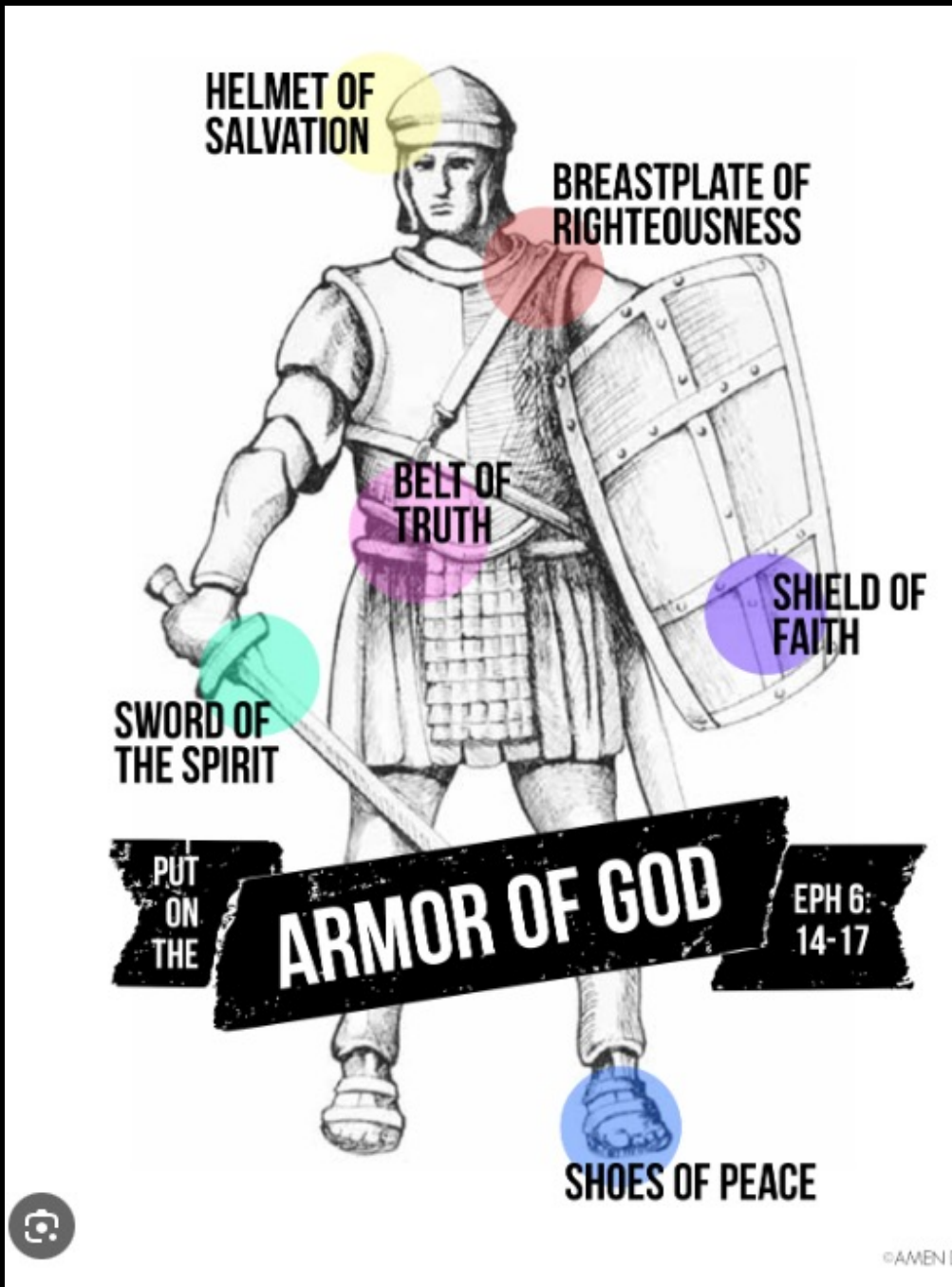


Pentwater Bible Church

Revelation Message 23

February 4, 2024



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Daniel E. Woodhead – Pastor Teacher

Pentwater Bible Church

Revelation Message Twenty-Three

DEFEATING THE DEMONIC

February 4, 2024

Daniel E. Woodhead

1 Timothy 4: 1

Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils (KJV);

Although we do not always know this enemy, one thing is sure. Satan *always* knows us! He is thoroughly acquainted with all of God's children and is quite aware of those who fall for his strategies. He also knows those who recognize and count on their position in Christ and who find and fulfill God's will for their lives. These saints are what the devil fears most, for they constitute the deadliest threat to his plans and ambitions. It is to us that he attacks in the subtlest manner. He brings us into temptation for the activities, which we know we should not be engaged. We fail to realize or admit his involvement and think that our activities are harmless or out of the purview of anyone else including God.

THE CHRISTIAN WALK AS WARFARE

Two Commands; One Battle

Ephesians 6: 10-11

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil (KJV).

Paul starts this section with two commands to make us aware of the enemy's plan of attack. The enemy wants to thwart God's plan for our families and will do whatever he can to draw us away from God. Our protection against this enemy is to avail ourselves of all available God given resources to protect ourselves against the strategy of the enemy... Satan. Christians are not to attack Satan, or advance against him; they are only to "stand" or hold the territory Christ and His body, the church, have conquered. Without God's armor, believers will be defeated by the "schemes" of the devil, which have been effective for thousands of years.

Understanding the Spiritual Battle Introduction

Ephesians 6: 12

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places (KJV).

This struggle implies hand-to-hand combat. It is not a casual annoyance that is being referred to here. Paul is describing a battle that happens in the mind, for control of the mind, and gets manifested in the flesh. The Devil and his Demons want to destroy us and will take every chance we give them to do that. These are genuine powerful beings not mere fantasies. They live outside

of time and space where we will be when we leave these bodies in which we temporarily reside. Once a person becomes a believer in Jesus Christ, we become their enemies and they begin their attack. The two major mistakes Christians make toward this evil empire are to ignore it or to give it too much attention.

“High Places” is Hebrew phraseology for the connecting medium to their world that Christ spoke of as life (Matthew 18:8-9; 19: 17; Mark 9: 43; 45). The high places of gross idolatry are physical locations where interaction with demons is carried out to connect to the demonic inhabitants that live there and not to God. These interactions with demons are carried out in the sphere of conflict seeking to damage and kill those who would come to God and find eternal salvation. The Old Testament referred to the phallic idols of the Canaanites, which the Hebrews followed and set up on hills as “High Places.” It occurs ninety times in the OT in the exact phrase “High Places.” It always refers to an effort to thwart God’s plans. Darkness refers to the ugly nature of evil that has entered the earth’s domain when Satan caused Eve to ignore the Word of God and follow the temptation offered by Satan.

Idolatry in itself poses a terrible danger and has to be destroyed. The Hebrew’s were commanded to perform a “herem”, which is a total destruction of the “High Places” and all associated with them. These places are demon energized and an affront to God. Their existence violated the first two commandments of the Decalogue as well.

Exodus 20: 1- 6

¹And God spake all these words, saying, ²I am Jehovah thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. ³Thou shalt have no other gods before me. ⁴Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image, nor any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: ⁵thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them; for I Jehovah thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, upon the third and upon the fourth generation of them that hate me, ⁶and showing lovingkindness unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments (ASV, 1901).

The principal entities which represent the demons in time and space in the OT are the:

- Idolaters who burn incense to Baal, the sun, moon and stars and planets also known as astrologers.
- Adorers of Ashera or sexual worship.
- Sodomites.
- Male and female prostitutes.
- Worshippers of Molech who offered their children as sacrifices, which is modern day abortion.

So, images and idols are intimately connected with occult and demon worship because the entity behind the idol is a demon enticing the worshipper to some desirable sensual experience. If there were not some “charge” or excitement the worshipper would not be attracted to an inanimate object.

STANDING YOUR GROUND

The Whole Armor of God (Withstanding Evil).

Truth, The Breastplate of Righteousness
Shoes of the Gospel of Truth
Faith as a Shield
Salvation as a Helmet
The Word of God is our Sword
Prayer in the Spirit of God

The principal danger the Christian faces is whether the demonic world is credible or not. The problem is not unbelief but credulity. Satan stands ready to take advantage of this in an era when occult religion and liberalism is threatening to replace pure biblical Christianity. Liberalism produces a fuzzy imprecise rendering of the Bible reducing its credibility. This draws people away from the truth and protection of God's Word causing a spiritual vacuum. The occultic religions seek to invade the vacuum opened by liberalism. Satan then is let in to deceive in greater measure. One example of this is to reject the activity of the demons altogether and fail to discern a condition of the general nature of the fall vis-à-vis direct involvement of demons. For example, in demon-ridden China of the nineteenth century the natives had no difficulty differentiating between mental disease and demon-possession. Dr. Alfred Lechler, a German psychologist, stressed the need to distinguish between the diseased and the demonic. In this connection he showed the difference between schizophrenia, epilepsy, depression, neurosis, psychopathy, senile dementia, and the demonic. Christians must exercise every precaution to avoid falling prey to Satan's two popular tricks of either seeing Satan and demons in nothing or else seeing them in everything.

Ephesians 6: 13

Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand KJV).

The apostle knowing that this front is a battle uses the illustration of Roman soldier's armament for us to utilize in our war with the enemy. This is so that we may be able to stand against the wiles and stratagems of Satan, against his power and might, to oppose his schemes, and resist his temptations. Because this is a battle it is fitting that the battle gear is used to describe the spiritual equipment given to us to succeed in deflecting the "arrows" of the evil one. We routinely meet him to face to face and give him battle, being fitted with the whole armour of God. Satan and his dominions are very busy bringing about trials, afflictions, and persecution because of the Word of God. We are then told having put on the whole armour of God in order to stand, we can as conquerors withstand the enemy.

Ephesians 6: 14

Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness (KJV);

Keep your ground, do not desert the army which is the church of Christ, nor his cause. Continue in the station in which you are placed, keep your post, be upon your watch, stand upon your guard. Have your loins girted about with truth; by which is meant the Gospel as depicted in Ephesians 1:13. It also means that we are not to embrace superstitions but check everything against the Word

of God (Acts 17:11). Girding our *loins* with the truth shows that the Word should be near and close to us, and never departed from it. It is a means of keeping us close to God and Christ, and of strengthening us against the assaults and attacks of Satan; and is great use in the Christian's spiritual conflict with our demonic enemies. The girdle is the part of armour, that is so important that it sometimes represents the whole armament (Isaiah 5:27). The *breastplate of righteousness* is a reference to Isaiah 59:17, meaning not works of righteousness done by men (though these are a deterrent when correctly used against the reproaches and charges of the enemy as they were by Samuel in I Samuel 12:3). Therefore, it seems best to understand this as the righteousness of Christ, which being imputed by God and received by faith, is a guard against and repels the accusations and charges of Satan, and is a security from all wrath and condemnation.

The Whole Armour (The Gospel fights Wickedness).

Ephesians 6: 15

And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace (KJV);

Our sure footing and stability in battle is due to our having our feet shod with the *gospel of peace*. We have the blessed assurance that we are God's children and we receive peace with God at the time we accept His gospel. Among the armour of soldiers to provide balance and keep them upright were shoes, or boots, sometimes made of iron, and other times made of brass. The Gospel is our firm foundation. A firm, solid knowledge of the Gospel, as it emanates peace by Jesus Christ, yields a sure foundation for the Christian soldier to set his foot upon and stand fast. The *gospel of peace* means we are no longer at war with Him (Romans 5: 1). Our countenance reflects this peace as the war with Him is ended, and we have become a traitor to Satan and his demons and their overwhelming influence over us prior to conversion. Once saved, we receive the peace of God who will bruise Satan under our feet shortly (Romans 16: 20; Philippians 4: 7).

Ephesians 6: 16

Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked (KJV).

The Whole Armour (Word of God is our weapon) .

Our faith is based upon truth as given by Christ and revealed in the Bible. When we accept that and believe, our faith becomes as strong as a shield to buffet the many attempts we will experience to erode our faith. Satan is a formidable foe. If we take up our faith seriously, he can't hurt us. He will try and we must resist.

Ephesians 6: 17

and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God (KJV):

The helmet protects the head, which is the control center of our bodies, and our salvation acts in the same way. Salvation by Christ is a defense of the head against false doctrines. Just as the helmet is a piece of armour for the head, our salvation is a protector of the head in times of difficulty, affliction, and distress. Like a helmet, it covers the head in the day of battle when engaged with Satan, the enemy of souls.

The word of God is compared to a "sword" for its two edges: Christ's New Testament law and Gospel. The one convicts of sin and cuts to the heart, and the other cuts down all the goodness of man. The Scriptures in general are a sharp sword, in convicting of sin, reproving for it, threatening with wrath and ruin, in refuting error and heresy, and repelling Satan's temptations. They will be used in the destruction of antichrist. God's word may be called *the sword of the Spirit* because it is not carnal, but of a spiritual nature because the Holy Spirit is the author of it. He furnishes us with it, teaches us how to make use of it, and makes it powerful and effectual. The Jews say the words of the law are like to a sword, and speak of "the sword of the law" (Bereshit Rabbah, sect. 21. fol. 19. 1.).

The Whole Armour (Spirit filled prayer and utterances).

Ephesians 6: 18

Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints (KJV);

The last weapon is prayer. It says that a man should pray as often as he has an opportunity and particularly in times of darkness, desertion, and temptation. This, when performed correctly, is performed *in the Spirit* with the heart, soul, and spirit engaged in it. It is offered up with a true heart, and a right spirit of fervent sincere prayer knowing that God hears us and will answer our petition. If we do these things Satan has no chance to dissuade us from God. But he will try and we must resist.

James 4: 7

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the Devil and he will flee from you (KJV).

Ephesians 6: 19-20

And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak (KJV).

Paul asked his readers not only to pray in general for all saints but also specifically to pray for him that he might make known the mystery of the gospel. He had to have a clear thought process regarding the "mystery of the gospel" when he would be on trial before Caesar in Rome. The Romans looked on the Christians as a sect of the Jews, but the Jews considered them as a heretical group. In his trial, Paul needed to make clear that Christians are neither a Jewish sect nor a heretical group but a new entity. This new entity is called the church, the body of Christ, which is composed of Jewish and Gentile believers. This recalls Paul's lengthy discussion of this "mystery of the gospel" in 2:11-3:11. For this reason Paul was an ambassador in chains (Acts 28:16, 20; Ephesians. 3:1; 4:1; Philippians 1:7, 13-14, 16; Colossians 4:3, 18; Philippians 1, 9-10, 13).

Closing greetings.

Ephesians 6: 21-22

But that ye also may know my affairs, and how I do, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things: Whom I have sent

unto you for the same purpose, that ye might know our affairs, and that he might comfort your hearts (KJV).

Tychicus was the bearer of this epistle. Paul considered him a dear brother and faithful servant in the Lord. In Colossians 4:7 Paul called him by these same titles and added that he was a “fellow servant.” Tychicus is also mentioned in Acts 20:4; 2 Timothy 4:12; and Titus 3:12. Tychicus was to inform the Ephesians of Paul’s welfare—how he was and what he was doing—in order to encourage them (Ephesians 3:13).

Ephesians 6: 23

Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ (KJV).

Three spiritual qualities frequently mentioned by Paul—peace, love, and faith—are referred to in this verse. The phrase *peace to the brethren* is found nowhere else in the New Testament. This and love with faith (Ephesians 1:15) have their sources in God. Paul wanted them to continue their love for other Christians, their spiritual brothers (since they are all “members of one body,” 4:25) and to combine that love with their faith in God, for which they were well known. God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ is similar to Paul’s wording in Ephesians 1:2-3, 17; 5:20.

Ephesians 6: 24

Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen (KJV).

Grace concludes the letter, just as it had introduced it (Ephesians 1:2). The words with a sincere love are literally, “in incorruption, incorruptibility, immortality” (Romans 2:7; I Corinthians 15:42, 50, 53-54; II Timothy 1:10). It conveys the idea that believer’s love for the Lord Jesus Christ is to be pure, not corrupted with wrong motives or secret disloyalties. Unfortunately, some Ephesian believers later did lose the fervency of their love for Christ (Revelation 2:4). Paul’s benediction, though unusual was certainly appropriate.

NEXT WEEK: REVELATION MSG. XXIV

Please call or e-mail with any questions or comments

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