of all evil. It should be underscored that Christ never compromises when he confronts Satan face to face.

He does not do battle with Satan, with Satan's weapons. Christ does not tolerate hell, nor tolerate hell's monarch. He never is in alliance with the eligible.

He never makes Christ his ally. He faces the old serpent openly and forthrightly until he obtains the victory. In this narrative, four things need to be carefully noted.

First of all, we need to note the landlord of hate. The Lord Jesus has here characterized, in a condensed characterization, Satan himself. Please open your Bible at Luke's Gospel, chapter 11, and keep your finger in Matthew's Gospel, chapter 12.

First of all, you will see the displays of the devil. He claims man's heart as his palace. It is his usurpers.

He is no prince. He is a self-styled prince. He has no property, no throne, or no palace.

He labels all his stolen goods with atrocious, hellish claims. He attempts at all times, Satan, to ungodly and dethrone God himself. And so we have his displays.

Secondly, we have his demonstrations. He is a strong man. The Lord Jesus Christ admits that.

He is strong in mind and in the exercise of his evil powers. The two greatest champions in the Bible were Samson, he was the strongest man that ever lived, and King Solomon, he was the wisest man that ever lived. But both of them were broken and defeated by Satan.

Those in the Christian life know from the darkest contest just how mighty Satan the old dragon is. It is well for the Christian that he keeps company with a stronger than the strong man, that is, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Mark, thirdly, the deceits of the devil.

He is armed. What is Satan's greatest weapon? Satan's greatest weapon is the lie. Jesus Christ said the devil was a liar from the beginning and a bold knot in truth.

By falsehood he overcame the innocent in Eden's garden. It was his lie that overthrew our race at the beginning. And it is with continued and continuing falsehood that the devil maintains darkness in the minds of the men of the world.

He has blinded the minds of them that believe not. He is a forger, a counterfeiter. He deceives the sinner.

He tells the sinner, you are too young to die and be damned. And when that does not succeed, he then tells the sinner it is too late for him to repent. You are too old, he says, to seek the Lord.

Could I say to sinners in this meeting, you are never too old to seek the Lord. And you are never too young to seek the Lord. He fills our hopes with airy dreams or kills with slavish fear.

And holds us still in extreme presumption or despair. Now he persuades how easy it is to walk the road to heaven. And on he swells our sins and cries, they cannot be forgiven.

Thus he supports his cruel throne by mischief and deceit. And drags the sons of Adam down to darkness. And Satan uses all the lusts of the flesh and all the lusts of the world.

And all the pride of life to enchain us from the way of life and the way to life. Who can count the arrows that the devil lets loose upon mankind. Who can exhaust the plots and the plans and the purposes of hell's monarch.

Who can catalogue the satanic ploys of that old serpent, the devil. They are past finding out by human searching. While man sleeps, the devil sews his tears.

He watches over all his black sheep carefully. Satan can never be surprised. Only the storm of the Holy Ghost can blast his refuge of lies to pieces.

And destroy his falseness. To fallible man, Satan is invincible. But he is not invincible to the God man, the man Christ Jesus.

Notice he is defensive. He keeps his goods in peace. The devil's peace is the devil's greatest counterfeit.

When the devil inoculates a sinner with his counterfeit peace, how terrible that sinner's state is. But Satan speaks with a lying persuasion. Peace, peace, peace, when there is no peace.

And that lie is believed. The sinner is as good as damned. The wrath of God that is upon him does not make him fret.

Nor does it drive sleep from the body of the deceived sinner. All the symptoms of a lost soul are unknown to the soul doped with satanic drugs. The sermon goes unheeded.

The ringing of the death bells cannot be discerned. The sleeping soul even murmurs amidst his dreams, I have no worries. I have no upsets.

I have no fears. Ah, Satan the master. He can lure the sinful soul with infernal music to the depths of the lake that burneth with brimstone and fire forever.

What a deceiver Satan is. I would say solemnly, O God Almighty, Waken souls doped and duped by the devil. Awaken them from the sleep of death.

Bring them to their senses. Help them to see that the end of the road that they are traveling is eternal death, eternal judgment, eternal fire, and eternal torment. May God help man and woman to wake up to the power of the devil to deceive them and make them to lie, to believe the lie.

That all, says the scripture, that all who believe the lie will be damned. Either something happens, a mystical change takes place in this man's life who was possessed with an unclean spirit. The unclean spirit suddenly withdraws from his tenancy.

He is not forced out. He leaves of his own volition and will. There is no given reason why this should happen.

The fact is beyond controversy that the devil and his devils do withdraw from those whom they have previously indulged and tormented. The footprint of the devil is no longer marked on the floor of this house. The filth of hell is no longer discernible in the property of this house.

The man once possessed by the unclean spirit is changed. He ceases to do business on the Lord's day. He attends the services of the church.

He applies for membership. He is accepted. He attends the prayer meeting.

He offers public prayer, but the secret of private praying is scarcely known to him. Outwardly he presents a fair show in the flesh, but there has been no true repentance. He has shown no struggle against his indwelling depravity.

He has never wept over his sins before God. He wields no battle against the world and the flesh and the devil. He yearns not for holiness.

He has a new coat, but he hasn't got a new heart. The man was a sinner yesterday. He poses as a saint today, but nobody can tell you how or when he became the saint that he now professes to be.

But our Lord Jesus is telling us how this change has come about. You talk to this man of the doctrines of the gospel, he is as ignorant as a tomfit on that subject. He knows nothing about the impure righteousness and imparted righteousness of Jesus, the Son of God.

The unclean spirit is out of him for the moment, but the end is not yet. This was not a visit of the Holy Spirit of God. It was a visit from a supposed landlady from heaven which changed the heart.

So we have the Lord of hate. We have the supposed landlady from heaven, but we have something more. We have the satanic lodgers from hell.

The unclean spirit said, I will return unto my house whence I came out. He did not admit that anyone else owned that house. Although he had forsaken it.

The darkness and damnation of this returning unclean spirit is terrible to behold. Notice the first finding that this returned unclean spirit found when he came back. He found that it was empty.

I see that unclean spirit come to the outside door of that house which he had usurped for so long and claimed that it was his. I see him opening the door for it is unlocked. I notice that the house is greatly changed all inside.

But no one has taken up residence there. It is an empty house. He cries with a loud voice, anyone in? Christ is not in residence here.

No, there is no blood on the door. Nor is there any sense of the sweet presence of the Holy Spirit. The unclean spirit searches the heart from top to bottom, but it is an empty house indeed.

The empty house is different. It is empty, but it is also swept. The house has not been washed, nor cleansed, but rather swept.

Sweeping can dislodge the loose dirt and dust, but without washing the house and heart cannot be cleaned. What can wash me white as snow? Nothing, nothing but the blood of Jesus. The unclean spirit first noticed the sweeping.

And then he noticed the garnishing. No scripture texts hang upon the walls of this newly swept house. The power of this Word of God causes all hell to cringe in fear.

So the Holy Scriptures are banned. No word of the cross will be tolerated here, but the idolatry image of the crucifix will have its part in the garnishing. It was Mr. Spurgeon who once said, Oh, the garnished people I have met with, garnished with their givings, their long-winded praying, garnished with their profession of zeal and their pretense of reverence.

You will find a Protestant oh so zealous who would go into fits and yet will commit open fornication. They are swept, swept and garnished. Walk in ladies and gentlemen.

Did you ever see a house so fully furnished as this? How elegant, how tasteful. Just so but men can be damned gracefully and can go to hell respectfully, just as well as those who go down to the pit in vulgar and filthy depravity. C. H. Spurgeon was right.

But what is the ending? The unclean spirit goes abroad to find other lodgers from hell to join him in the final damnation of this poor indwelt soul. Seven times more wicked. That's an interesting expression, isn't it? That all the devils in hell are not equally wicked.

There are better devils and there are worse devils. There are devils utterly corrupted and there are devils not so corrupted. Seven devils better than the devil who recruited them.

But they all at the end of the day are filthy, twisted, depraved, debauched. And more and more they drown and immerse the soul with their wickedness. These are trees, says the book of Jude, that are plucked up by the roots.

These are wandering stars reserved for the blackness of darkness forever. Ask you tonight, my hearer, are you one of these deceived people? You have a house that's swept and garnished, but its enter, it is incarnated with the devils of hell. You sit at the Lord's table, you drink the wine, the divinely appointed memorial of a supper, but alas, you're going to drink the cup of God's wrath forever.

You have never been genuinely born again. You have sung the Lord's praises in time, but you will sigh hell's agonies unceasingly in eternity. You have had a glimpse of heaven, but you will feel eternal death.

You will be in the everlasting burnings of the unending ages to come. What of this dark obituary notice? Will it be graven on your tombstone? Listen to it. The last state of this man is worse than the first, drifting away on sin's treacherous tide, drifting where death and darkness abide, drifting away from heaven in your pride, drifting away, drifting away from hope's blessed shore, drifting away where wild breakers roar, drifting unstranded right evermore, far from the light.

Why will you drift on billows of shame, spurning God's grace again and again? Soon you'll be lost in sin to remain ever away. Brother, sister, the Savior has called you before. Don't you see you are nearing eternity's shore? Soon you may perish, be lost evermore.

Jesus is now calling for you. My final word is the good news of the gospel. There is not only a Lord of hate, and there is not only an unclean spirit, and there is not only a supposed landlady who sweeps and garnishes the house, and there's not only lodgers from hell that occupy that swept and garnished property, but there is one Jesus Christ who is stronger than the strong man.

The Lord Jesus is the infinite creator, and He's far more in power than any finite creature. Satan must yield to the Savior. Christ destroyed him at Calvary.

All his works are destroyed. Christ is stronger than the prince of hell. And when a stronger than the strong man comes, He overcomes him.

He taketh from him all his armor, for in He trusteth and divideth his spoils. Christ is a mighty victor of the cross. Oh, how I remember that day when the stronger than the strong saved my soul.

That was seventy-four years ago. It's fresh to me now as if it only happened a few minutes ago. My mighty Savior destroys Satan's armor, strips him of all his powers.

And I cry out, Oh, sovereign grace, my heart's subdued. I would be led in triumph to drag the old dragon from his seat with all my prayer. The day I was saved was in the line of the old gospel hymn, A few more years shall roll, a few more seasons come, and we shall be with those that rest asleep within the tomb.

Then, O my Lord, my soul for that great day, O wash me in the precious blood and take my sins away. A few more suns shall set o'er these dark hills of time, and we shall be where suns are not, afar, serena. Then, O my Lord, prepare my soul for that great day.

O wash me in the precious blood and take my sins. A few more storms shall beat on this wide rocky shore, and we shall be where tempests cease and surges swell no more. Then, O my Lord, prepare my soul for that great day.

O wash me in the precious blood and take my sins away. Dear sinner friend, pray that great prayer from your heart now. Don't wait till the end of this meeting.

The only time you have is now. Now is the accepted time. Now is the day of salvation.

With the holy book of God in my hand, and with the name of my blessed Savior on my lips, I plead with you, sinner. Heed the warning voice. Make the Lord your final choice.

Then all heaven will rejoice in God's name. Be in time. Amen.

This is power hands. O God, our Father, we thank Thee for Thy stillness and Thy presence. Keep speaking to lost souls, those that are held in the grip of a false profession and think because the house has been swept and garnished or converted.

O rob them of the devil's lie of a false peace and bring them to know heaven's great donation of real peace, peace made by the blood of the Lamb. And help us all to be anxious for our lost ones, earnest in prayer, and especially earnest in prayer this week as young people will be faced with the challenge of the gospel. Bring them in.

Bring the wandering ones to Jesus is the prayer of our hearts. And the people of God said, Amen.

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