

DELIVER US FROM THE EVIL ONE Chicago 5-28-22 rev.3

The subject of our remarks this morning is one that is quite familiar to you brethren. We are not bringing you anything new, just a reminder of some important points concerning our strongest adversary. We would like to borrow from the Apostle Peter in II Peter 1:12 where he says "Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know *them*, and be established in the present truth.

And, of course, Peter was just finishing up in the earlier verses with "add to your faith..." the different character qualities so necessary to our growth and development in Christ. Then he is taking opportunity here to remind us in verses 11 and 12 also of the determination necessary on our part to make our calling and election sure. When we think of present truth we would consider not only the truth necessary and available to the church throughout the

Gospel age but especially that harvest truth now due since our Lord's 2nd presence as meat in due season for the consecrated. Brethren, we are like leaky vessels – The apostle Paul also was aware of this condition and spoke of it in Hebrews 2:1 where he says,

“Therefore, we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let *them* slip.”

Margin of the King James says, “run out as leaking vessels.”

The phrase “we should let *them* slip,” Strong's #G3901, carries with it the thought of carelessness. Hence the need for constant and continual replenishment so we do not lose those precious truths of the Divine Plan with which the Lord has blessed us.

Just one more point on the thought of Present Truth for your consideration brethren.

In 1997 the New Brunswick Convention sponsored a 2 hour comprehensive panel discussion on the subject of “What is Present Truth.” It is well worth your consideration.

As we move into the next part of our lesson today ---

We remember Jesus' life was a life of prayer. We are reminded of that many times throughout the Scriptures. Two of those scriptures are Matt.6:9 and Luke 11:1, where the disciples requested Jesus to teach them how to pray. We are sure Jesus was very pleased to help them develop a closer relationship with the Father as he himself had. Jesus certainly knew the disciples would need this communion with the Father going forward. Jesus then taught them what is referred to as "The Lord's Prayer." As the Pastor suggests this is not a form to just repeat but because Jesus starts with the words "after this manner" it is to be used as an example on how to arrange our prayers. All though we do have to be familiar with the words to include the seven petitions in our prayers.

The part of this prayer we would like to consider for our lesson today, petition 6 and 7 is found in the 13th verse of Matt.6, where we read, "And lead us not into temptation..." We understand the Diaglott gives a better thought here where it says "abandon us not in

temptation.” The word temptation is Strong’s #3986, and really has the thought of adversity, or putting to the proof through adversity. So our prayer then to the Father is not to abandon us in whatever adversity or temptation we are experiencing.

In thinking about the Memorial season just past and our Lord’s life leading to his death on the cross, where He was willing to do the Father’s will completely. He is the only one that will ever have to be abandoned and cry out, “My God, my God, why has thou forsaken me?” But because of that we will never be abandoned in temptation or in adversity. What a wonderful promise we find recorded for us in Hebrews 13:5 & 6, where we read “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord *is* my helper, and I will not fear what man (or Satan) shall do unto me.”

Because we know that to abandon us, or leave us to our own strength, would be a failed experience. From our studies we understand God is permitting the adversary to

bring strong delusions upon the world and the nominal church because it is time to completely separate the wheat from the tares. While we must be brought into positions of trial and testing, we may well pray not to be abandoned there, not to be left to our own strength. The Pastor sums it up very well for us in R1759:3 where he says, we quote "here is an important part of the great battle of the Christian's life. He must fight the natural tendencies of the old nature and confidently anticipate the victory in the strength of the Great Captain of his salvation. He must not succumb to the flattering and deceptive influences of prosperity, nor faint under the burdens of adversity. He must not allow the trials of life to sour and harden his disposition, to make him morose, or surly, or bitter, or unkind. Nor may he allow pride or ostentation or self-righteousness to grow and feed upon the temporal good things which the Lord's providence has granted him to test his faithfulness as a steward." (End quote)

In R.#2769 the Pastor gives us the thought that as Christians we are subject to assaults from three different quarters by three different enemies, the world, the flesh, and the adversary. He points out, and we quote "that we are not to suppose that every difficulty and trial which besets us is of the devil; (sorry, brethren, we can't always use the excuse or phrase the devil made me do it) but rather to remember the Apostle's words 'A man is tempted when he is led astray of his own devices' such temptations, then, are of the flesh—the results of our being members of the fallen race, whose weaknesses and imperfections have been aggravated and intensified for now six thousand years. So then we are to recognize as one of our chief foes, our own inherent weaknesses and predisposition to things depraved, selfish and sinful." (End of quote) I think we are aware of those trials and difficulties that come upon us in our struggle with our human nature. James 1:13-14 says, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be

tempted with evil, neither tempted he any man: (14) But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. (15) Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.” Then he continues in the 16th verse, “Do not err, my beloved brethren.”

Temptation then does not necessarily mean sin. Sin can only come through yielding to temptation. Satan is the tempter, he is endeavoring to ensnare us into a wrong path, or into a wrong conduct. But we have a Promise, that God will not suffer us to be tempted beyond a certain point. In I Cor. 10:13 we read

“There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God *is* faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear *it*.”

There are a number of different points to consider in this verse, first who is faithful? God is faithful. Can we depend upon that? Yes, we can. This reminds me of a scriptural

equation a brother gave one time in a talk. He said there are two parts to the equation, there is God's part and there is our part. He asked, and we quote "who always does their part? That would be God. Who doesn't always do their part? That would be us."(end of quote) We have the mercy of God to help us; we have the throne of grace to receive comfort and help in time of need; and we have forgiveness for our failings and short comings—and how thankful we are for that arrangement. The whole world lieth in the wicked one. We are told that Satan already has the world under his control. Which allows his emphasis to be on those who have espoused Christ, those who have received the Holy Spirit, those who are endeavoring to do the will of God in their lives. Someone once said about this Scripture, 1 Cor 10:13, that God is either going to lighten the load that we are carrying, or He will strengthen our backs to be able to carry the load i.e., the current adversity we are experiencing. Perhaps you have seen those special belts that you put around your waist when you are going

to be lifting a heavy load, to help strengthen your back. I am sure you can think of some additional Precious Promises brethren, that might represent that belt of truth around our waist that would help us through some specific trial or difficult experiences. Remembering Jesus' words in Matt. 6:34 "Sufficient the day is the evil thereof."

God never tempts us to sin, He never tempts us to do evil. Those temptations are of the adversary and of our fallen nature. Through our own flesh, and through the weaknesses of others, perhaps, as well. R5702:4. There is a side point to those James Scriptures about temptation, as James says, "God cannot be tempted, neither tempts He any man to do sin." Now we know that temptation has the thought also of trial or testing, as we saw in the 1Cor 10:13 scripture -- we will have further discussion on how God allows those trials and testing's in a proper way for our development. But that is not the way that Satan is going to tempt us to do evil or to do sin. There is an aspect of these Scriptures also that is very interesting, because in

Matthew the fourth chapter, as John the Baptist was bringing Jesus up out of the water the Holy Spirit came upon Jesus without measure. Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness. At the end of that 40 days Satan came to him to tempt him. So, if Jehovah God cannot be tempted and Jesus was tempted—then we have to balance that out somehow, don't we? Br. Russell said we would have to conclude that Satan's temptation was only a sham if they were both one person. Aren't we glad brethren we have both the Father and the Son?

We are going to consider a Scripture in I Peter 5:10 indicating the results of the trials and testing's, it says "But the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ will, after you have suffered awhile, himself equip, stabilize, strengthen, and firmly establish you." So we can see the purpose of the trials and the proper temptations that we go through to develop the Christlike character area process, but the end result is glorious if we are properly exercised. The world of mankind is going to

travel up the highway of holiness. We know that now we are also traveling as pilgrims and strangers in the process of growth and development in this present life. Ours is not a Highway wide enough for all, but rather a narrow way of sacrifice, and few there be that find it. I saw a marquee one day that read, "we become neither instantly good or bad". It is a process of growth, but it is a warning also; because we know there are Scriptures that caution us that if we begin to set aside God's word in one aspect or another, we can almost, imperceptivity at first, begin a downward course that, if not checked, can be disastrous for the new creature.

How does God tempt different from Satan? To be "tempted" signifies to try, to prove. God applies tests of character by permitting the alternatives of good and evil to be placed before us, to show by the way we respond, how our character is developing. This is one way God knows if we are maturing properly. The Apostle Paul in Heb.5:14 states (Berkley version) "But solid food (strong meat KJV)

is for the mature person. For those whose faculties have been trained by practice to distinguish between good and evil.” That is the Manna scripture text for May 3rd, and the comments are quite to the point, (and I quote) “Those who have real and sincere faith in God are willing to take Him at His word: and with these the first principles of the doctrine should long ago have been established; much of the superstructure of gold and silver and precious stones should already be erected, and the work be steadily progressing. Such are able, if they are loyal and true to God, to discern between truth and error. We ought to know what we believe and why we believe it, and then should be bold and uncompromising in declaring it; for ‘if the trumpet give an uncertain sound who shall prepare himself to the battle?’” (end of quote)

Let us look at the second half of Matt.6:13, “Deliver us from evil” – from the Evil One and the evil associated with him. Deliver is Strong’s word #4506, and has the thought to rescue, to keep us safe from.

Satan as our evil adversary is ever ready to attack us in whatever way he can. The Apostle Peter speaks of Him in 1Pet 5:8 where we read from the Weymouth New Testament

“Curb every passion and be on the alert. Your great accuser, the Devil, is going about like a roaring lion to see whom he can devour.”

And again, the Apostle Paul’s instructions in 1Cor 5:5 are,

“To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.” King James Version

While we do not intend to minimize the power and influence allowed Satan, we understand it is all under the control of our Sovereign God and there is no greater power.

As a matter of fact, in Psa.145:20 we read, “The Lord preserves all them that love Him: but all the wicked will he destroy.” Brethren, I think we can agree there is no greater time when this petition to the Lord, “deliver us from the evil one” is more relevant to us than now. It always has been, but I think we are seeing so much in the

world today of Satan trying to make inroads as much as possible--and he is in certain aspects. It just points out even more that we need to stay close to the Heavenly Father and our Lord Jesus. There is only one door to the sheepfold, there is only one shepherd. How do we stay close to the shepherd? We learn to recognize the shepherd's voice so that we will follow only that shepherd.

The Pastor points out there is quite a distinction between the different enemies of the New Creation. In the 6th Vol. page 611 we quote, "Our Lord's declaration, that Satan is the great Adversary, not only of God, but of humanity, is by no means a fancy sketch, but the plain truth. He is our Adversary in a sense that the world and our own flesh are not our adversaries. Our own flesh opposes the New Creature, not from any bitterness or hatred, nor with any scheming for its temporal or eternal disadvantage; but merely in the sense that the cravings of the fallen flesh are in a direction which is at variance to the best interests of the New Creature and the hopes with

which he has been begotten. The opposition of the world is likewise not a malicious one, but merely a selfish one, because of seeing things in different lights and because of selfish differences of interest. Satan alone is the willful, intelligent plotter and schemer who uses a superhuman intelligence and, so far as permitted, superhuman powers, to inveigle (meaning, to entice, lure, or ensnare by flattery) our fallen flesh, through depraved appetites, etc., and who frequently uses the worldly as his tools and unconscious instruments in opposing righteousness and truth and those who are of the Truth.” (end of quote).

James 4:4 tells us that “friendship with the world is enmity with God.”

One other Scripture along the lines of “Deliver us from the evil one,” that I appreciated very much is John the 17th chapter. We will begin at the 15th verse

Joh 17:15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

Joh 17:16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of

the world.

Joh 17:17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

Joh 17:18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

Joh 17:19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

Joh 17:20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

These words were not only for the disciples, but they are for us too, the Church, even down at this end of the Gospel Age. Jesus was praying for us, 2,000 years ago, knowing that what the Apostles were going to be experiencing in the early stages and development of the Church those same, or similar trials, were going to be throughout the whole Gospel Age. Jesus knew those experiences were going to intensify at the very end of the age.

The Apostle Paul gives us a similar lesson about not being taken out of this world. It is not only the evil one, but it is the fact that Jesus was saying they should not be taken out of the world, but, rather be preserved from the evil and the evil one while they are in the world. We read in I Cor. 5:9-13, "I wrote unto you in an epistle not to

company with fornicators: Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world. But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat. For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? Do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.” (end of quote) It is not that we are excusing what is in the world by any means. It was mentioned earlier that Satan has control of the world. In II Cor. 4:4 he is called “the god of this world.” He is given the opportunity to control the world today. But Paul points out here that we do have a responsibility, within the context of the Church, as to how we are to behave on these issues. There is a proper judgement that needs to be done, and there is improper

judging. We know that the heart is never judged, but the outward actions within the Church certainly come under judgment; and should be. This is an area where the adversary can turn things upside down—sometimes not judging strong enough, sometimes judging too strong.

There are many threats in the world today. We must know our enemy, brethren, to make the proper threat assessment. By denying, or not realizing the evil of our adversary. First, Satan's very existence is now being denied by many. How many times have you read those words from the Pastor? It was not just in the Pastor's day but also now.

Second, we place ourselves in great jeopardy, by denying the adversary's power and ability to influence us, or our loved ones, and our brethren in Christ. Remember, jeopardy means a risk of or exposure to loss, and is a great danger when Satan is involved. Third, on the other hand we understand that Satanism, the Occult, etc., are on the rise—and are gaining more influence in the world today. As

a corroborative testimony we read a recent news article entitled--

PARENTAL ALERT: The Occult and Witchcraft Dominate Marvel's New Dr. Strange Film, 'Making Satanists the Heroes'

What does the word Babylon mean? Confusion. That is one of the tools of the adversary. We have to be aware of just how much confusion is in the world today in the areas of social, political, ecclesiastical, and financial elements of society. A fourth point is the importance of the Vow as a daily reminder of Satan's increased activity. "I vow to thee that I will be on the alert to resist everything akin to Spiritism and Occultism, and, remembering that there are but the two masters, I shall resist these snares in all reasonable ways as being of the adversary.

Some time ago I came across an advertisement talking about "Active Threat Assessment Training for Law Enforcement, Security, and Military: Identifying What 'Just Doesn't Look Right'" It was a very interesting ad and

I will mention just a portion of the ad. I quote, "Active threat assessment involves the identification of immediate or imminent threats. Threats such as terrorists, criminals, and active shooters." (end of quote) Well brethren, who is the greatest terrorist in the world? Isn't it Satan and the fallen angels--at least to the Christian community? Satan is a thief; he came to steal. That is just what Jesus said in John 10:10 "the thief's only purpose in coming is to steal, to slaughter and to destroy. I have come so they may have life and have it abundantly." So, we see there is a program to help train people; but the Lord has been training the Church for over 2,000 years on "active, assessment training" and helping us to know and to point out those things to look for and to be able to warn and encourage each other. To continue in the ad, it states, we quote "The Threat Awareness Training Program not only teaches trainees to successfully identify and react to active threats, but also how to articulate their observations and decision-making process." (end of quote) We train the

mindset, not just the eyes. Although the eyes are important—especially the eyes of the heart as we read in Eph. 1:18, so that we can develop a proper spiritual vision. Where is our mindset? In Phil.2:5-9 we read,“ Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.” As we develop the mind of Christ, we will have the proper mindset on how to thwart the adversary and how to combat his tactics. Jesus is our perfect example. In Matt. 4, when tempted by Satan, Jesus answered with a thus sayeth the Lord. Remember, Satan also used scripture but he misapplied it to trap our Lord. Satan will try to entrap us with scripture, too. We just have to be on the “alert” all of the time, we can’t let down our guard. Somebody once said, “there is no rocking chair in the Holy,” is that true? I don’t remember any diagram showing one. We have to be very careful about getting too lethargic.

We refer you to page 609 of the 6th vol. where there is a list of Scriptures that talk about our adversary. You can

make up your own list, but this is a good one to start. It talks about the field of wheat and tares. In the parable the good seed was the wheat seed that was planted; it was the evil one who came and planted the false seed. The interesting thing about the false seed, which is the Eastern Darnel, when it is growing looks just like the wheat plant. You can't tell them apart as they are growing together. It is only at the time of the harvest that you can tell the plants apart. Another consideration of the tare seed or Darnel plant; it is poisonous. Isn't that a wonderful illustration of the poisonous opposition to the true Gospel and the true seed? This is only one example of many that the adversary has used to influence the church class during the whole Gospel Age.

Brethren, one of the best things we can do for each other is certainly to maintain our awareness of these things; to keep each other in prayer; to be diligent and keep actively alert. As the Apostle Paul said, in 2Cor. 2:11,

“We are not ignorant of his devices.” One of those devices is his ability to disguise himself as an angel of light.

For what purpose? It is not to lead to Jesus as the light of the world, not to lead to the cross of Christ, or to the Bible as the word of God. Satan’s desire is to lead away from these to another salvation. One way he does this is by minimizing the sacrificial aspect of the Christian life, of keeping our sacrifice upon the alter until it is fully consumed. The Pastor mentions, “when Satan will cast out Satan and heal disease, it is a marked evidence that his throne is tottering to its fall—so to speak, this is the last extremity of the adversary’s efforts to deceive.” Let us utilize all the tools the Lord has provided for us, including those Precious Promises to keep us motivated and keep us strong in the Lord and the power of His might (Eph. 6:10 and on). We are fighting against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Brethren, let us take James' advice and "resist the Devil that he will flee from us" May the Lord overrule anything said amiss and add his blessing.