

Deliverance from the
idolatry and sorcery
that caused the fall of man

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Satan's delusion

- Satan works through sorcery. The apostle Paul identified the way in which Satan operates in his second letter to the Thessalonians. Speaking concerning the coming of Antichrist, he wrote, 'The coming of the lawless one is according to the *working of Satan*, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved'. 2Th 2:9-10. The 'unrighteous deception' by which Satan works is an alternative to the simplicity that is in Christ. In this regard, Paul expressed his concern for the believers in Corinth, writing, 'But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ'. 2Co 11:3.
- Satan works to gain advantage over mankind through trading. In other words, the sorcery by which Satan operates is the practice of trading. This principle is revealed through the descriptions of Satan in the prophetic Scriptures. Addressing the prince of Tyre, who is a type of Satan, the Lord said, through the prophet Ezekiel, 'By the *abundance of your trading* you became filled with violence within, and you sinned ... you defiled your sanctuaries by the *multitude of your iniquities*, by the iniquity of your trading'. Eze 28:16,18.
- In the book of Isaiah, the Lord further detailed the multitude of Satan's iniquities, declaring, 'Stand now with *your enchantments and the multitude of your sorceries*, in which you have laboured from your

youth - perhaps you will be able to profit, perhaps you will prevail. You are wearied in the multitude of your counsels; let now the astrologers, the stargazers, and the monthly prognosticators [who operate by the same sorcerous principles] stand up and save you from what shall come upon you.' Isa 47:12-13. Paul exhorted us to be aware of this iniquitous practice of trading, lest Satan 'take advantage of us'. 2Co 2:11.

- Through sorcery, Satan skilfully presents a temptation to a person, which becomes a 'spell' that ensnares them. Paul identified this effect among the Galatian believers, writing, 'O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth'. Gal 3:1. The Greek word translated 'bewitched' in this passage is *Baskaino*, which means 'to bring evil on a person by feigned praise, or mislead by an evil eye, and so to charm or bewitch'. It is connected to the word from which we derive the English word 'fascinate', conveying the concept of commanding someone's complete interest and attention.

The temptation of Eve and Adam

- We see the sorcerous working of Satan in the temptation of Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden. Satan's temptation of Eve became a 'spell' upon her, inciting her, and her husband Adam, to disobey the word of God. The outcome of this disobedience was that mankind became estranged from God's fatherhood and came under the judgement of death. Having been taken captive through Satan's temptation, Adam and Eve now belonged to his fatherhood and were compelled to fulfil his desires. Joh 8:44.
- Satan gained advantage over Adam and Eve by proposing an alternative to the word of the Lord. The Lord had commanded Adam, saying, 'Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it, you shall surely die.' Gen 2:16-17. By speaking an alternative word, Satan provoked a desire in Eve to become 'like God'. Gen 3:5.
- The desire that had been aroused in Eve through Satan's lie became a strong emotion within her, motivating her to disobey God's word. The apostle James summarised this outcome of temptation, writing, 'But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed [deluded; allured, beguiled]. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.'

Jas 1:14-15. Eve was drawn away by an alternative word from Satan. This word aroused desire within her and she came under his 'spell'.

- Unlike Eve, Adam had not been deceived by Satan's word. Instead, he chose to heed the voice of his wife, believing that, through the knowledge of good and evil, he could exercise dominion over creation without the grace that comes from God. Paul summarised this point by saying, 'Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.' 1Ti 2:14. When Eve gave her ear to Satan's word, and when Adam heeded the voice of his wife, desire became an emotional drive within them both, causing them to covet what belonged to God's mandate and capacity. Sin was fully manifest in them when, driven by emotion, they endeavoured to lay hold of, and to exercise, the knowledge of good and evil.
- Satan used the tree of the knowledge of good and evil as a charm to affect Eve's senses. Having given ear to Satan's lie, the woman began to *see* the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil from a different perspective. Prior to Eve's encounter with Satan, the fruit of this tree had not appealed to the couple in any way. In fact, Adam and Eve had viewed the tree as dangerous, understanding that they were not even to *touch* this food. Gen 3:5. Now, through Satan's sorcery, Eve's senses became fixated on the fruit of this tree as the means by which she could achieve her desire. Under Satan's 'spell', Eve was now single-minded in her obsession with the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. She had been deceived into believing that eating this fruit would be how she, and her husband Adam, would be able to realise her dream of being 'like God'.
- The tree of the knowledge of good and evil symbolises the creative initiative that belongs to the fellowship of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The knowledge of good and evil belongs only to God. Proclaiming His own creative mandate, the Lord Himself said, 'I am the Lord and there is none else. I form the light and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things.' Isa 45:6-7.
- The fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is the food that sustains the angelic host, who were created to facilitate and uphold God's creation. This fruit gives them power to function as God's servants, working with Him to maintain order in the natural creation. Concerning the work of angels, the psalmist declared, 'Bless the Lord, you His angels, who excel in strength, who do His word, heeding the voice of His word. Bless the Lord, all *you* His hosts, you

ministers of His, who do His pleasure.’ Psa 103:20-21. With great power and might, the angels uphold the natural laws of the universe. 2Pe 2:11.

The effect of Satan’s sorcery

- Bewitched by Satan, Eve no longer perceived the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil as dangerous or threatening. Instead, she now believed that eating from this tree would grant her the same power by which the angelic host exercised their ministry roles. With this power, she could become like God; that is, she could become the origin of multiplication.
- The word of Satan, once received and believed, energised Eve’s desire to be like God. The bewitching formula that Satan used was to then direct the focus of Eve’s attention on the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil as the means by which she could become ‘like God’. Her mind was corrupted from the simplicity of trust that she had known in fellowship with the Lord, by this new desire to be like God. 2Co 11:3. As this happened, she was then open to the lie that eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil would not cause death, but would make her like God. This mix distorted her senses, causing her to be mesmerised by what she saw. This was the bewitching effect of Satan’s device upon Eve’s mind, desire and emotions. Gal 3:1. It became a lust that birthed sin within her. Jas 1:15.
- The action of Adam and Eve’s disobedience, in taking and eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, produced in them the fruit of death. There was nothing in the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil that caused them any harm. It was their disobedience that cut them off from the life of God, leaving them naked and alienated from the life and fellowship of God. Eph 4:18.
- Let us reiterate, and further clarify, this sorcerous endeavour of Satan. Satan used the tree of the knowledge of good and evil as a charm, distorting Eve’s senses and causing her to be mesmerised by what she saw. By giving her ear to an alternative word, Eve’s mind had begun to corrupt from the simplicity that she had known in fellowship with the Lord. As a consequence of this corruption, Eve was now motivated by desire, revealing her connection to the fatherhood of Satan. In this regard, we recall the words of Jesus when

He said, 'You are of your father the devil, and the *desires of your father you want to do.*' Joh 8:44. This is a key point. Eve was not simply the helpless victim of Satan's sorcerous intent. Rather, having chosen to give ear to his lie, Eve now *wanted to do* the desires of her father the devil. In this way, Eve was now accountable for her choice, and for the subsequent impact of her disobedience. She had accountably chosen the fatherhood of Satan.

- When a person is mesmerised by something, it means that their attention has been completely captured. They are transfixed and unable to think of anything else. The object of their fixation dominates their will and motivates their actions. That is, every thought that they have and action they take now springs from their obsession. Satan's word has a mesmerising effect upon a person's senses. Their actions, motivated by deception, bring them into bondage to Satan who has deceived them. Writing to Timothy, the apostle Paul described such a person as a 'novice' whose deceptive actions cause them to 'fall into the same condemnation as the devil'. 1Ti 3:6.
- Satan used sorcery to provoke, by deceit, covetous desire within Eve. She was 'spell-bound', or ensnared, by his alternative word, and then *charmed* by the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This double action of proposing an alternative word, and then misappropriating what belonged to God, began to corrupt Eve's mind from the simplicity that she had known in relationship with Yahweh. Satan's sorcery resulted in confusion concerning how she now perceived herself and her surroundings.
- Demonstrating his pride and impudence, Satan presumed to speak on behalf of God, saying, 'For *God knows* that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.' Gen 3:5. Under the beguiling effect of Satan's sorcery, Eve engaged with this alternative word as if it was God speaking to her. Her view of reality had become distorted, including how she now perceived herself in relation to God.
- Informed by Satan's lie, and now motivated by desire, Eve disobeyed God and ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. In this disobedient action, she joined herself to the fatherhood of Satan, coming under his power and severing herself from the truth of her predestination as a son of God. Confused by deception, she considered that the tree was now 'good for food' and believed that it

would empower her life in a new way. The fruit of the tree was now pleasant to look at, and she assumed that it would satiate her desire, giving her the 'happiness' she now craved.

- Eve's desires were excited as she became *fixated* on the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Her desires were now the desires of her father the devil, and she desired to do his will. Joh 8:44. Satan had fathered this desire within her, which was now another law in her members. Rom 7:23. Motivated by this law, Eve believed that the knowledge of good and evil would give her wisdom so that she could be like God. Through this wisdom, she believed that she could gain control of her own life and the lives of others. With her husband Adam, she would be able to rule over creation in the way that she now desperately desired.

The lie that Satan lives by

- Speaking to the Jews who had believed Him, Jesus said, 'If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.' Joh 8:31-32. However, their offence at Jesus' words revealed that these ones were in bondage to Satan. Jesus said to them, 'You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.' Joh 8:44. What is Satan's lie?
- The lie that Satan lives by, and propagates, is that both angels and men can be 'like God'. As we considered in the publication, *Becoming the Israel of God*, Satan drew from the void to define this destiny for himself. He said in his heart, 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, *I will be like the Most High.*' Isa 14:13-14.
- Satan's message is that to be like God, we must function like him. In other words, through the knowledge of good and evil, we can become like an angel. To become like Satan, we must embrace his way of living, which is trading. When we function by trading, which is the sorcerous practice of Satan, we will come under his fatherhood and be brought into captivity to do his will. 2Ti 2:26.

- What does Satan father? Jesus identified Satan as a liar and the father of lies. A lie has no substance because it is not true. We note, therefore, that Satan was unable to father anything *substantial* within mankind. In contrast to this, our identities are substantial because they were created by God. Gen 2:7. Believing Satan's lie brought Adam and Eve, and all who were born after them, under a delusion and made them citizens of the kingdom of darkness. Col 1:13. As a consequence of disobedience, mankind came under the judgement and wrath of God because they pursued the lie of self-validation. They did this to substantiate the pursuit of their own life and definition apart from fellowship with Yahweh. This way of living brings us into bondage to the law of sin and death. Rom 7:23.

The working of Satan

- As we considered earlier in these notes, Satan works by sorcery. Through sorcery, he brings men and angels under the fatherhood of his ideas. The fruit of Satan's sorcery in the hearts of mankind was the deluded belief that we could create for ourselves a life and destiny in our own image and likeness. This desire is the basis of idolatry.
- Idolatry is self-worship. In this regard, an idol is crafted in our own image and likeness. It is a projection of what we desire to become, and of the lifestyle to which we aspire. The Lord drew attention to this principle through the prophet Ezekiel, saying, 'Everyone of the house of Israel *who sets up his idols in his heart, and puts before him what causes him to stumble into iniquity*, and then comes to the prophet, I the Lord will answer him who comes, according to the multitude of his idols, that I may seize the house of Israel by their heart, because they are all estranged from Me by their idols.' Eze 14:4-5.
- Our idolatry is empowered by sorcery. The sons and daughters of men practise sorcery to gain advantage, or power, over others. They trade with others, using them, and their resources, for the purpose of empowering the idols that they have crafted for themselves. In essence, *all trading is spiritual*. Humans and angels are spiritual. The cost of trading in the spiritual realm is that those who receive power from a demon or from another person to obtain some advantage in life, come under the power of the one with whom they have traded. This oppression has a deleterious effect upon their life.

The elemental principles

- This trading dynamic belongs to the *stoicheia* or elemental principles of the world. Describing the bondage that results from trading, the apostle Paul wrote, 'Even so we, when we were children, were *in bondage* under the elements [*stoicheion*] of the world. But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.' Gal 4:3-5.
- We know that the elemental principles of the world are not speaking merely about one's subjection to the Law Covenant, because Paul then wrote, 'But then, indeed, when you did not know God, you *served those which by nature are not gods*. But now after you have known God, or rather are known by God, how is it that you turn again to the *weak and beggarly elements* [*stoicheion*], to which you desire again to be in bondage?' Gal 4:8-9. Providing further breadth to our understanding of the *stoicheion*, Paul warned the Colossians, saying, 'Beware lest anyone cheat you through *philosophy* and *empty deceit*, according to the *tradition of men*, according to the basic [*stoicheion*] principles of the world, and not according to Christ.' Col 2:8.
- The *stoicheion*, or elemental principles, describe the way of life under the disposition of angels. Act 7:53. In this regard, it includes life under the Law Covenant, as well as the laws of nature which are upheld by the angels. Because of the Fall, trading is the 'ethic' that belongs to those who remain in bondage to the elements of the world.
- From the writings of Paul, we recognise that the contexts and currency for these trading dynamics under the *stoicheion* include commerce, education, religion, health and beauty, the natural environment, etc. Within these settings, people, driven by fear of death, engage in transactions that they believe will enhance their opportunities for life. However, this very pursuit keeps them in bondage to Satan. Heb 2:14-15.

Under the sway of the wicked one

- As children of the devil, we are now in conflict with God and under judgement. The frustration, disappointment, depression, and suffering that we experience in life are indicators of our condemnation, which are resulting in death. Satan then uses our fear

of death to provoke us again to avoid suffering, and to pursue the lifestyle that we desire.

- Satan is always seeking to gain advantage over us, and his desire to feed on fallen mankind is insatiable. In this regard, the apostle Peter exhorted us to 'be sober, be vigilant; for your adversary the devil walks around like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.' 1Pe 5:8. Satan devours those who live according to the flesh, whom God described as the 'dust'. Gen 3:19. To this end, Paul urged us to be mindful of Satan's devices, lest he gain advantage over us. For each one of us, his device is to promote an understanding that the limited and time-bound resources of life can be used to our advantage through trading.
- The apostle John said that the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one. 1Jn 5:19. He is the ruler of this world and maintains control over the nations by promoting the sorcerous practice of trading. He does this by implying that we can gain control over our lives by wise trading, enabling us to achieve the lifestyle that we choose. Further, by using the elements of our natural and spiritual lives, and through the understandings of science, Satan proposes that we can gain control over our physical and social environment. We can, finally, be like God, dispensing blessing and cursing, good and evil. Fallen mankind aspires, through science, to even conquer death and its accompanying fear. This way of operating is not God's way. Instead of trading, God lives and multiplies His life through offering. This is His economy, in which we participate through fellowship at the tree of life.

Mantras

- In response to the scribes who accused Him of casting out demons by the power of Beelzebub, Jesus said, 'If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand. And if Satan has risen up against himself, and is divided, he cannot stand, but has an end.' Mar 3:24-26. Jesus was describing the way in which Satan's kingdom functions under the influence of elemental spirits.
- Elemental spirits are *fallen angels*, who employ the mighty power by which they were created to achieve their own desires and agendas upon the earth. Referring to these spiritual forces, Jude wrote, 'And the angels that did not keep their proper domain, but left their own

abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgement of the great day'. Jud 1:6. Having warned of the influence of the elemental spiritual forces that exist in the world, Paul asked, 'Therefore, if you died with Christ from the basic [elemental] principles of the world, why, as though living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations ... according to the commandments and doctrines of men?' Col 2:20-22.

- Clearly, we must be alert concerning the impact of elemental spirits so that we are not drawn away from the simplicity that is in Christ. This is particularly pertinent considering Paul's warning that the influence of demonic forces upon the world would intensify as the time of the end draws near. 1Ti 4:1. To this end, he encouraged us to be clothed with the 'whole armour of God in order to stand against the wiles of the devil. 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.' Eph 6:11-12.
- Satan's kingdom is divided and functions by competing mantras. A mantra is a word or phrase that, when repeated or chanted, is believed to have special spiritual power. It can be defined as a tool of the *mind* that has a *spiritual effect* on a person's will or emotional state of being. The custom of chanting mantras is a common feature of many Eastern religions, including Hinduism, Buddhism, and Sikhism. The practice, however, is not confined to these groups. In fact, the exercise of repeating, or chanting, short prayers or passages of Scripture to achieve a 'spiritual effect' has become a common tradition among many who profess to be Christian. Jesus warned against this demonic practice, saying, 'When you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words.' Mat 6:7.
- In his first epistle, the apostle John explained that the word of God is a fellowship. He wrote, 'That which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ'. 1Jn 1:3. When the word becomes a mantra, it is no longer a fellowship. It ceases to be 'living and powerful' towards us and, instead, becomes a tool of Satan through which we are taken captive and oppressed. Heb 4:12. The mantra is Satan's 'whisper' by which he gains power over a person. In this regard, the prophet Isaiah declared,

'You shall speak out of the ground; your speech shall be low, out of the dust; your voice shall be like a medium's, out of the ground; and your speech shall whisper out of the dust.' Isa 29:4.

How Satan uses fear

- Satan uses the fear of death to keep fallen mankind in bondage. Paul taught that, through the cross, Christ has destroyed 'him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and released those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage'. Heb 2:14-15. Fear is the 'faith' of Satan, which a person lives by when they reject the fatherhood of God. Motivated by this 'fear-faith', a person employs sorcery to affirm the idolatrous projection they have of themselves. This, in turn, enslaves them to the elemental principles (spirits) of the world. A person uses sorcery in an attempt to accomplish their own wicked agendas. These agendas may include worldly success, wealth, reputation, romantic attachment, and any other idol of their heart. Demonic power becomes a key influence in those who function in this way.
- The practice of sorcery is particularly evident in the animistic cultures and religions of the world. Animism is the belief that all things possess a distinct spiritual essence. That is, all things are *animated* and alive. While animism is typically considered the common 'spiritual' thread among the 'tribal' cultures of the world, the Scriptures teach us that the '*whole world* lies under the sway of the wicked one'. 1Jn 5:19. This means that all of those living as part of the 'old creation' are subject to the demonic forces of Satan's kingdom, which includes the influence of animism.
- Under the sway of the wicked one, the whole world is subject to fallen principalities and powers. These elemental forces are familiar spirits that are mediated within a family dynasty. As we have considered in previous publications, familiar spirits belong to a family, and can be passed on from generation to generation. These *familiar demons* control the culture and cohesion of the family, or tribe. Factional grievances or aspirations within the family become the motivation for activating these spiritual powers, either in blessing or cursing.

The sorcery of Balaam

- In his letter to the church in Pergamos, Jesus identified some who held to the doctrine of Balaam. He said, 'But I have a few things

against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality.' Rev 2:14. Significantly, Jesus noted that this doctrine was being promoted in the place 'where Satan's throne is'. Rev 2:13. He promised that those who overcame this principle would receive hidden manna to eat. Rev 2:17. Hidden manna is the wisdom of God that is ministered to the church as the word of present truth.

- The trading relationship between Balaam and the Moabites demonstrates the sorcery through which individuals and whole communities can be enslaved to the elemental principles of Satan's kingdom. Balaam was a man who practised divination in the land of Mesopotamia. When the king of Moab requested that Balaam come and curse the nation of Israel, God instructed him not to go, because the Israelites were a nation that was already blessed. Num 22:12. Balaam's sorcerous intent was revealed by his unwillingness to obey God, and his willingness to enter into a trading relationship with the religious world of his time.
- Balaam continually claimed to be a faithful messenger of the Lord, yet his readiness to engage in a trading relationship with the Moabites exposed the true condition of his heart. He was under the sway of the wicked one, presuming to call on the name of the Lord as a prophet, whilst engaging in the sorcerous practice of trading. Balaam functioned this way in pursuit of the prosperity and lifestyle his heart desired. In this regard, the apostle Peter observed that Balaam loved the wages of unrighteousness. 2Pe 2:15.
- The doctrine of Balaam, which is from the synagogue of Satan, can be a pervasive leaven in the church. This theology wars against the true gospel of God by demanding that the church, in the name of love and harmony, embrace the idolatry of the religious world. This is a wickedness that is promoted by Satan to enslave individuals, families, and whole communities, under the elemental principles of his kingdom.

Our practice

- The Scriptures refer to a sorcerer as a 'son of the devil'. The encounter of Paul and Barnabas with Elymas on the island of Paphos is a helpful illustration in this regard. Elymas was a false prophet who withstood Paul and Barnabas as they proclaimed the gospel of Christ

to the governor of the region. In response to the resistance they experienced from Elymas, Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him and said, 'O full of all deceit and all fraud, you *son of the devil*, you enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease perverting the straight ways of the Lord? And now, indeed, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you shall be blind, not seeing the sun for a time.' Paul's word had an immediate effect on Elymas. Luke described a 'dark mist' descending upon him, causing him to seek for someone to lead him by the hand. Act 13:6-11.

- The name 'devil' is derived from the Greek word *diaballo*, which means 'to accuse, to malign'. In the book of Revelation, Satan is described as 'the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night'. Rev 12:10. Paul applied the name 'devil' to those who slander and falsely accuse. For example, in his second letter to Timothy, Paul warned that, in the time of the end, men will be 'lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers [lit. devils], without self-control, brutal, despisers of good'. 2Ti 3:2-3.
- A devil is always seeking to take possession of a person through sorcery. They derive their power from the elemental principles of Satan's kingdom and exercise this power over others for their own gain. The effect of this power over a person can be spiritual, psychological, and even physical. Much of the sickness and disease that was healed by Jesus during His earthly ministry was the product of Satan's power and influence over the kingdom of man.
- As we considered earlier in these notes, John described an interaction between Jesus and the Jews 'who believed Him'. Joh 8:31. Jesus said that these ones were children of the devil on account of their incapacity to hear and understand His word. Joh 3:43-44. These 'believing' Jews were motivated by the desires of their father the devil and were now under his power and control. Those who live this way exercise demonic power and control over others through the sorcerous practice of trading.
- When Jesus sent out His messengers, He gave them power over demons. He said to them, 'I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you.' Luk 10:18-19. Through the word of Jesus, these disciples

received authority to cast out demons, and to liberate people from the fear and oppression of Satan's kingdom.

- As disciples of Christ, we also have received a mandate for this ministry. The apostle Paul observed that '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'. Eph 6:12. To this end, it is important to understand how a person is delivered from demonic oppression and set free from their bondage to Satan.

Deliverance from demonic oppression

- Jesus taught that we are delivered from the power of darkness by the *truth*. He said, 'If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and *the truth shall make you free.*' Joh 8:31-32. The word of the Father, which Christ speaks, is the truth that makes us free. Joh 17:17. Joh 14:6. This word defines our predestination as a son of God, including our name and work as a member of Christ's body. When we receive, believe, and obey Christ's word, we are free to become the son whom the Father predestined us to be. John described this principle at the beginning of his Gospel, writing, 'But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God'. Joh 1:12.
- The word frees us from the power of darkness because it joins us to the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings. On the cross, Jesus disarmed all principalities and powers, making a public spectacle of them and triumphing over them. Col 2:15. He did this to redeem us from the basic principles of the world in order to establish us in our predestination as sons of God. We are delivered from life and oppression under the elemental principles of the world, to the *agape* fellowship of the Father's house. This happens as we are connected to the order of headship through new birth and baptism.
- We are baptised into Christ's death and resurrection. Rom 6:3-5. The implication of baptism is that, as we journey with Christ in the fellowship of His seven wounds, we are raised with Him, *far above all principalities and powers*. Rom 6:4. Eph 1:20-21. That is, we are being delivered from the fallen propensities that belong to life under the elemental principles, to live by love in the context of the body of Christ, where the Father has set us according to His good pleasure. 1Co 12:13,18.

- Practically, our deliverance and protection from demonic oppression under the *stoicheia*, requires our recovery to the fellowship and order of headship. Paul defined this order, stating, 'I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.' 1Co 11:3.
- Paul then proceeded to explain the implications of violating this order. Specifically, he noted, that 'the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels'. 1Co 11:10. In other words, if a woman is not submitted to the headship of her husband, she will be oppressed by unclean spirits who are part of Satan's spiritual host of wickedness in the heavenly places.
- A woman's covering is her submission to the headship authority of God the Father. The grace of life that belongs to this authority flows from the Father, to the Son, and from the Son to her husband, and then from her husband to the family. This authority is for the naming of their children in the Father's family. Where marriages and families are being restored to the order of headship, which belongs to the *agape* fellowship of the Lord at the tree of life, they are protected from Satan's devices and from the destruction that he seeks to wreak upon them.
- To this end, we are exhorted by the apostle Paul to hold fast to the Head, who is Christ, 'from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase that is from God'. Col 2:19. However, those who abandon the fellowship of headship are ensnared again to the weak and beggarly principles of life that belong under the angels. Consequently, they are cheated of the eternal reward that belongs to their predestination as a son of God. Col 2:18-19. Gal 4:9. Instead of holding fast to headship, they take delight in false humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which they have not seen, being vainly puffed up in their fleshly minds.

The name of Jesus is not a mantra

- As we noted earlier, demonic oppression can impact upon a person's spirit, their mind, and even their physical body. However, when one is simply motivated by relief from the *effects* of oppression, they will find no deliverance from their subjugation to the elemental principles of Satan's kingdom. For this reason, the practice of exorcism within churches rarely produces lasting deliverance for those who engage

in it. In fact, unless a person is firstly responding to Christ's word that reveals the truth of their name as a son of God, casting out demons 'in the name of the Lord' becomes nothing more than a 'mantra'.

- The name of Christ is not a 'mantra', used as a sacrament, through which a person gains power over Satan. Rather, the Scriptures teach us that the name of the Lord is the dwelling place of all those who have, by one Spirit, been baptised into one body. 18:10. 1Co 12:13. With this in view, we can appreciate the testimony of the messengers sent out by Christ who said, 'Lord, even the demons are subject to us *in Your name.*' Luk 10:17. We see that the power exercised by these disciples was not *by* the name of Jesus, but rather *in* His name. That is, they were not overpowering demonic forces by simply employing a more powerful name than Satan, the 'ruler of this world'. Joh 14:30. Such a view would consign this ministry to a sacramental exercise, no different to infant baptism or the Eucharistic.
- As members of the body of Christ, we each have a unique work for which we receive power from Him. In every season of our life, we are to use this power according to our name as a son of God. The experience of Paul in Ephesus is a helpful illustration of how we are to exercise the power of Christ according to our name as a member of His body. Having witnessed Paul casting out evil spirits, some 'itinerant Jewish exorcists took it upon themselves to call the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, 'We exorcise you by the Jesus whom Paul preaches.' Act 19:13.
- Luke noted that this evil was also perpetrated by seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest. These wicked men presumed to exercise power apart from fellowship in the body of Christ, by using the name of Jesus like a mantra. The result was that the evil spirit prevailed against them causing them injury and shame as they 'fled out of that house naked and wounded'. Act 19:16. The implication is that, to exercise the power of Christ, we must first be joined to the body of Christ, and then constrained to the unique ministry to which we have been called as a son of God within His body.
- To be clear, deliverance from oppression begins with the preaching of Christ. As a hearer responds to this message and seeks to become obedient to God as their Father, they can find relief from demonic oppression and healing from its effect in their lives. Their freedom will be demonstrated by a commitment to offering as the culture and

practice of their life. They will also embrace their daily participation in the offering and sufferings of Christ as the context of their ongoing healing and recovery. Notably, unless a person becomes genuinely committed to the fellowship of the body of Christ as a son of God, their demon possession will return.

- Satan gains no advantage over us when trading ceases to be the basic motivation of our life. Instead of trading, offering in sanctification becomes the expression of our freedom as sons of God. To this end, Paul described our sanctification as the 'glorious *liberty* [freedom] of the children of God'. Rom 8:21. We are sanctified by the word of the Father, which is the truth concerning who we are as His sons. By the faith of Christ, which we obtain as we hear and receive this truth, we can express the righteous works of our sonship as a member of the body of Christ. Rom 10:17.

The fear of God

- The power of Satan is the fear of death. He gains this power through misappropriating the Law of God. Satan uses the fear of death to provoke us to avoid suffering, and to pursue the life we desire, by keeping the Law of God through the exercise of our flesh. Paul testified that this mode of living does not lead to life. Rom 7:9-11. Instead, it is how Satan keeps us in bondage to himself. Heb 2:15. Paul said that when we live this way, 'sin reigns through death'. Rom 5:21. As it did for Adam and Eve, the fear of death motivates us to draw back when God comes to meet us. This fear intensifies our commitment to the shame-driven identity projections that we have, and energises our sorcerous manipulation of others to affirm these idolatrous projections.
- Alternatively, the fear of God motivates us to draw near to Him. We begin to fear God when the word of the cross pierces our heart. Through the provision of grace and supplication, we receive the blessing of illumination as our heart is laid bare before the fiery eyes of Christ. The fire in His eyes exposes the thoughts and intents of our heart, which are in conflict with the word of the Father concerning our sonship. We accept that God's word, which proclaims His judgement against all sin and iniquity, is true. Motivated by the fear of God, we find 'strong consolation' as we flee to Him for safety. Heb 6:18. Strong consolation is the assurance of our name and life as a son of God, which we receive in the word of the Father proclaimed

to us by Christ's messengers. As we considered earlier, the word of the Father is the *truth* that sets us free. Joh 8:32.

- Noah's response to the word of God's judgement reveals how we are to receive, and live by, the fear of the Lord. The book of Genesis recorded that Yahweh was grieved in His heart on account of the wickedness of man. He said, 'I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them.' Gen 6:6-7. Notably, we read that the earth was 'corrupt before God' and 'filled with violence'. Gen 6:11. This was the outcome of Satan's influence, who himself was 'filled with violence' because of the abundance of his trading. Eze 28:16.
- God proclaimed His word to Noah, pronouncing the impending judgement of the world because of its evil. He said, 'The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth. Make yourself an ark.' Gen 6:13-14. Noah demonstrated his fear of God through His obedience to the word of God's judgement. He built an ark for the salvation and deliverance of his family, and for all those who would later be the sons of God.
- The ark became the place of safety, in which Noah and his family could find the 'strong consolation' of sonship through fellowship in Christ. In this regard, we recall the words of the apostle Peter who wrote, 'When once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. There is also an antitype which now saves us—baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him.' 1Pe 3:20-22.