

*FIVE MEN WHO FACED THE
ROARING LION*

A Modern Guide for Spiritual Warfare



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Preface

“You shouldn’t talk about the devil. If you do, you’re only giving him glory.” That was the logic of my Christian upbringing... but it seemed to make about as much sense as saying, “The Pentagon shouldn’t talk so much about Osama bin Laden. They’re just giving him glory.” It is only logical to assume that you cannot develop an effective plan of battle if know nothing about your enemy.

How often have you heard someone testify that “the devil is after me” or songs with witty rhymes like “satan is on my track... trying to hold me back.” Are we prepared for spiritual warfare or just hiding in the foxhole while the bullets fly? Did God give you spiritual armor so that you could lie shivering in a foxhole? Should you be on the offensive, or on the defensive? A good soldier of God will hide the word of God in his or her heart. The word is our sword. It is *the* one effective weapon in our spiritual arsenal. We need to have the same spiritual vision as Elisha when he explained to his servant Gehazai that a mighty battalion of angels in flaming chariots were surrounding and protecting them. With the spiritual armor and your angelic platoon, why should you cower in fear of the devil? You have the most potent arsenal of weaponry the world has ever known. But that won’t help if you’re too scared to even point and pull the trigger. We need the right attitude in order to defeat satan. The first attribute of that attitude is one of sobriety. Our key scripture puts it this way:

Be well balanced (temperate, sober of mind), be vigilant and cautious at all times; for that enemy of yours, the devil, roams around like a lion roaring [in fierce hunger], seeking someone to seize upon and devour.

1st Peter 5:8 (AMP)

The Greek word translated “sober” means **more** than to abstain from alcohol. To be sober, in this context, to be calm and collected in spirit; temperate, dispassionate. In other words, a sober person is one who is “clear headed.” The sober person maintains self-control. The sober person is well balanced. On one hand, he does not leave room for wanton disregard of spiritual matters by those who are caught up in the things of the world. On the other hand, he does not make room in his life for those whose religious fanaticism replaces a solid scriptural foundation with emotionalism. A balanced person is not given to extreme winds of doctrine (see Ephesians 4:14-15). He thoughtfully analyzes the scriptures (as commanded in 2nd Timothy 2:15-19), coming to Spirit-led conclusions that do not veer to any extreme of asceticism (self-denial) or fanaticism (excessive enthusiasm).

It is good to want to win souls for Jesus, investing your time and money into distributing

tracts or participating in other forms of local or international evangelism. But when you reach the extreme of instituting inquisitions to force people into “receiving Christ,” then you’ve gone beyond the limits. Jesus said that the key to effective evangelism is love (see John 13:35), not nagging, begging or threatening them to “believe, or else.”

Let us consider the word “vigilant.” In the original Greek, the word literally means to stay awake, be alert, watch and/or be vigilant. Many Christians seem to practice “ostrich religion” in which their heads are firmly buried in the sand. They shut up inside the safe and comfortable four walls of the church where they make bold threats against satan and the kingdom of darkness. However, they never make good on those threats, they tiptoe home, careful to not draw attention to themselves. Metaphorically, “vigilant” means to give strict attention to those matters that are most important. A vigilant person is careful to avoid any act that might allow some destructive calamity to suddenly overtake him. Specifically, he is on guard against the wiles of the roaring lion. When the first drug dealer moves in, the vigilant prayer warrior begins building up a standard against the evil, forcing it back. The average church, it seems, is too busy deciding what color the ladies will wear for Women’s Day or whether the chicken dinner will be baked or fried. I attended one church where drug dealers operated just a few paces away from the front door but the parishioners were too busy fighting over the number of chicken dinners that the church should sponsor.

In nature, a lion does not roar until it is ready to spring on its prey. A vigilant animal will constantly sniff the air and keep on the lookout for suspicious movement in the brush. Strange, by comparison, that many Christians are not vigilant. Not only do we not “sniff the air” and keep on the lookout for “suspicious movement,” it seems that many Christians allow satan to walk through the front door and sit on their laps before they realize that something is wrong. If you intend to do God’s work in your community (or, in other parts of the world), you must be prepared for the opposition you **will** face. What opposition might that be?

Indeed, all who delight in piety *and* are determined to live a devoted *and* godly life in Christ Jesus will meet with persecution [will be made to suffer because of their righteous stand].

2nd Timothy 3:12 (AMP)

As a teenager our church visited nursing homes, hospitals, and mental institutions. We served meals (and the gospel—as we understood it) at soup kitchens. We tracked down and confronted gang members and drug dealers in the toughest neighborhoods. We lifted drunks out of the gutters and challenged prostitutes on street corners. And did we suffer persecution? You bet we did; not only from atheists and other religious groups but from within our ranks. Even more frustrating was that, with all of the activity, **very few** were actually saved. Even fewer were delivered. Many who made professions for Christ turned back to their old lifestyles in a short

time. Each month, the church could boast over a dozen new members. Sadly, many of those were falling through the cracks and it appeared that no one cared. Don't get me wrong, I don't believe that the objective of any soul-winning activity is to get on-the-spot confessions. The Bible says that one man plants, another waters, and the Holy Spirit brings the increase (see 1 Corinthians 3:7). Still, it seemed to me that the power of the gospel should have had more of a tangible manifestation. Why was it that, after years of planting and watering, we never saw much of a harvest?

It takes more than just activity, more than even a willingness to be used of God. **It takes the power and anointing of the Holy Ghost.** Going out to do any sort of spiritual work without such covering is like trying to fly a Boeing 767 with only one engine. We need to avail ourselves of **all** of the weapons in God's arsenal if we are to effectively do battle with and be victorious over the devil.

The purpose of this book is to delineate a study of five men who faced the roaring lion in their lives and ministries. These men illustrate a selection of "types" within the body of Christ. By examining each of these types (as set forth in the scriptures), you may be able to identify areas in your life and/or your church that need to be strengthened. Even better, you will be empowered to do even greater damage to the kingdom of darkness as you renew your focus on the things of God.

Those five men are:

The Carnal Man: This is the person who thinks he or she can exist with one foot in the church and the other in the world. The carnal Christian is a person of compromise, incapable of fulfilling his or her commitment(s) to Christ. As we will soon see, anyone attempting to pull off any such "balancing act" is destined for failure.

The Shepherd: The spiritual leader is the type of person that satan will most likely target and attack. This is a person whom God has called to hold some office or function within the body of Christ. The stakes are high: not only is the life of the leader at stake, but also the lives of those who follow him (see Matthew 26:31b). The shepherd must avoid strife and walk in love. Otherwise, the roaring lion will have an entryway into his or her life.

The Religious Man: This is the type of person who values his or her religion over their relationship with God. Just like the Pharisees, tradition and appearance take precedence over spirituality and substance. The religious man may be a carnal Christian in disguise — hiding his self-willed nature behind outward religious practice and/or observation. This person, if not careful, may hear the somber words of Matthew 7:23 when they stand before the Lord on Judgment Day.

Five Men Who Faced the Roaring Lion

The Righteous Man: Like the shepherd, this man is blameless, yet is under attack (see 2nd Timothy 3:12). The attention of the roaring lion is attracted by those who have an uncompromising walk with God (see Job 1:8). Yet, as we will see, God will honor those who honor Him, and will destroy those who stand against His anointed.

The Anointed Man: This is the man who not only follows the example of Jesus; he is filled and covered with the anointing of Jesus. He, therefore, only experiences victory when facing the roaring lion.

Not all of these men were successful in defeating the roaring lion. Some were defeated. Let's learn from their mistakes so as to not repeat them.

CHAPTER ONE

THE CARNAL MAN

The first man who faced the roaring lion is Samson. What makes this story unusual is the fact that, at least on cursory analysis, Samson had successfully defeated the roaring lion. Upon even closer analysis, we see it as only an illusion. The challenge is not the strength of the lion but rather Samson's weakness, his carnality. What is carnality? Carnality is basically a state of being led by the impulses of the flesh, particularly in circumstances where it would be more appropriate to be under the influence of God's Holy Spirit. This could apply to the sexual nature, as in Samson's case, or to some other area of human nature. Charles Grandison Finney, a powerful revivalist in America during the 1800's, was very adept at delineating areas in which we need an "attitude adjustment." Consider the following list – a truncated sampling from Rev. Finney's *Revival Lectures*:

- Ingratitude
- Lack Of Love For God
- Neglect Of The Bible
- Unbelief
- Lack of Prayer
- Neglect of Fellowship
- "Outward Show" of Religion
- Lack of Love for Souls
- No Concern for Foreign Missions
- Materialism
- Neglect of Family Duties
- No Concern About Your Testimony
- Failure to Intercede for the Brethren
- Lack of Self-Sacrifice
- Vanity
- Envy
- Bitterness
- Slander

THE NATURE OF A CARNAL MAN

14 But [the] natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him; and he cannot know [them] because they are spiritually discerned;
15 but the spiritual discerns all things, and he is discerned of no one.

16 For who has known the mind of [the] Lord, who shall instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

1st Corinthians 2:14-16 (Darby)

To summarize the above scripture, we could say that the carnal man (or woman) either possesses or exhibits one or more of the following traits or characteristics:

- He will not allow the word of God to enter his or her heart, considering such things to be foolish, irrelevant, or inconsequential.
- He questions everything... picking each fact down to the bone... yet does not allow him/herself to be questioned or examined by any man.
- He does not have the mind of Christ and, consequently, can't discern spiritual things.

HOW CAN A CHRISTIAN BE CARNAL?

Although some modern theologians disdain the idea of the “carnal Christian,” the scriptures do give some evidence to support that concept. Paul goes on in 1 Corinthians 3:1-4 to classify some Christians as being carnal.

*1 And I, brethren, have not been able to speak to you as to spiritual, but as to fleshly; as to babes in Christ.
2 I have given you milk to drink, not meat, for ye have not yet been able, nor indeed are ye yet able;
3 for ye are yet carnal. For whereas [there are] among you emulation and strife, are ye not carnal, and walk according to man?
4 For when one says, I am of Paul, and another, I of Apollos, are ye not men?
1st Corinthians 3:1-4 (Darby)*

How do you differentiate a carnal Christian from a spiritual believer? According to the above scripture, carnal Christians are similar to infants. As infants have yet to master the basics of language and, therefore, are “non-speakers,” these carnal Christians can’t “speak the word” yet¹. As infants can only digest milk, these carnal Christians have difficulty digesting the word of God beyond the most basic doctrines². As infants have no control over their bodily functions and must be diapered, these carnal Christians have no control of their flesh and are easily given to envying, jealousy, and other problems. They need to be “covered” with the prayer and support of more mature believers³. As infants are not able to walk but can only crawl, these carnal Christians have difficulty walking in the path that Christ walked. They have a bit of growing up to do. (1 Corinthians 3:3)

¹ 1st Corinthians 3:1

² 1st Corinthians 3:2

³ 1st Corinthians 3:3

INCAPABLE OF WORKING TOGETHER

For example, churches that split up over some difficulty, rather than loving each other and praying through rough spots. Or, pastors who can't work with other churches toward the common goal of saving souls in the local community because of a fear of losing members or resources to a "rival" pastor. Churches that split by racial lines, refusing to welcome a mixture of saints and failing to come together as one under the blood of Jesus. Their lifestyles reflect inner fears, lusts, prejudices, etc. rather than scriptural attitudes.

SUFFERING FROM RETARDED GROWTH

Of course, if you've only been a Christian for a short period of time, then that is understandable. After all, you wouldn't expect a 6-month-old baby to be able to drive an automobile. However, if you have a 16-year-old that still can't walk, then there might be a problem. A carnal Christian may have been a "regular" member of their church for years, yet have not experienced any spiritual growth. Like those deacons I mentioned in the introduction to this book, they may even have attained a prominent position in their church. Still, there is no spiritual maturity, no fruit (or gifts) of the Spirit, and no power in their lives.

CONSEQUENCES OF CARNALITY

What are the consequences of carnality? The ultimate consequence of carnality is death. Certainly, if one does not experience that ultimate result of carnality, he or she will certainly experience a short-circuiting of their relationship and walk with God. Paul puts it this way:

6 Now the mind of the flesh [which is sense and reason without the Holy Spirit] is death [death that comprises all the miseries arising from sin, both here and hereafter]. But the mind of the [Holy] Spirit is life and [soul] peace [both now and forever].

7 [That is] because the mind of the flesh [with its carnal thoughts and purposes] is hostile to God, for it does not submit itself to God's law; indeed it cannot.

8 So then those who are living the life of the flesh [catering to the appetites and impulses of their carnal nature] cannot please or satisfy God, or be acceptable to Him.

Romans 8:6-8 (AMP)

If you linger in carnality without making any attempt at feeding on the word of God and submitting to the Holy Spirit, you will likely end up being separated from God (e.g., spiritual death). The *very best* you could expect would be to die physically as a result of your carnal actions. For example, sinful sexual behavior can result in death from some sexually contracted disease.

Adultery can result in injury or death from a jealous husband or wife. The sin of gluttony can result in death from cardiovascular disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, or other ailments. An unbridled tongue can spew forth words that so hurt the hearer that he or she responds violently. I could go on, but I'm sure that you get the idea.

SAMSON: THE CARNAL MAN

We started this chapter by identifying Samson as a carnal man. Why do we consider Samson to have been carnal? Let's examine his story:

1 And Samson went down to Timnath, and saw a woman in Timnath of the daughters of the Philistines.
2 And he came up, and told his father and his mother, and said, I have seen a woman in Timnath of the daughters of the Philistines: now therefore get her for me for a wife.
Judges 14:1-2

Samson was, like many men, led by the "little brain." Having traveled through the land of the Philistines (the land of the "immigrants," the mortal enemies of the nation of Israel), he laid eyes on a very attractive young woman. He wanted her. He was obsessed with her. You know the feeling. As a leader in the nation of Israel, Samson should have been led by his spirit (in submission to the Spirit of God). Like those deacons at the nursing home, Samson obviously didn't take his leadership role very seriously. Of course, you don't have to be a deacon, trustee, or hold any position in the church in order to be a leader. Any believer in Jesus Christ can lead another person to the Lord. In fact, the "work of the ministry" is actually the job of those we refer to as "lay persons." Those of us who are in the "five-fold" ministry are simply "coaches" in the team. We all have a position to play on the "field" of life.

11 and he has given some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some shepherds and teachers,
12 for the perfecting of the saints; with a view to [the] work of [the] ministry, with a view to the edifying of the body of Christ;
Ephesians 4:11-12 (Darby)

The word "perfecting" means to prepare or make ready. Contrary to popular belief, the role of the "clergy" is not to do the work of the ministry while the "lay persons" simply lay around.

Getting back to the subject... The Philistines (or, the "immigrants") were the forefathers of the modern-day Palestinians and were persistent in their efforts to strip land away from the children of Israel. As possessors of metal-working technology (they preceded Israel into the "Iron Age"), they had a distinct technical and military advantage over Israel. Still, Israel had the Lord God, the Creator of iron and all the elements in the earth. The "catch," however, is that

disobedience can “short circuit” your connection with the Sovereign.

Samson should have been leading Israel into unified submission to Jehovah. All things considered, no leader of Israel had any business involving himself with a Philistine. But, again, Samson was more concerned with gratifying his flesh than with glorifying the Lord. This was probably the first case of “sleeping with the enemy.” Samson didn’t even care that this woman was a heathen, outside of the covenants and promises of the Living God. Nor did he care that his courtship of this woman would be a major diplomatic faux pas. All Samson cared about was the fact that this woman steamed his jeans. Isn’t it curious that, of all the areas that satan attacks people, sex (and sexuality) seem to be the areas where satan has invested seemingly a majority of his effort? Why is that? It is obvious that God has endowed this area with some special significance, given the amount of “energy” satan has extended towards attempting to destroy or pervert it. Consider all of the satanic perversions of God’s plan of marriage:

In Ephesians 5:22-32, we see that marriage is largely symbolic of the relationship between Christ and the church. When a man and a woman come together in sexual congress, the two become one flesh. It is this union that makes the pair very powerful, particularly when they come together to agree in prayer. If satan can cause any division between the two, or can corrupt God’s perfect plan, then that power is short-circuited and defenses against the roaring lion begin to fall.

THE VALUE OF GOOD ADVICE

Samson had a source of godly advice in his parents. Did Samson heed that advice?

3 Then his father and his mother said to him, [Is there] not a woman among the daughters of thy brethren, or among all my people, that thou goest to take a wife of the uncircumcised Philistines? And Samson said to his father, Get her for me; for she pleaseth me well. {pleaseth...: Heb. is right in mine eyes}

Judges 14:3

Apparently not. His parents told him he’d be better off finding a Jewish wife. After all, the Philistines were an uncircumcised people. This isn’t simply a reference to their flesh. It signifies their lack of a covenant relationship with God. Unfortunately for Samson, he let his parents’ words go in one ear and out the other. His only reply was, “Get her for me; for she is right in mine eyes.”

4But his father and his mother knew not that it [was] of the LORD, that he sought an occasion against the Philistines: for at that time the Philistines had dominion over Israel.

Judges 14:4

Five Men Who Faced the Roaring Lion

Of course, what satan might have engineered for evil, God was turning around for His glory (see Genesis 50:20). And so, let's consider Samson's encounter with the roaring lion.

5 Then went Samson down, and his father and his mother, to Timnath, and came to the vineyards of Timnath: and, behold, a young lion roared against him. {against...: Heb. in meeting him}

6 And the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him, and he tore him as he would have torn a kid, and [he had] nothing in his hand: but he told not his father or his mother what he had done.

Judges 14:5-6

A young lion attacked Samson. Through the power of the Spirit of God, Samson easily dispatched the beast. And so, it would appear, Samson had triumphed in his encounter with the roaring lion. But, did he really? The lion was dead. What further threat could it be? Let us see...

7 And he went down, and talked with the woman; and she pleased Samson well.

8 And after a time he returned to take her, and he turned aside to see the carcase of the LION:and, behold, [there was] a swarm of bees and honey in the carcase of the lion.

9 And he took of it in his hands, and went on eating, and came to his father and mother, and he gave them, and they ate: but he told them not that he had taken the honey out of the carcase of the lion.

Judges 14:7-9

It was at this point, after the lion's demise, that Samson had been conquered. Why? Let's go a little deeper into Samson's background. Notice the directive that the Lord gave to Samson's mother prior to his birth:

For, lo, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and no razor shall come on his head: for the child shall be a Nazarite to God from his birth: and he shall begin to deliver Israel from the hand of the Philistines.

Judges 13:5

The Lord God declared that Samson would be a Nazarite from birth. What is a Nazarite? A Nazarite is a person who is dedicated or consecrated to God. The word "Nazarite" literally means "people of the vow." While many took the Nazarite vow for a certain period of time (similar to declaring or observing a fast), a few were called to a lifetime consecration before the Lord. Those observing perpetual Nazaritism include the prophet Samuel, John the Baptist, and (as you have already guessed) Samson. The sixth chapter of the book of Numbers provides a detailed explanation of the requirements of a Nazarite. Let's look at a small portion of that passage:

Five Men Who Faced the Roaring Lion

- 1 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,
2 Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them, When either man or woman shall separate [themselves] to vow a vow of a Nazarite, to separate [themselves] to the LORD: {to separate...: or, to make themselves Nazarites}
3 He shall separate [himself] from wine and strong drink, and shall drink no vinegar of wine, or vinegar of strong drink, neither shall he drink any liquor of grapes, nor eat moist grapes, or dried.
4 All the days of his separation shall he eat nothing that is made of the vine tree, from the kernels even to the husk. {separation: or, Nazariteship} {vine...: Heb. vine of the wine}
5 All the days of the vow of his separation there shall no razor come upon his head: until the days shall be fulfilled, in which he separateth [himself] to the LORD, he shall be holy, [and] shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow.
6 All the days that he separateth [himself] to the LORD he shall come at no dead body.
7 He shall not make himself unclean for his father, or for his mother, for his brother, or for his sister, when they die: because the consecration of his God [is] upon his head. {consecration: Heb. separation}
8 All the days of his separation he [is] holy to the LORD.
Numbers 6:1-8

The three key marks of distinction for the Nazarites were:

1. They refrained from wine and other products made from grapes. In the, this restriction may be interpreted to include inks or dyes made from grapes or grapevines.
2. They did not cut or shave their hair.
3. They were forbidden to come into contact with dead bodies. If someone suddenly collapsed and died in a Nazarite's tent, he was required to undergo an eight-day purification ritual.

In its life and full strength, the lion was no match for Samson. But as a dead carcass, the lion became a trap that Samson walked right into.

- 8 And after a time he returned to take her, and he turned aside to see the carcass of the LION: and, behold, [there was] a swarm of bees and honey in the carcass of the lion.
9 And he took of it in his hands, and went on eating, and came to his father and mother, and he gave them, and they ate: but

Five Men Who Faced the Roaring Lion

he told them not that he had taken the honey out of the
carcase of the lion.

Judges 14:1-9

Samson noticed the honey in the carcass of the lion and didn't even give the slightest consideration to the fact that the lion's carcass was unclean. Then again, perhaps the fact that he failed to tell his parents where the honey came from reveals that Samson *was* aware of his sin, but considered it lightly in comparison to his physical urgings (e.g., his sweet tooth). Samson's taste buds demanded gratification. Samson thought about how sweet that honey would taste and ignored his vow of consecration to God. Carnality... the tool satan used to bring this man of God down.

Of course, if you continue reading the story of Samson, you will see greater defeats... and an ultimate victory as he brought great destruction upon the enemies of Israel. As you pursue your Christian walk before God, you have two choices:

Live holy, consecrated before the Lord and bring glory to His name.

Live a carnal life, satisfying the desires of your flesh, and risk bringing disgrace upon yourself, and tarnishing your Christian witness.

Each of us face these choices **on a daily basis**. That's why Jesus tells us to take up our cross DAILY and follow Him (see Luke 9:23). If you are hungry, God will feed you. If you are lonely, God will send your companion. If you have **any** need, God will provide... IF YOU WALK UPRIGHT BEFORE HIM (see Psalm 84:11).

Don't follow Samson's example and pursue the lust of your flesh, the lust of your eyes, or the pride of life. Resolve to ignore that "carrot" that satan is dangling before you and set your face to walk holy and upright before your Heavenly Father.

CHAPTER TWO

THE SHEPHERD

The shepherd man is the opposite of Samson. Not only did he defeat the roaring lion, he built upon that success to win other victories in his life. That man is David, son of Jesse, King of Israel. While his older brothers went off to join the army and “fight” against the Philistines, a teenaged David remained at home to care for his father’s sheep. When his father, Jesse, began to worry about the other boys, he sent David to do a bit of “reconnaissance.” David arrived on the scene in time to watch the men of Israel turn their backs and run from the giant, Goliath, of the Philistines. As Goliath continued to challenge the men of Israel (for forty days), the Israelites continued to run and cower in fear. David was outraged that this uncircumcised heathen would dare and speak against the people of the Living God. Unfortunately, no one else seemed to share David’s faith stand. David went to King Saul and declared his willingness to fight (and defeat) Goliath. From Saul’s perspective (and that of everyone else David spoke with), David was nothing more than an untrained, scrawny teenager. It is true that David didn’t know much about warfare. David did, however, know the Maker of heaven and earth. David almost sounded boastful when he repeatedly proclaimed that he could (and would) defeat the enemy of Israel. When questioned how David knew he could defeat Goliath, David responded as follows:

And David said to Saul, Let no man’s heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine.
1st Samuel 17:32

You might imagine that this youngster had a lot of gumption to go up to the king himself and proclaim that he could kill a giant. Observe King Saul’s reaction in verse 33:

And Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou [art but] a youth, and he a man of war from his youth.
1st Samuel 17:33

What Saul said seems to make sense. After all, David was only a child, and Goliath an adult who had been trained in combat from his nursery school days. Did David accept that and simply walk away? Absolutely not! David countered:

34 And David said to Saul, Thy servant kept his father’s sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: {lamb: or, kid}
35 And I went after him, and smote him, and delivered [it] out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught [him] by

his beard, and smote him, and slew him.

36 Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God.

1st Samuel 17:34-36

David knew that he could take Goliath, because he had earlier faced the roaring lion while tending his father's flocks. While watching his father's flocks, a roaring lion came and attacked the sheep. We see in verse 35 above that David smote the lion and delivered the lamb out of its mouth. However, as in Samson's situation, the roaring lion wasn't through yet. It rose up against David, but David rose up in the power of God and slew him. David kept his eye on his past victory and made no differentiation between either foe. Goliath would go down just as hard as the roaring lion. Why?

David said moreover, The LORD that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. And Saul said to David, Go, and the LORD be with thee.

1st Samuel 17:37

WE CAN ONLY POSSESS WHAT WE EXPERIENCE

The above words, incorporated into a truth-filled song by Charlie Peacock, are illustrated in the life of David. Armed with his past experience, and the understanding that the true power behind those victories was of the Lord, David felt (rightfully so) that he was uniquely qualified to conquer Goliath. And, as the entire army of Israel cowered and hid, young David went forth to do what any man (man of faith, that is) could (and, should) have done.

Pastors and others given leadership over a group of believers are like David in this scenario. While watching over your Heavenly Father's flocks, the roaring lion may come to devour a helpless little lamb. It is your responsibility to smite satan and deliver that lamb out of his clutches. It is sad to observe pastors and spiritual leaders who sit back without even lifting a finger to save those who fall away from the Lord. What is even worse is when such men and women smugly say, "That fool is gonna bust hell wide open. He deserves it, having the nerve to leave *my* church." I've heard it with my own ears. Shocking. How does the spiritual leader deal with satan, that roaring lion? First of all, make sure that you have the right spirit (or, attitude). That attitude is one of zeal: bubbling, boiling fervor. It is a single-minded mentality... focused and on-target.

... he who gives aid *and* superintends, with zeal *and* singleness of mind...

Romans 12:8 (AMP)

What we are really alluding to is that the spiritual leader must have the right anointing. He or she must be called by God into the position of leadership and must be diligent to bear spiritual fruits, not to just be a religious nut. I like the way Joyce Meyer puts it, you can't be an effective spiritual leader if you are operating on charisma without character.

DRESSED FOR SUCCESS

Secondly, make the spiritual leader must be clothed with the appropriate armor. Having the **right** armor is essential. Notice that David didn't go after Goliath with the king's armor. He went armed with his faith in the Living God. The armor for the members of the body of Christ is delineated by the Apostle Paul in Ephesians 6:

10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.
11 Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.
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]. {flesh...: Gr. blood and flesh} {spiritual...: or, wicked spirits} {high: or, heavenly}
13 Wherefore take to you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. {having...: or, having overcome all}
14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;
15 And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;
16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, with which ye shall be able to put out all the fiery darts of the wicked.
17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:
18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching for this purpose with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

Ephesians 6:10-18

The weapon you fight satan with is the sword of the Spirit — the word of God. Of course, in order to use this weapon, you must have a thorough knowledge of God's word. Five minutes a day may not cut it given the challenges we are facing in these perilous times. We need to turn off the television, unplug the phone and spend some serious time before the throne of our Almighty Heavenly Father.

Five Men Who Faced the Roaring Lion

Study to show thyself approved to God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

2nd Timothy 2:15

If you can, as Paul says, rightly divide the word of truth (that is, fully comprehend and appropriately apply it), then you will be successful in delivering innocent lambs out of the mouth of the roaring lion... then slay the lion before it can rise up and attack you.

For [although] they hold a form of piety (true religion), they deny *and* reject *and* are strangers to the power of it [their conduct belies the genuineness of their profession]. Avoid [all] such people [turn away from them].

2nd Timothy 3:5 (AMP)

THE WATCHMAN

It is a sobering thought to imagine that, on the day of judgment, we might see some poor soul being cast into the lake of fire and realize that we could have intervened and snatched that poor soul out of the jaws of the roaring lion. Even worse, it is a horrible thing to be responsible for someone's eternal damnation. But wait, aren't people responsible for their own sin and the decision(s) they make regarding their sin? Yes, however...

When I say to the wicked, O wicked man, you shall surely die, and you do not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his perversity *and* iniquity, but his blood will I require at your hand.

Ezekiel 33:8 (AMP)

God takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked. God's desire is that all men turn from their sin, turn to Him, and live (see Ezekiel 33:11 and 2nd Peter 3:9). And it is up to **us**, His ambassadors on earth, to take the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ and disciple them (see Matthew 28:19-20). Of course, if we tell them and they refuse to repent, **then** it is on them and our responsibility for them is over.

But if you warn the wicked to turn from his evil way and he does not turn from his evil way, he shall die in his iniquity, but you will have saved your life.

Ezekiel 33:9 (AMP)

As churches grow in size and activities, we can get so busy that we often forget the **true** purpose of our being there. It's good to serve in an official position, to sing on the choir, to run church equipment, to work in the office, etc. But when we allow our responsibilities to get in the way of reaching out to those who are in need, then we've entered into an area of sin.

You may not be a pastor or lead a Bible study. That doesn't matter. Even if your only "official responsibility" is keeping the pew warm, remember that we are **all** spiritual leaders (to some degree) in the body of Christ. We all can lead someone to Christ, and we can all admonish others to "follow me as I follow Christ"⁴.

FEEDING HIS SHEEP

Do you serve the Lord *only* to receive blessings, or do you seek out opportunities to **be** a blessing? A better question: are you so busy running from satan (like the Israeli army ran from Goliath) that you have no time to rescue those defenseless little lambs? Have you, in fact, trampled over Christ's little lambs in an effort to get away from the roaring lion? Consider Jesus' admonishment to Simon Peter in St. John, chapter 21:

So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter,
Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He
saith unto him, Feed my lambs.

John 21:15

Jesus asked Peter if he loved Him "more than these." More than these... what? More than these fish? More than these disciples? What was Jesus referring to? Let's imagine, for a moment, that Jesus was referring to the fish. Consider how much Peter loved fishing. Peter, Andrew, and the Zebedee brothers left thriving businesses when Jesus called them to the ministry. According to Mark 1:20, James and John's fishing business even had employees. After Jesus was crucified, the disciples had forgotten His frequent reminders that He would rise from the dead after three days. Rather than expectantly waiting for His return from the grave, Peter decided to return to the fishing business. Peter was so convincing, not only did the former fishermen join him; three disciples who weren't even fishermen joined him⁵.

Some of us are **very** career oriented. We love our jobs. Although career is important, nothing should come before our devotion to the Lord⁶. Likewise, our positions within the church can be stumbling blocks if we are not careful. If you are in a more visible area of ministry (i.e., public speaking, teaching, singing, performing, etc.), don't hold yourself up to be greater than someone in a less visible area (i.e., intercessor, administrator, janitor, etc.). Not only will your service to the Lord bring you a blessing, the Lord could use you in some small way to encourage and strengthen a brother or sister. Sometimes, you are influencing others without even realizing it.

⁴ See 1 Corinthians 4:15-16 and 11:1

⁵ See John 21:2-3

⁶ See Matthew 6:33

Was Jesus asking, “Do you love Me more than these fish, Simon Peter?” Do you love Jesus more than your job? Do you love Jesus more than your position within your church? Do you really? Have you ever ignored a brother or sister who needed a ride to church because you didn’t want to be late and lose out on the “good” seats? Have you ever failed to greet someone seated alone in the rear of the sanctuary because you had to run downstairs to check on something? Did you ever ignore some newcomer in the congregation because you wanted to sit with your friends? If so, then you have missed the mark (which is the literal definition of the word “sin”). Can you imagine how many people leave church services and go home crying because nobody reached out to them in their time of pain or sorrow? We should never allow our positions — inside or out of the church — or any other thing to get in the way of true Christian service. What is true Christian service? Read the gospels and observe how Jesus lived His life. Jesus’ primary prerogative was to reach out and touch people who were in need. Those who were hurting. Those who were suffering. Those who were under the attack of the roaring lion. Although the question, “Do you love Me more than these fish” seems an interesting possibility, Jesus was, more likely, referring to the other disciples. “Do you love Me more than these other disciples, Simon Peter?” Why would Peter’s devotion to the Lord be any greater than the other disciples? Let’s check Peter’s confession:

But Peter said to Him, Even if they all fall away *and* are caused to stumble *and* distrust *and* desert You, yet I will not [do so]!

Mark 14:29 (AMP)

In Mark 14:29, Peter intimated that he loved Jesus more than the other disciples. Yet, despite his bold-sounding promises, he failed to keep his word and deserted Jesus at His greatest hour of need. How could Peter do that? A better question... “How could I desert Jesus at His greatest hour of need?” What? Don’t you realize that doing something to the least of Jesus’ brethren is the same as doing that to Him? In Matthew 25:31-46, the parable of the sheep and the goats, we see that whatever we do to the least of His brethren (e.g., those defenseless little lambs that the roaring lion seeks after) we are ostensibly doing to Him.

I am constantly amazed at how some Christians can seem to be so in love with the Lord... shouting and dancing and speaking in tongues... and yet can run over their fellow saints without even batting an eyelid. Can you **really** be so in love with the Lord, whom you have never seen, and yet hate your brother whom you see every day? According to John⁷, it is impossible and your façade of loving God is a lie. I’ve attended all types of churches across the United States, Europe and Asia. It’s wonderful to be freely welcomed into a fellowship of believers, regardless of how much or how little you have in common... even if you’re in a foreign country and don’t

⁷ 1st John 4:20

speak the language. Don't you realize that's how heaven will be (although we **will** understand each other)? Don't you also realize that if you can't accept your brothers and sisters in Christ, chances are you may not find yourself in heaven?

Do you love Jesus? Do you **really** love Him? If so, are you obeying His commandments (see John 14:15)? Are you feeding His sheep? Let's look at John 21:15 again:

So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter,
Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He
saith unto him, Feed my lambs.

John 21:15

Jesus asked Peter if he **loved** Him. In the Greek, Jesus asked, "Do you AGAPAO me?" He was referring to AGAPE love... which is God's love. Agape love is an uncompromising love. It loves whether or not the subject returns that love. It loves even if the subject returns hate. Agape love is an unconditional love. It loves even the un-lovely. It loves those who don't want to be loved. If you truly love Jesus, feed His sheep.

The word "Feed" in this verse in the original Greek language means to promote the spiritual welfare of Jesus' AR-NEE'-ON (little lambs). Would any mother give birth to a baby, then leave it to fend for itself? Of course not! When a soul comes to Christ, we need to embrace that spiritual babe and foster his/her spiritual growth. When a new convert (or even a veteran believer) comes to the church, it is imperative for you to wrap your arms around that person and agape them. Lift them up in your prayers. Let them know that somebody cares about them. They may not look or act like the type of person you would want to love... which is even more reason to agape them. Peter's reply to Jesus' question, "thou knowest that I love thee," wasn't really a direct answer. Peter was saying "Lord, you know that I PHILEO (not agape) you." The Greek word phileo means friendship, fondness, affection or personal attachment. Phileo love is qualified by a relationship or attachment of some sort. It is very conditional. It is not the pure, high AGAPE love that Jesus was asking for. Sometimes, we'll love our Christian brothers and sisters... but only if they're doing what we want them to. We won't love them if it is uncomfortable or inconvenient for us. **THAT IS SIN!** Look at what happens in John 21:16

He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of
Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou
knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my
sheep.

John 21:16

Jesus repeats his question to Peter. However, this time the word "feed" in the Greek is POY-MAH'EE-NO, which means to oversee or to provide their soul needs. You see, once a baby Christian progresses along the path of spiritual maturity, we no longer need to "bottle

feed” them. I like the way Keith Green put it... we’re simply like the curb on the street. We keep them from running off the road. Although the primary responsibility for providing POY-MAH’EE-NO falls upon the pastor, we all play a part in edifying the body of Christ in love⁸. Jesus also uses a different word for “sheep” in this verse. He calls them PROB’-AT-ON, which means sheep but, in its most literal translation, means a thing that walks forward. The body of Christ does not sit still... we are moving forward, taking the gospel to the world. In order for us to effectively move forward, we must remember to lift each other up in a spirit of love. In fact, if we don’t receive support and fellowship from each other, we can’t walk forward. Not only that, we couldn’t do anything without the “mutual support” of our sisters and brothers. Kenneth Copeland once said that if it was God’s responsibility to hold the church together, that He was doing a “lousy job of it.” At first, I found that statement to be shocking. Later, I realized Kenneth’s point. The truth is, it is **not** God’s job to hold the church together. It is **our** job! Look at what Ephesians 4 says:

- 10 He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) {fill: or, fulfil}
- 11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;
- 12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:
- 13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: {in: or, into} {stature: or, age}
- 14 That we [henceforth] be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, [and] cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;
- 15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, [even] Christ: {speaking...: or, being sincere}
- 16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.
- 17 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind,
- 18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: {blindness: or, hardness}

⁸ See Ephesians 4:16

Five Men Who Faced the Roaring Lion

19 Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.
20 But ye have not so learned Christ;
21 If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus:
22 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;
23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;
Ephesians 4:10-23

As we see in verse 16 above, the body of Christ is joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplies. You supply a little love, the next person supplies a little exhortation, the Pastor supplies teaching... etc. Each one of us has a role to play. Each one has a gift to use. Are you operating in those gifts God has given? Why not? Jesus wasn't through with His interrogation. He asked Peter a different question this time (although, in the English translations, we may miss the subtle change):

He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.
John 21:17

This time, Jesus used Peter's word for love. Jesus asked, "Do you phileo Me?" Notice that, when we can't seem to make it to Jesus' level, He will always meet us where we are. He did the same with the woman at the well, starting the conversation with a request for a drink of water, not with a diatribe about the woman's sinful life⁹. Jesus goes on to tell Peter about the sacrifice that would be required of him, closing in John 21:19 with "Follow me." In the Greek, Jesus was telling Peter, "Be in the same way with Me" or "Join/Accompany Me." Remember Jesus taught (and demonstrated) that the greatest love is to lay down your life for your friends¹⁰. This is what Jesus did¹¹. This is what He requires us to do... to be perfect (or, complete), as our Father is perfect¹². How can we be perfect? By being made perfect in love¹³.

If you love Jesus... if you **really** love Jesus, you will feed His sheep. Feed them with the word of God. Feed them with your love, your fellowship, your support. As the Lord took up the cross

⁹ Read the account in John 4:4-42

¹⁰ John 15:13

¹¹ John 10:15

¹² Matthew 5:48

¹³ See Ephesians 1:4 and Colossians 3:14

and died for us — when we were His enemies¹⁴ — we must take up our cross daily¹⁵ and die on it.

The cross is the first century equivalent to the electric chair. It's not a shiny emblem that you wear like a piece of common jewelry. It is an instrument of death. To take up your cross (daily) is to kill the selfish and carnal works of the flesh (see Colossians 3:5-17) and be crucified with Christ... allowing Him to live through you¹⁶. Would Jesus walk over one of His sheep, callously ignoring its piteous bleating? **No way!** Neither should we. Make an extra effort to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit and to be ready to encourage the hearts of your brothers and sisters in Christ with love and compassion. Help them to walk forward and continue to promote their spiritual welfare¹⁷. Just like a pride of lions on the African plains, that roaring lion (the devil) will look for a weak straggler to take down. But when the sheep are being watched by the shepherd, no enemy can overtake them. No matter how strong you think you are spiritually, satan is standing by, waiting to hit you with some temptation. Remember that iron sharpens iron¹⁸ and two (or more) are a lot stronger than one¹⁹.

Let love for your fellow believers continue *and* be a
fixed practice with you [never let it fail].

Hebrews 13:1 (AMP)

The above scripture sums it up. As David protected his father's sheep against the roaring lion, you can protect your Christian brothers and sisters by following Jesus' commandment to feed His sheep.

¹⁴ Romans 5:6-8, 10

¹⁵ Luke 9:23

¹⁶ Galatians 2:20

¹⁷ See Hebrews 10:24 and 2nd Timothy 4:2

¹⁸ Proverbs 27:12

¹⁹ Ecclesiastes 4:8-12

CHAPTER THREE

THE RELIGIOUS MAN

The next man we will study was defeated by the roaring lion, but not because of a moral failure. This man's defeat came about because he had taken (and acted upon) bad advice from a "religious man" who turned out to be a false prophet.

It is amazing how many people will accept the words of would-be ministers and prophets without testing their veracity against the word of God. It seems that the act of wearing a collar or robe and standing behind a pulpit is enough of a qualification for any "jack legged philosopher" to lead God's flock astray. Don't get me wrong, I'm not saying that one needs a post-graduate seminary degree. But what *is* important is the attitude of the heart. I'm reminded of Eddie Murphy's movie "Coming to America" where Arsenio Hall played the role of a "traditional" African American preacher (possibly drawn from his childhood experiences as the son of a Baptist minister). As he preached fervently about God delivering Daniel from the lion's den and Gilligan from the Island, the congregation soared out of their seats with hearty shouts of "Amen, preacher!" That reminded me so much of preachers I have heard and observed over the years. The word of God admonishes us to test everything that comes to us. Don't accept a "word" because the speaker twisted his mouth around and used long words. Don't accept it because he was wearing a long robe and got sweaty and greasy. Only accept it based on the word of God.

¹ Beloved, do not put faith in every spirit, but prove (test) the spirits to discover whether they proceed from God; for many false prophets have gone forth into the world.

² By this you may know (perceive and recognize) the Spirit of God: every spirit which acknowledges and confesses [the fact] that Jesus Christ (the Messiah) [actually] has become man and has come in the flesh is of God [has God for its source];

³ And every spirit which does not acknowledge and confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh [but would annul, destroy, sever, disunite Him] is not of God [does not proceed from Him]. This [nonconfession] is the [spirit] of the antichrist, [of] which you heard that it was coming, and now it is already in the world.

⁴ Little children, you are of God [you belong to Him] and have [already] defeated and overcome them [the agents of the antichrist], because He Who lives in you is greater

(mightier) than he who is in the world.

John 4:1-4 (AMP)

This doesn't apply exclusively to those who are espousing "unsound doctrine." Nor does it only pertain to those who seek to build their own kingdoms, amassing finances and building great edifices without the slightest concern regarding God's plan of salvation for mankind. This scripture also applies to those *actors and actresses* who are more concerned with "showmanship" than truly reaching souls for Jesus Christ. The sad reality is, you have men and women in pulpits across America (and around the world) who stand and preach any old nonsense off the top of their heads, only to receive the greatest respect and adulation from their congregations. It seems that a charismatic personality goes farther than solid Biblical doctrine. It should be obvious that a charismatic personality won't purge a community of drugs and violence. People may be drawn to attend services, but they won't find their bondages or addictions broken.

In 2nd Timothy 4:3, the Apostle Paul gives a perfect description of these men and women... and of their followers. I believe this verse sets the stage for our examination of the third man who had a fateful encounter with the roaring lion.

For the time is coming when [people] will not tolerate
(endure) sound *and* wholesome instruction, but, having ears
itching [for something pleasing and gratifying], they will
gather to themselves one teacher after another to a
considerable number, chosen to satisfy their own liking *and* to
foster the errors they hold.

2nd Timothy 4:3 (AMP)

The time is coming... and is, in fact, here now... when people will only hear what they want to hear. Common sense, logic, and even hard, cold evidence won't dissuade them. In fact, the reason they gather and listen to these speakers is to help assure them of what they want to hear. What they fail to recognize is that their self-perpetuated state of ignorance will only nail shut the coffin of their destruction. Men and women of God must have the boldness to proclaim the truth... the whole truth... and nothing but the truth. Even if the hearers refuse to listen! People with "itching ears" are looking for someone to confirm what they inwardly know is wrong. When a cashier overpaid me \$80.00 and I was resisting the Holy Spirit's urging to give it back, I went to a friend (an associate pastor) and asked if it were alright to keep what I referred to as "a little extra change." Regardless of how many people I asked and how much I wanted to keep the money, I knew that it was wrong. Eventually, I gave in to the Lord and returned the money. Surprisingly, I found in this act an opportunity to share the gospel with a curmudgeonly old Jewish man who had been opposed to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Additionally, this man took the word I was sharing with him to his family and his employees. I do realize, however, that I could have continued to resist the urging of the Lord, but I thank God for the willingness to submit.

The word of God is a sharp, two-edged sword that cuts to the bone and separates the soul and spirit (see Hebrews 4:12). If there is sin in our lives, the word of God will perform a “sinecctomy” to remove it. Of course, this is not always a pleasant experience. In fact, it can be downright painful. However, the end result is the joy of a closer relationship and walk with Him. God’s word is the first and final authority. It is the only authority. And whatever does not jibe with God’s word needs to be discarded like year-old milk. If you don’t, then you will experience in the spiritual realm what would happen if you drank stale, sour milk.

THE RELIGIOUS MAN

Let’s begin our study of the “Religious Man” who had an encounter with the roaring lion. The scripture we will be studying is from 1 Kings, chapter 13:

And behold, there came a man of God from Judah, by the word of Jehovah, to Bethel; and Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense.

1st Kings 13:1 (Darby)

King Jeroboam led the separation of Israel from Judah (after Solomon’s fall into idolatry) and ruled over the Northern Kingdom from 933 through 911 B.C. He was promised the throne (over the Ten Tribes) by the prophet Ahijah, with the condition that he walk in the ways of Jehovah God. This prophecy was fulfilled after Solomon’s death. Jeroboam returned from Egypt (where he was hiding from Solomon) to establish the Ten Tribes as an independent kingdom. However, he forsook the Lord God of Israel in favor of worship of a golden calf (reminiscent of Israel’s sin while Moses was on the mountain, this was the harbinger of Baal worship in Israel). Perhaps during his time in Egypt, more of Egypt’s practices “rubbed off on him” than vice versa. It’s like the old parable of the man who put a song bird into a cage full of crows. Rather than the crows learning how to sing, the songbird learned to “cawl.” As a result of Jeroboam’s disobedience, the Lord sent this unnamed prophet from Judah to Bethel, where Jeroboam was standing by the altar (presumably, the day that the altar was being consecrated to the Lord).

2 And he cried against the altar by the word of Jehovah, and said, O altar, altar! thus saith Jehovah: Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he sacrifice the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men’s bones shall be burned upon thee.

3 And he gave a sign the same day, saying, This is the sign that Jehovah hath spoken: Behold, the altar shall be rent, and the ashes that are upon it shall be poured out.

1st Kings 13:2-3 (Darby)

This prophecy, accurately fulfilled in 2 Kings 23:15-16, told that a king from the lineage of David would overthrow Jeroboam's dynasty. Also amazing is the fact that the name of the king, Josiah, was accurately predicted. This prophecy foretold Josiah's blasphemous act of burning human bones on the altar. The prophecy was uttered in the form of a proskesis, in which the prophet addressed the true subject of the prophecy (King Jeroboam) indirectly by addressing an inanimate object (the altar). Perhaps this was done to prevent the king from charging the prophet with making an accusation against the king. Notice that the king did, however, respond negatively, aggressively, and violently to this prophecy.

When King Jeroboam heard the words that the man of God cried against the altar in Bethel, he thrust out his hand, saying, Lay hold on him! And his hand which he put forth against him dried up, so that he could not draw it to him again.

1st Kings 13:4 (AMP)

This prophecy certainly did not scratch any itching ears. In fact, this prophecy (like a two-edged sword) began cutting deeply and obviously struck a nerve. Jeroboam shot his hand out as a gesture for his security forces to move in. But God validated His word with a very convincing sign. Jeroboam's hand (the one which had previously been resting on the altar that the prophet had prophesied against) withered and became paralyzed. God was not through yet.

The altar also was split and the ashes poured out from the altar according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the Lord.

1st Kings 13:5 (AMP)

The shriveling of Jeroboam's hand was only the beginning. God caused the altar to split apart so that the ashes poured out (just as he said in verse three.)

And the king answered and said to the man of God, Intreat now Jehovah thy God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored to me again. And the man of God intreated Jehovah, and the king's hand was restored to him again, and became as before.

1st Kings 13:6 (Darby)

Notice how quickly the king changed his tune. Initially, he was ready to have the prophet taken away (likely, that he may be bound for execution). However, once the Hand of God began to move in response to His word, Jeroboam realized that it wasn't just a man he was dealing with but the Lord God Himself. Notice how Jeroboam says "Intreat now Jehovah thy God." He doesn't say "my God" or "our God," but "your God." It seems the king realized that he was **not** walking according to the precepts of the Lord (as he should have been). It's like Jesus said,

not everyone who says “Lord, Lord” knows Him²⁰.

Notice that the prophet from Judah did not hold a personal grudge against the king. When entreated to pray for him, the prophet interceded for Jeroboam. As a result, the king was instantly healed. Many of us would probably pray that the Lord would not only wither the king’s hand but his entire body for good measure. Then, we would rain fire down upon him and his entire family. As Jesus told the Sons of Thunder, that spirit is not of God²¹. We must remember that when we suffer persecution for righteousness sake, the people who operate against us are not our true enemy. Our enemy is satan (the roaring lion), and it is against him (and not other human beings) that we should mount our attack²². As Jesus admonished in Matthew 10:16, we must be as humble as sheep and as harmless as doves in regard to men, but as wise as serpents in defeating the devil.

Behold, I am sending you out like sheep in the midst of
wolves; be wary and wise as serpents, and be innocent
(harmless, guileless, and without falsity) as doves. [Gen
3:1.]

Matthew 10:16 (AMP)

The prophet from Judah prayed for Jeroboam’s healing and the Lord, Jehovah Rapha (Exodus 15:26), heard his request. The king was so grateful that he extended a gracious invitation to this prophet.

⁷ And the king said to the man of God, Come home with me, and
refresh thyself, and I will give thee a present.

⁸ And the man of God said to the king, If thou wilt give me
half thy house, I will not go in with thee, neither will I eat
bread nor drink water in this place;

⁹ for so was it charged me by the word of Jehovah, saying, Thou
shalt eat no bread, nor drink water, nor return by the way
that thou shalt go.

¹⁰ So he went another way, and returned not by the way
that he had come to Bethel.

1st Kings 13:10 (Darby)

The Lord had given this prophet specific instructions regarding this mission. The prophet was to fast during the course of this mission. Additionally, he was told not to return using the same roads he had used to come into Bethel. It is not clear why the Lord had given what such seemingly strange instructions. Still, the prophet recognized these instructions as being from the Lord and knew better than to presumptuously transgress them.

²⁰ Matthew 7:22-23

²¹ Luke 9:54-55

²² See 2nd Corinthians 10:4-7 and Ephesians 6:12

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In verse eight, the prophet told Jeroboam that even if the king were to give him half of his house (which represented substantial riches and substance), he would not transgress the word of God. Indeed, what would it profit a man to gain the world and lose his soul (see Mark 8:36-37). We can see that the prophet's appetite or even his desire for wealth could have made him transgress the word of the living God, but it didn't. This prophet was committed, steadfast and obedient. At least, outwardly.

¹¹ Now there dwelt a certain old prophet in Bethel; and his sons came and told him all the works that the man of God had done that day in Bethel; the words that he had spoken to the king, them they told also to their father.
1st Kings 13:11 (Darby)

It seems that there was already a prophet in this town... an old prophet. Of course, if he was such an established figure, one might wonder why **he** was not selected to deliver this word to the king. Might I suggest that the reason he had managed to become so "old" and "established" was because he had learned to compromise to "tickle the itching ears" of the king?

¹² And their father said to them, Which way went he? for his sons had seen which way the man of God went, who came from Judah.
¹³ And he said to his sons, Saddle me the ass. So they saddled him the ass; and he rode thereon,
¹⁴ and went after the man of God, and found him sitting under a; and he said to him, Art thou the man of God that camest from Judah? And he said, I am.
¹⁵ And he said to him, Come home with me, and eat bread.
1st Kings 13:12-15 (Darby)

Why was the prophet from Judah resting under that terebinth (oak tree)? Didn't God tell him to get out of town after delivering his prophecy? Could it have been that he was having second thoughts about turning down the king's offer? The old prophet extended a similar invitation as the king... to come to his house and receive a meal. And how did the prophet from Judah respond to this second request? He reiterated that the word of Jehovah was for him to neither eat nor drink, nor to return the same way that he came.

¹⁶ And he said, I cannot return with thee, nor go in with thee; neither will I eat bread nor drink water with thee in this place.
¹⁷ For it was said to me by the word of Jehovah, Thou shalt eat no bread nor drink water there, nor turn again to go by the way that thou wentest.
1st Kings 13:16-17

Notice, in verse 16, that this prophet did not say that he would not return to dine with the elder prophet. What he said was that he may not (in the KJV) return with him. In the original

Hebrew, he said: **Loh Yoh-‘Chohl’** (English transliteration). He was literally saying that he did not have the power (or ability) to do join the old man for supper. What he **did not** say (and **should have** said) was that he did not have the desire to do so.

There is a big difference between not wanting to do something and not being able to do something. By way of an illustration, let us consider a young Christian woman who receives a proposition from a handsome, yet unsaved man. The young woman is “turned on” by this suave and sexy hunk with his rippling muscles and wavy hair, but she thinks about her parents and her pastor, anticipating their objections. She replies, “I’d really like to go out with you, but I can only date people that go to my church.” If this guy is really hot to get into Miss Christian’s life (not to mention her undergarments), he may go so far as to visit or even “join” her church. These young women are like the man from Judah. They may have voiced an unwillingness to submit, but left the back door open to compromise (no pun intended). Their male pursuers recognized this, as did the old prophet of Bethel:

And he said to him, I am a prophet also as thou art; and an angel spoke to me by the word of Jehovah saying, Bring him back with thee into thy house, that he may eat bread and drink water. He lied unto him.

1st Kings 13:18 (Darby)

The old prophet told a lie! He actually lied! He used his credentials as a prophet as the foundation for his prevarication (satan will always season his lies with a smidgen of truth) and claimed that an angel spoke to him, countermanding the original order that the Lord had given to this prophet. The truth was, no such thing had ever taken place. Yet, surprisingly, the man from Judah *believed and received*.

Then he went back with him, and ate bread in his house, and drank water.

1st Kings 13:19 (Darby)

Without questioning the old man or double-checking to see if the word was in fact genuine, he went home with him and ate and drank. This brings home the fact that it is **vitaly important** to test any “word” against scripture. One key “give away” was the prophet’s statement in verse 18: “I am a prophet also as thou art; and an angel spoke to me by the word of Jehovah...” Don’t prophecies normally start with, “Thus saith the Lord...”? How is it that the prophet could accept the word of the older man when he started out by saying, “I am...” This was satan’s original sin:

13 For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:

14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.

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15 Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

¹⁶ They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, [and] consider thee, [saying, Is] this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms;

Isaiah 14:13-16

Frankly, I'm surprised that this old prophet wasn't struck down where he stood for such a blasphemous lie. Isn't the mercy of God wonderful? It was also God's mercy that held back His wrath as the prophet from Judah sat down and said grace before eating this forbidden meal. Don't you think it's kind of odd that it never dawned on him that he was being duped by the old guy? Perhaps the reason that the prophet from Judah was sitting beneath the oak tree was that he felt hunger pangs and was waiting for an excuse to break the rules. Maybe he was praying that God would change His mind and allow him to stay. Maybe he thought about the king's riches (that he had passed on) and was wondering if there was maybe a second chance, or perhaps an opportunity to grab a "consolation prize." When the old prophet came and spoke that deceptive prevarication, it was like music to the ears of the man from Judah. Maybe he reasoned that, "This man is a prophet, and he's senior in rank to me... so he must be right." Then again, maybe not. The bottom line is that he bit the line. Hook, line and sinker for that matter.

I can't overemphasize how important it is to prove everything against the word of God. But, in the pursuit of balance, don't throw the baby out with the bath water. In other words, don't run so far from spiritual utterances that you fall into a spirit of skepticism. Some people close their minds so tight that not even a sliver of truth can squeeze in. The key is to test everything against the truth of God's word *before* you receive (or discard) it. Paul emphasizes that point in 1st Thessalonians 4:20-21.

²⁰ Do not spurn the gifts and utterances of the prophets [do not depreciate prophetic revelations nor despise inspired instruction or exhortation or warning].

²¹ But test and prove all things [until you can recognize] what is good; [to that] hold fast.

1st Thessalonians 4:20-21 (AMP)

Remember the old saying, "If God said it, that settles it." No one has the right to override the word of God. Not the Pope. Not a pastor. Not an angel. Not the committee or national board or general counsel of your denomination. Not a nationally televised evangelist. Nobody. As Paul wrote to the churches in north Galatia:

⁸ But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to and different from that which we preached to you, let him be accursed (anathema, devoted to destruction, doomed to eternal punishment)!

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⁹ As we said before, so I now say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel different from or contrary to that which you received [from us], let him be accursed (anathema, devoted to destruction, doomed to eternal punishment)!

Galatians 1:8-9 (AMP)

When we last saw the prophet from Judah, he was sitting back and enjoying a delicious meal in the house of the old prophet. And what would you imagine happens next?

²⁰ And it came to pass as they sat at the table, that the word of Jehovah came to the prophet that brought him back;

²¹ and he cried to the man of God that came from Judah, saying, Thus saith Jehovah: Forasmuch as thou hast disobeyed the word of Jehovah, and hast not kept the commandment that Jehovah thy God commanded thee,

²² but camest back, and hast eaten bread and drunk water in the place of which he said to thee, Eat no bread and drink no water; thy carcass shall not come to the sepulchre of thy fathers.

1st Kings 13:20-22 (Darby)

Well, it seems that this old prophet *finally* uttered the truth. Unfortunately, the prophecy was not good news for the prophet from Judah. In fact, the prophecy was frightening. He found out, the hard way, that the Lord did not change His word. In fact, this prophet from Judah should have remembered these words from the Law of Moses:

God is not a man, that He should tell or act a lie, neither the son of man, that He should feel repentance or compunction [for what He has promised]. Has He said and shall He not do it? Or has He spoken and shall He not make it good?

Numbers 23:19 (AMP)

Unfortunately, he did not test the words of the old prophet against the scriptures. And, as a result, the judgment of God was dangling over his head like the proverbial Sword of Damocles. It wouldn't be long before this sword would fall and this young man would become Purina® Lion Chow. You would imagine that, at this point, the man from Judah would have cried out to the Lord in repentance. After all, when Jeroboam cried for mercy, his withered hand was healed. For whatever reason, he did no such thing (or, at least, the scripture does not record any repentance on his part). Could it be that he had realized his sin and resigned himself to the impending judgment he faced? Or perhaps, did he figure that since this old prophet was so unreliable, that his word probably wouldn't come to pass? Did this man from Judah consider himself so special that he could violate the laws of God with impunity? The Bible doesn't reveal to us what was in this prophet's heart or mind.

²³ And it came to pass, after he had eaten bread, and after he had drunk, that he saddled the ass for him, for the prophet

that he had brought back;

²⁴ and he departed.

1st Kings 13:23-24a (Darby)

This brings to mind a very important point. Both of these prophets were used of God: the man from Judah prophesied against Jeroboam; the old prophet against the man from Judah. They were obedient to God in *certain* matters, but it would appear that their hearts were not 100-percent in sync with their heads. In other words, they outwardly obeyed God, but (at least by our observation) not inwardly. Consider a child who is told by her father to clean her room. She may obey, but only to avoid the spanking that would follow rebellion on her part. While putting her toys away, she grumbles and complains. When Daddy asks, “Is your room clean?” she may say “Yes” with her mouth, but inside she’s saying, “I hate you, you mean old thing.” We need to be consumed with the same love and devotion for God that the Apostle Paul had when he wrote:

For to me to live is Christ [His life in me], and to die is gain [the gain of the glory of eternity].

Philippians 1:21 (AMP)

If then you have been raised with Christ [to a new life, thus sharing His resurrection from the dead], aim at *and* seek the [rich, eternal treasures] that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. [Ps. 110:1.]

Colossians 3:1 (AMP)

The man from Judah had earlier performed his task as commanded, but we begin to see a revelation of his inward attitude. His eyes may have been set on the fortune he was forced to decline. His stomach may have growled at the thought of continuing the long journey from Bethel back to Judah without eating anything. It is hard to say how far his journey would have been, since his exact point of origin was not given. If he were from Mizpeh (the closest Judean city to Bethel), he would have had to travel approximately four to five miles. The old prophet’s words provoked no response. The man from Judah simply continued on his way. Judgment had been pronounced on his head, yet he took no regard. He was going home without showing any remorse about the fact that he failed his God.

The man from Judah may not have realized it, but it was at this moment that he encountered the roaring lion.

And a lion met him by the way and slew him; and his corpse was cast in the way, and the ass stood by it; the lion also stood by the corpse.

1st Kings 13:24b (Darby)

The lion knocked him off the donkey and slew him. Then, as if posing for a portrait, the lion and the donkey positioned themselves on either side of the man from Judah.

And they stood there. They just stood there. Even as people began to pass by... they simply stood there.

25 And behold, men passed by, and saw the corpse cast in the way and the lion standing by the corpse; and they came and told it in the city where the old prophet dwelt.

²⁶ And the prophet that brought him back from the way heard [of it] and said, It is the man of God who was disobedient to the word of Jehovah; therefore Jehovah has delivered him to the lion, which has torn him and slain him, according to the word of Jehovah which he spoke to him.

1st Kings 13:25-26 (Darby)

This was quite a spectacle... quite a sight to see. This dead prophet, lying on the ground, flanked by his donkey and the lion that killed him. What was so unique was that, normally, a wild lion would attack the donkey but shy away from the man. What was also unique was that, normally, the donkey would run away from the lion. The only conclusion anyone could draw from this spectacle was that this was not a normal circumstance. There was obviously a supernatural hand behind this strange picture, a picture that served as a somber warning to all not to transgress the word of the Lord, as the man from Judah had done. The older prophet received word that his prophecy had, tragically, been fulfilled. Moved by what may have been either compassion or remorse, he saddled his donkey and went to retrieve the body of the man from Judah's.

27 And he spoke to his sons saying, Saddle me the ass; and they saddled it.

²⁸ And he went and found his corpse cast in the way, and the ass and the lion standing by the corpse: the lion had not eaten the corpse, nor torn the ass.

1st Kings 13:27-28

The lion and donkey continued to stand on either side of the slain prophet. The lion didn't attack the donkey. The donkey didn't run from the lion. They kept standing there. They just kept standing.

29 And the prophet took up the corpse of the man of God, and laid it upon the ass, and brought it back; and the old prophet came into the city, to mourn and to bury him.

30 And he laid his corpse in his own sepulchre; and they mourned over him [saying], Alas, my brother!

31 And it came to pass after he had buried him, that he spoke to his sons saying, When I am dead, bury me in the sepulchre in which the man of God is buried; lay my bones beside his bones.

³² For the word that he cried by the word of Jehovah against the altar in Bethel, and against all the houses of the high places

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that are in the cities of Samaria, shall certainly come to pass.

1st Kings 13:29-32 (Darby)

Although he had set this man from Judah up by lying to him, the old prophet acknowledged the veracity of his prophecy against Jeroboam and mourned his demise. It is sad to see how this man, who had previously been used mightily by God, would up a casualty of the roaring lion. It makes the following scripture even more relevant:

Therefore let anyone who thinks he stands [who feels sure that he has a steadfast mind and is standing firm], take heed lest he fall [into sin].

1st Corinthians 10:12 (AMP)

Let everything you do be guided by the word of God. If someone comes to you with a “word from the Lord” or a prophecy, make sure that there is a strong scriptural foundation, and that word is confirmed by two or more witnesses.

It is essential that we observe those who would be our teachers, and ensure that their lives display spiritual fruits. If you cannot determine any spiritual fruits, then it is likely that you’re dealing with a religious nut. A prophet must be of a mature character... willing to submit to authority... humble and capable of receiving instruction and correction. Most importantly, the prophet’s “prime directive” must be to bring glory to the Lord Jesus Christ.

32 For the spirits of the prophets (the speakers in tongues) are under the speaker’s control [and subject to being silenced as may be necessary],

33 For He [Who is the source of their prophesying] is not a God of confusion and disorder but of peace and order. As [is the practice] in all the churches of the saints (God’s people).

1st Corinthians 14:32-33 (AMP)

Don’t be like the man of God from Judah. Don’t allow your “itching ears” to be scratched. Don’t wind up a spectacle, a casualty of the roaring lion. Become strong in the word of God, proving the veracity of everything **before** you start believing and/or acting on it.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE RIGHTEOUS MAN

The fourth man who faced the roaring lion walked away from the encounter victoriously. In fact, his confrontation with the roaring lion is one of the better known stories for most Christians and Jews, as well as to those outside of the faith. The man is Daniel, whom we consider to represent “the righteous man.” One important point I would like to stress in this chapter is that any person who sets him or herself to live righteous before the Lord can surely expect an attack by the roaring lion. Sorry, make that several attacks. In fact, the more you dedicate yourself to the Lord, the more frequent and powerful the attacks will become. Why? Because the scripture says:

Indeed all who delight in piety *and* are determined to live a devoted *and* godly life in Christ Jesus will meet with persecution [will be made to suffer because of their religious stand].

2nd Timothy 3:12 (AMP)

Why does the devil target those who are living righteously (as opposed to the “pew warmers” who simply attend church, but make no commitments and never get involved)? The reason is that if you are actively identifying with Jesus in your Christian walk and lifestyle, you will be doing the things that Jesus did (i.e., reaching lost and hurting people with the gospel of Jesus Christ, coaxing them to come out of the darkness and into the light). It should be blatantly obvious as to why such a lifestyle (with its resultant activities) is an affront to the kingdom of darkness. Jesus further clarifies by telling us that the reason the world hates us is because it hates Him.

18 If the world hateth you, ye know that it hated me before [it hated] you.

19 If ye were of the world, the world would love its own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

John 15:18-19

The reason that the world hates Him is because satan hates Him and satan is the (“small ‘g’”) god of this world (see 2nd Corinthians 4:4). Anyone under the control of the devil (e.g., those unsaved as well as “carnal Christians” who submit to their flesh and the temptations dangled before them by satan) is certain to go crosswise of the word and the will of God. They really don’t have any choice in the matter.

The **“sold out”** Christian is a threat to satan’s kingdom. The more determined you are to win souls for Christ, the greater the loss that satan will experience and, therefore, the greater his opposition will be against you. Alternatively, the **“sell out”** churchgoer who only practices a form of godliness without any power ²³ is no threat to the enemy. That isn’t to say that the roaring lion will completely ignore them, but that they are significantly less of a threat in their “unconverted” state. One might even conjecture that the “do nothings” that seem to populate 80% of the average church are actually an asset to satan²⁴. It is as if we were dragging much “dead weight” behind us as we struggle to run the pilgrim race set before us. I apologize to those of you who are chewing your fingernails. I didn’t mean to scare you. We shouldn’t take the warning in 2nd Timothy 3:12 fearfully. In fact, Jesus said that we should have peace (and confidence) since He has overcome the world (and satan, the god of this world²⁵). Consider the words of Jesus in John 16:33, where He says:

I have told you these things, so that in Me you may have [perfect] peace *and* confidence. In the world you have tribulation *and* trials *and* distress *and* frustration; but be of good cheer [take courage; be confident, certain, undaunted]! For I have overcome the world. [I have deprived it of power to harm you and have conquered it for you.]

John 16:33 (AMP)

Daniel was, by any definition, a righteous man. And it was his unwavering and uncompromising stand for righteousness that drew the attention of the roaring lion. But it was that same righteous stand that delivered him victoriously from the jaws of that roaring lion while causing his enemies to perish in the lions’ jaws. Before we go into that encounter, let’s pause to investigate who this Daniel was. Before he was taken captive into Babylon (around 606 B.C.), Daniel was a member of the Jewish nobility. According to ancient historian Josephus, Daniel was related to Zedekiah, king of Judah. When Israel fell to the Babylonian invasion, his rank and social status set him up for an incredible time of persecution. You see, Babylon needed to take captive the “brightest and the best” to emphasize to the rank and file Israelis that they were under Babylonian domination. Also, it could have been that the Babylonians thought that the leadership role of these young men could be used against Israel by indoctrinating them in pagan ways, then sending them home to teach the people. This would not be a “glamour” position, however. Young Daniel was to find himself facing an unspeakable horror that would change the course of the rest of his life.

When Nebuchadnezzar overthrew Jerusalem in the sixth century B.C., he had the male

²³ See 2nd Timothy 3:5

²⁴ See Matthew 12:30

²⁵ See 2nd Corinthians 4:4

captives castrated as a form of humiliation and subjugation. The Greek historian Herodotus confirms the prevalence of this practice among the ancient Persians. Castration (which likely involved removal of **all** male organs) was a method of ensuring that the victims remained docile and submissive under the hand of their conquerors (having been robbed of their source of testosterone, the male hormone that—among other things—makes men aggressive). Generally speaking, castrati were angry and suspicious individuals, yet were capable of undying loyalty to their masters. Having suffered the ordeal of castration may explain why Daniel was capable of remaining faithful to the Babylonian kings whom he served. This faithfulness allowed Daniel to increase in favor and status within the kingdom (although we must remember the fact that Daniel never compromised his stand as a servant of the Living God). Castration was a horrible experience, particularly in those days before the invention of anesthesia or sharp surgical implements. The horrendous procedure was most likely performed with one slice of a curved blade, or with a device described by archaeologists as resembling a nutcracker (no pun intended) or a large set of pliers. Often, the device would be heated red-hot to sear and cauterize the cut flesh. Alternatively, the wound might have been cauterized with a searing hot poker or molten tar. The wound would take a few days to heal, then a hole would be opened (using a reed or other hollow implement) to allow urination. Many who suffered this ordeal died from shock or from infection. Not only did Daniel survive, but through it all he remained faithful to his God. Most Christians want to quit church if they didn't get a big piece of chicken during the church supper.

It is amazing how many “Christians” will backslide because they’ve lost a job or suffered the break-up of a relationship. Many people shake their fists at God and swear never to set foot into any church again. But when you put things into perspective, considering that few people (these days) have suffered the type of loss that Daniel did, it should strengthen your faith and resolve to live a holy and sanctified life. Daniel suffered a great loss, yet he never wavered in his walk with His God. So steadfast was Daniel’s faith that none of his detractors could ever dig up any dirt on him. And, as the years passed, Daniel gained and remained in favor with the successive leaders of the Babylonian state. Although Daniel was an “alien” or a “foreigner,” he continued to increase in stature, rising in prominence over even the native-born leaders. This resulted in intense jealousy against Daniel. Not only was Daniel’s position a source of jealousy, his blessed lifestyle caused some contention as well. It is a fact that living righteous before God will cause blessings to multiply in your life²⁶. This will, in turn, incur the jealousy of those who are not living righteous lives and, as a result, are not enjoying the blessings of God²⁷. Let’s go into our key scripture, Daniel chapter 6:

1 It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom a hundred and

²⁶ See Psalm 34:8-15 and Psalm 84:11

²⁷ Genesis 26:12-14

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twenty satraps, who should be in all the kingdom;
2 and over these, three presidents-of whom Daniel was one-to whom these satraps should render account, and that the king should suffer no loss.

3 Now this Daniel surpassed the presidents and the satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king thought to appoint him over the whole realm.

⁴ Then the presidents and the satraps sought to find a pretext against Daniel with respect to the kingdom; but they could not find any pretext or fault; inasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him.

Daniel 6:1-4 (Darby)

Isn't it amazing that, after examining the life of this 70 year old man, no one could find anything to pin on him? In these days of Watergate, Whitewater, sexual harassment and (of course) Monica Lewinsky, other scandals, it is hard to imagine a high-ranking political official with nothing in his life that the tabloids could capitalize on. Yet, that was the case with Daniel. In fact, the only thing his enemies could hold against him was his walk with God.

Then said these men, We shall not find any occasion [to bring accusation] against this Daniel except we find it against him concerning the law of his God. [Acts 24:13-21; I Pet. 4:12-16.]

Daniel 6:5 (AMP)

So, the decision was made. They would find some way to make Daniel's faith in God a liability. Their next step was to go before King Darius and set this wicked plan into motion.

Then these presidents and satraps came [tumultuously] together to the king, and said to him, King Darius, live forever!

Daniel 6:6 (AMP)

They came before the King with lots of butter, appealing to his pride and vanity. Once they got the king's ego inflated, he was ready to sign anything... not realizing the consequences.

7 All the presidents of the kingdom, the prefects, and the satraps, the counsellors, and the governors have consulted together to establish a royal statute, and to make a firm decree, that whosoever shall ask a petition of any god or man for thirty days, except of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions.

8 Now, O king, establish the decree, and sign the writing, that it be not changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which may not be revoked.

9 Therefore king Darius signed the writing and the decree.

Daniel 6:7-9 (Darby)

It seemed that Daniel would have to stop praying to his God if he wanted to save his life. However, Daniel was a man of **NO COMPROMISE**.

Consider Daniel's three friends (Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego who may have been relatives of Daniel) who were taken captive along with him. They had faced the fiery furnace years ago and were delivered as a result of their uncompromising faithfulness to the Lord of Hosts. I like to think that those three Hebrew boys were standing by faith on the words of the Lord recorded by the Prophet Isaiah:

When you pass through the waters, I will be with you, and
through the rivers, they will not overwhelm you. When you walk
through the fire, you will not be burned or scorched, nor will
the flame kindle upon you.

Isaiah 43:2 (AMP)

Perhaps Daniel remembered that ordeal of so many years ago. Maybe Daniel kept Isaiah's writings in his heart. Regardless, he didn't change his routine one iota. His habit was to go up into his house and to worship the Lord his God, and was exactly what he was going to continue to do.

And when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into
his house; and, his windows being open in his upper chamber
toward Jerusalem, he kneeled on his knees three times a day,
and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he did
aforetime.

Daniel 6:10 (Darby)

Can you imagine where the church would be today if we exercised the same faithfulness and tenacity as old man Daniel? Daniel didn't pray just once, but **THREE TIMES A DAY**. Christian recording artist Steve Camp did a song called "Lazy Jane" about a believer who also prays three times a day... breakfast, lunch and dinner. That just about sums it up for most of today's churchgoing population. So then, what was the result of Daniel's insistence on continuing his daily routine of seeking the Lord?

11 But those men came in a body, and found Daniel praying and
making supplication before his God.

12 Then they came near, and spoke before the king concerning
the king's decree: Hast thou not signed a decree, that every
man that shall ask [anything] of any god or man within thirty
days, except of thee, O king, shall be cast into the den of
lions? The king answered and said, The thing is true,
according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which may not
be revoked.

13 Then they answered and said before the king, That Daniel,
who is of the children of the captivity of Judah, regardeth
not thee, O king, nor the decree that thou hast signed, but

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maketh his petition three times a day.

14 Then the king, when he heard these words, was sore distressed thereby, and set his heart on Daniel to save him; and he laboured till the going down of the sun to deliver him.

15 Then these men came in a body unto the king, and said unto the king, Know, O king, that the law of the Medes and Persians is, That no decree nor statute which the king establisheth may be changed.

Daniel 6:11-15 (Darby)

The king realized that he had been tricked, and worked long and hard to find a way to save his friend Daniel. Although the king persisted until after sunset, he could do nothing to deliver him. Sometimes when the roaring lion attacks us, there is little that others can do for us. Not our friends, not our employers, not the pastor... not even the President of the United States. In times like these, there is only one person that you can turn to... and that is JESUS.

¹⁶ Then the king commanded, and Daniel was brought and cast into the den of lions. The king said to Daniel, May your God, Whom you are serving continually, deliver you! [Ps. 34:7, 19; 37:39, 40; 50:15]

¹⁷ And a stone was brought and laid upon the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet and with the signet of his lords, that there might be no change of purpose concerning Daniel.

Daniel 6:16-17 (AMP)

The king's hands were tied. He had no choice but to cast Daniel into the den... *where Daniel was brought face to face with the roaring lion*. However, the king's words suggest that he knew more than a little about Jehovah, God of the people of Israel. His prayer was that the Lord would deliver Daniel. It is interesting to note that when Daniel was cast into the lion's den, the king sealed it with his signet. That is similar to the crucifixion of our Lord, where Pilate had a stone put at the mouth of the tomb and a seal set upon it (see Matthew 27:66). As God did not forsake Daniel, but rather delivered him from the power of the roaring lion, so God would do for Jesus²⁸. Thus, Daniel's encounter with the roaring lion could be considered to be a harbinger of what was to initiate the New Covenant through the blood of Jesus Christ.

Then the king went to his palace and passed the night fasting, neither were instruments of music or dancing girls brought before him; and his sleep fled from him.

Daniel 6:18 (AMP)

Although the king prayed that Daniel's God would deliver him, his prayer was not a prayer of faith. If it was, then the king could have slept soundly, trusting that God was in control of the

²⁸ See Psalm 16:10; Psalm 22:13, 21; Acts 2:24, 27, 31-33; Acts 4:26-28; and Acts 13:35

situation. The reality is the king did what many people (including believers) do today. He sat up all night, undoubtedly pacing the floor. He couldn't eat, he couldn't sleep... he couldn't even enjoy the pleasures of his concubines on that night. All he could do was think about how "poor old Daniel" had been set up by the other officials. Isn't that how we are at times? "Poor old me, I've been 'buked and I've been scorned. I've been talked about sure as you're born." It seems that whenever we face some difficulty, we don't leave it before the Lord. At best, we'll present it before Him, then go off to have a pity party with our problem as the main attraction. Instead of enjoying the good night's sleep that the Lord would prefer us to have²⁹, we sit up and worry. I heard one evangelist say that since God never sleeps³⁰... why should both of us stay awake? Also, note that the "fasting" the king did was not the type of fast that we engage in. He was so literally sick from worry that his appetite (for food, as well as for sex with his harem) vaporized. The most interesting thing in that regard is that Daniel had a better night's sleep in the den with the roaring lions than the king had in his palace surrounded by the royal musicians and his harem of concubines. Even in the storms of life, there is more peace in the storm with Jesus than to be "safe" on the shores without Him.

19 Then the king arose with the light at break of day, and went in haste unto the den of lions.

20 And when he came near unto the den, he cried with a mournful voice unto Daniel: the king spoke and said unto Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, hath thy God whom thou servest continually been able to save thee from the lions?

²¹ Then Daniel spoke unto the king, O king, live for ever!
Daniel 6:19-21 (Darby)

Was the God that Daniel served able to deliver him from the jaws of the roaring lion? YOU BET! Daniel looked up from the depths of the pit and gave his testimony of praise to Jehovah.

My God has sent His angel and has shut the lions' mouths so that they have not hurt me, because I was found innocent *and* blameless before Him; and also before you, O king, [as you very well know] I have done no harm or wrong. [II Tim 4:17.]
Daniel 4:22 (AMP)

I've heard ministers joke that Daniel probably slept using a lion as a pillow, then slapped the lion every time it started to snore. I'm sure that Daniel **did** get a good night's sleep, but I'm also sure that, as a praying man, and a man of faith, Daniel was diligently standing on the word of God. What scripture might Daniel have been reciting while in the lion's den? We can't know for sure until we get to heaven to ask him. However, a few "conjectured guesses" might include the

²⁹ See Proverbs 3:24

³⁰ See Psalm 121:3-4

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following:

¹⁰ There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come near thy dwelling.

¹¹ For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.

¹² They shall bear thee up in [their] hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.

¹³ Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet. {adder: or, asp}

¹⁴ Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name.

¹⁵ He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I [will be] with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him.

Psalms 91:10-15

This powerful psalm of protection has been the shield of many soldiers facing combat, as well as saints facing the trials of everyday life.

⁶ This poor man cried, and the LORD heard [him], and saved him out of all his troubles.

⁷ The angel of the LORD encampeth around them that fear him, and delivereth them.

⁸ O taste and see that the LORD [is] good: blessed [is] the man [that] trusteth in him.

⁹ O fear the LORD, ye his saints: for [there is] no lack to them that fear him.

¹⁰ The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD shall not lack any good [thing].

Psalms 34:6-10 (AMP)

The truth in that scripture is that the lions did indeed lack and suffer hunger. At least, until later in the story.

When you pass through the waters, I will be with you, and through the rivers, they will not overwhelm you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned or scorched, nor will the flame kindle upon you.

Isaiah 43:2 (AMP)

Regardless of what specific scriptures Daniel stood on, or what songs of praise he lifted up before the Lord, the end result was that his deliverance brought glory to the name of the Lord. Can you imagine what the end result would have been if Daniel had gone into the den grumbling and complaining, blaming God for his misfortune and threatening to backslide if God didn't change things for him? The king would have run down to the mouth of the den crying out, "Daniel, this is the king. How did it go last night? Are you still alive down there?" And the only

reply would come from the lions, “Burp!” Unfortunately, many people become Purina® Lion Chow because they fail to maintain the standards that Daniel maintained:

- An uncompromisingly righteous lifestyle
- A close and steadfast walk before the Lord
- A stand on the word of the Lord
- A willing to trust God even when “going through”

Not only did Daniel live through his experience with the roaring lion, there wasn’t even a scratch or a nick on his body. As with the three Hebrew boys in the fiery furnace (who didn’t even have the smell of smoke on their clothing), God delivered Daniel **completely**. Do you have any reason to expect that He won’t do the same for you?

Then the king was exceedingly glad and commanded that Daniel should be taken up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no hurt of any kind was found on him because he believed in (relied on, adhered to, and trusted in) his God.

Daniel 6:23 (AMP)

That is the definition of faith: to believe in, rely on, adhere to and trust in God. Daniel did that... and more. As a result, the tables were about to turn for those who cooked up the plot against Daniel to start with. Ancient historian Josephus commented that Daniel’s accusers explained this great miracle away by saying that the lion’s didn’t eat Daniel because they had been fed. These men were about to find out that there was no problem with the lions’ appetites whatsoever.

And the king commanded, and those men who had accused Daniel were brought and cast into the den of lions, they, their children, and their wives; and before they ever reached the bottom of the den, the lions had overpowered them and had broken their bones in pieces.

Daniel 6:26 (AMP)

Those who thought they had destroyed Daniel were, themselves, destroyed. These men... along with their wives and children... were thrown into the pit with the roaring lions. Most likely, each man got to witness the bloody deaths of their wives and children before being thrown in themselves. Having missed a meal the night before, these lions were hungry! They broke the bones of these men and their families before they could hit the bottom of the den! That’s the way it is when you choose to serve satan, the master of the double cross.

²⁵Then King Darius wrote to all peoples, nations, and languages [in his realm] that dwelt in all the earth: May peace be multiplied to you! ²⁶I make a decree that in all my royal dominion men must tremble and fear before the God of Daniel,

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for He is the living God, enduring and steadfast forever, and His kingdom shall not be destroyed and His dominion shall be even to the end [of the world]. ²⁷He is a Savior and Deliverer, and He works signs and wonders in the heavens and on the earth--He Who has delivered Daniel from the power of the lions.

Daniel 6:25-27 (Darby)

Notice, at the end of verse 27, how the king acknowledged that the power of God was greater than the power of the lions. God is greater than satan and his entire cadre of demons combined. When God is for us, and His Holy Spirit dwells within us, no one and nothing can stand against us.

Little children, you are of God [you belong to Him] and have [already] defeated *and* overcome them [the agents of the antichrist], because He Who lives in you is greater (mightier) than he who is in the world.

1st John 4:4 (AMP)

A favorite scripture memory verse, this is a powerful promise that the Living God (Whose Spirit lives within us) is greater than any circumstance one might face.

Behold! I have given you authority *and* power to trample upon serpents and scorpions, and [physical and mental strength and ability] over all the power that the enemy [possesses]; and nothing shall in any way harm you.

Luke 10:19 (AMP)

We don't have mere power. Even satan has power. We have *miracle working power* by the precious blood of the Lamb.

You shall tread upon the lion and adder; the young lion and the serpent shall you trample underfoot. [Luke 10:19.]

Psalms 91:13 (AMP)

The end result of this encounter with the roaring lion was that the name of the Lord got greater glory as a result of Daniel's righteous stand. Daniel had great reason to rejoice, as do we when we face persecution for righteousness' sake³¹. A lot of people wonder why bad things happen to good people. The fact of the matter is, bad things happen to everybody! But when bad things happen to those whose complete faith and trust is in the Lord Most High, those bad things are turned around for His glory! If you are living a holy life before the Lord, keep it up. If you are walking in Christ's righteousness, keep it up. If your lifestyle isn't betrayed by any visible sin, keep it up. God will honor your righteous stand and will silence your accusers. Guaranteed.

³¹ See Matthew 5:10-13

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For it is God's will *and* intention that by doing right [your good and honest lives] should silence (muzzle, gag) the ignorant charges *and* ill-informed criticisms of foolish persons.

1st Peter 2:15 (AMP)

If people are offended at you and try to dig pits for you, don't fuss. Don't fight. Don't worry. Be happy. Keep praising and worshiping the Lord. Remember what the old gospel singers used to say:

If you dig one pit You'd better dig two The trap you set Just may be for you

The afflictions of a righteous man or woman may be many, but the Lord delivers him out of them all³². And, by all means, if you are using a roaring lion as a pillow, feel free to slap him if he snores too loud!

³² See Psalm 34:19

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CHAPTER FIVE

THE ANOINTED MAN

Our fifth Man is One Who experienced a great victory over the roaring lion. Not only so, but He gives us the paradigm for defeating satan under any circumstance. That Man is Jesus, and He is “The Anointed Man.”

Why do we refer to Jesus as the Anointed Man? Because that is exactly Who and What Jesus is. To help you understand why and how we’ve come to that conclusion, let’s examine the etymology of His title, “the Christ.” I hope that you are aware that “Christ” is not His last name, but is a descriptive title, representing a position, function, or office. The word Christ is from the Greek *Christos*, which is a Greek translation of the Hebrew word *Massiach* (or, in English, “Messiah”). The word means, literally, “The Anointed One” and also refers to the anointing with which He is anointed.

In the practical sense, one who was anointed had oil rubbed onto his person by some higher ranking official (e.g., a prophet). Remember when David was selected by God to be king over Israel, Samuel anointed David with oil (see 1 Samuel 16:3). Generally, oil is symbolic of the Holy Spirit. Thus, one who is anointed has experienced an outpouring of God’s Holy Spirit in His life. A person who was anointed (in the physical sense) had the oil rubbed or massaged into his skin. Once the oil has been rubbed in, you can’t recapture it and put it back into the bottle. Likewise, when we receive the anointing of the Holy Spirit, He is in us. We don’t have to worry about losing Him, or of His leaving us. When the anointing is rubbed in, it is there to stay. We do have a responsibility, however, to keep it stirred up.

That is why I would remind you to stir up (rekindle the embers of, fan the flame of, and keep burning) the [gracious] gift of God, [the inner fire] that is in you by means of the laying on of my hands [with those of the elders at your ordination.]
2nd Timothy 1:6 (AMP)

In John 1:32-33, we see the anointing of Jesus (by the Holy Spirit) at the commencement of His earthly ministry, further validated as God the Father announced:

And behold, a voice from heaven said, This is My Son, My Beloved, in Whom I delight! [Ps. 2:7; Isa. 42:1.]
Matthew 3:17 (AMP)

So, having covered the above, you may still be wondering, “What is anointing?” There are

many popular definitions. I like to describe anointing as a covering. To be anointed is to be covered with the Holy Spirit. We are in a sense clothed with Him, but it goes much deeper than that. To help understand the concept of covering, consider the following examples of items that cover or shield the natural, physical body:

- In battle: If you are covered with armor, an enemy's weapons can't penetrate to harm you.
- In a jungle: If you are covered with netting, insects can't penetrate to sting you.
- In a cloudburst: If you are covered with a raincoat, the water can't penetrate to soak you.

One thing that the anointing with the Spirit of God does is to prevent the roaring lion from sinking his teeth into you. The devil may hurl fiery darts at you, but as you walk in faith concerning the protective covering of the Holy Spirit (as revealed in the word of God), you will be invincible against any attack. If you are covered by the Holy Spirit, then you are experiencing His presence in your life. Over time, you grow to become more comfortable with Him, much like your clothing fits more comfortably the more you wear them. That analogy was not purposed to belittle the anointing of God, but rather to help us better comprehend these spiritual concepts. We must grow in our relationship and walk with God to the point where we are as comfortable with Him as a bride is with her husband. If your attitude is one of "let's go to church and pay God a visit," then you probably don't have much (or any) of His anointing in your life. In Ephesians 6:13-17, the Apostle Paul itemizes "God's complete armor" that every believer should be constantly wearing. Each item may be interpolated as an aspect of the Holy Spirit's activity of unction in our lives. Let's examine this armor in detail so that we can better understand the covering or anointing of God as a part of our Christian lives:

SPIRITUAL ARMOR

Head: The helmet of salvation

Chest: The breastplate of righteousness

Waist: The belt of truth

Feet: The preparation of the gospel of peace

Defense: The shield of faith

Weapon: The sword of the Spirit

Salvation is what covers our heads. Of all wounds, a wound to the head can be most fatal. Therefore, one could conjecture that the helmet is one of the most essential parts to God's complete armor. Our salvation is, of course, a gift of God's grace, acquired through faith in

Jesus the Christ³³. Therefore, if we have Jesus, the Anointed One, then we have the helmet of salvation. We are protected from any (spiritually) fatal wounds that might be inflicted by the roaring lion.

Righteousness covers our heart and other sensitive internal organs. The breastplate of righteousness is a covering of integrity, moral rectitude, and right standing with God. Of course, going against the roaring lion with a breastplate of *self-righteousness* is like trying to stop a bullet with a nylon wind-breaker. You need Kevlar® (at the very least) if you're going out against flying lead. Likewise, we need the righteousness of Jesus Christ as our covering³⁴. Righteousness will protect us as it did Daniel when he stood in the den of lions.

Truth surrounds our loins and covers the reproductive organs. Jesus is the truth³⁵. Thus, if we have the belt of truth tightened around our loins, we are protected from those sexual temptations that grounded Samson. Also, as we walk in the truth of God's word³⁶, we will be protected from deception, like that which caused the prophet from Judah to fall. Jesus promised that His Holy Spirit would recall to our memories those things that He had spoken (see John 14:26). As we walk in the anointing of God, the word of God will come alive to us, countering any falsehoods that the roaring liar... I mean, lion may try to tell us.

Having our feet properly shod allows us to face the roaring lion with, as the Amplified Bible puts it, "the firm-footed stability, the promptness, and the readiness produced by the good news of the Gospel of peace [Isaiah 52:7.]" And what is the gospel (good news)? Let's see what Jesus had to say about it.

¹⁸ The Spirit of the Lord [is] upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,

¹⁹ To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

Luke 4:18-19

The scripture that Jesus was reading was from the Book of Isaiah. Let us take a look at that passage, and examine in greater detail what "the acceptable year of the Lord" will actually be like.

¹ The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed and qualified me to preach the Gospel of good tidings to the meek, the poor, and afflicted; He has sent me to bind up and heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the

³³ See Ephesians 2:8

³⁴ See 2 Corinthians 5:21 and 1 Peter 2:24

³⁵ See John 14:6

³⁶ See John 1:1

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[physical and spiritual] captives and the opening of the prison and of the eyes to those who are bound, [Rom. 10:15.]

² To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord [the year of His favor] and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, [Matt. 11:2-6; Luke 4:18, 19; 7:22.]

³ To grant [consolation and joy] to those who mourn in Zion – to give them an ornament (a garland or diadem) of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, the garment [expressive] of praise instead of a heavy, burdened, and failing spirit – that they may be called oaks of righteousness [lofty, strong, and magnificent, distinguished for uprightness, justice, and right standing with God], the planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified.

⁴ And they shall rebuild the ancient ruins; they shall raise up the former desolations and renew the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.

⁵ Aliens shall stand [ready] and feed your flocks, and foreigners shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers.

⁶ But you shall be called the priests of the Lord; people will speak of you as the ministers of our God. You shall eat the wealth of the nations, and the glory [once that of your captors] shall be yours. [Exodus 19:6; I Pet. 2:5; Rev. 1:6; 5:10; 20:6.]

Isaiah 61:1-6 (AMP)

This scripture speaks simultaneously about things that will happen during time that is to come upon the earth, and about things that can happen in our lives this very hour. When Jesus is in your life and you are wearing His anointing, you will receive beauty instead of ashes. You will express an attitude of praise, rather than a heavy and cast down spirit³⁷. God will pour great blessings upon you in this lifetime, upon this earth. He will fill your mouth with laughter³⁸ rather than gloom and doom, or “oh woe is me.”

Your shield is faith. Faith in what? It is not simply faith in faith, or faith in any idea or institution. It is faith in Jesus Christ and in what His word says. If the roaring lion comes tiptoeing around, you can stand in faith on Isaiah 54:17 and claim that scripture as your own by the Blood of Jesus.

Finally, your weapon is the sword that the Spirit wields... which is the word of God. John 1:1 tells us that Jesus *is* the word.

To sum it all up then, to wear the complete armor of God is to be covered with the

³⁷ See Philippians 4:8, Hebrews 2:12 and 13:15

³⁸ Psalm 126:1-3

anointing of Jesus Christ. Jesus Himself shows us how effective that anointing is during His encounter with the roaring lion on the mount of temptation. This encounter serves as the epitome of lion taming for all of us (who are His disciples) to follow. Jesus' baptism was a way of identifying Himself with humanity. And now, having done so, he was immediately driven by the Spirit to go into the wilderness. Why the wilderness, away from civilization? The original Greek leads us to understand that the testing (or affliction by the devil) that Jesus endured lasted the entirety of the 40 days and nights, and was not a single event. This testing is reminiscent of the Israelites wandering through the desert 40 years. Where the children of Israel failed their test however, Jesus passed His.

¹ Then Jesus was led (guided) by the [Holy] Spirit into the wilderness (desert) to be tempted (tested and tried) by the devil.

² And He went without food for forty days and forty nights, and later He was hungry. [Exod. 34:28; I Kings 19:8.]
Matthew 4:1-2 (AMP)

Also worth considering, Jesus went without food (and possibly also without water) for 40 days and nights, as Moses and Elijah had done before Him³⁹. How did He accomplish this physically challenging task, fighting off satan all the while? It was because He went into the wilderness under the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Mark 1:13 makes an interesting note that there were wild beasts in the wilderness where Jesus was. Could this have included roaring lions? We should note that at no time did the wild animals ever attack or molest Jesus. Some conjecture that His presence brought the first peace that animals had experienced since the fall of man in the book of Genesis. Sadly, although the creatures He created received Him, His own (those He created in His Own image) received Him not⁴⁰.

³ And the tempter came and said to Him, If You are God's Son, command these stones to be made [loaves of] bread.

⁴ But He replied, It has been written, Man shall not live and be upheld and sustained by bread alone, but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God. [Deut. 8:3]
Matthew 4:2-4 (AMP)

Taking advantage of the fact that Jesus was hungry, satan came with the above temptation. Notice that the "If" in verse three is better phrased, "Since," as there is no denying that Jesus is the Son of the Living God. Jesus fought that temptation with the sword of the Spirit, the word of God. ***It is written*** will take you a lot farther than any other method of warfare! Jesus also pointed out that obedience to God is more important than satisfying physical needs (e.g., hunger). Don't use hunger as an excuse for spending your tithes on Hostess Twinkies. Don't use

³⁹ See Exodus 34:28, Deuteronomy 9:9, and 1 Kings 19:8

⁴⁰ John 1:11

loneliness as an excuse to have an extramarital affair.

Of course, the act of changing stones into bread is not a sin in and of itself. However, Jesus was not about to break His fast until His purpose had been 100% completed, and He was not going to frivolously use His powers for selfish reasons. This is something that you and I must learn. If we put God and His agenda first, all other things that we require will be added to us⁴¹.

⁵ Then the devil took Him into the holy city and placed Him on a turret (pinnacle, gable) of the temple sanctuary. [Neh. 11:1; Dan. 9:24.]

⁶ And he said to Him, If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down; for it is written, He will give His angels charge over you, and they will bear you up on their hands, lest you strike your foot against a stone. [Ps. 91:11, 12.]

Matthew 4:5-6 (AMP)

Notice how crafty satan is. Jesus had effectively fought off the first attack using the word of God. So what did the devil do? He tried tries the same approach, twisting the word of God. This was, in fact, the same approach used against Eve in the Garden of Eden⁴². Quoting Psalms 91:11-12, satan tempted Jesus to jump off of the pinnacle (either the edge of the roof or a tower) of the temple. This was a busy location, crowded with people (sort of like Times Square in New York). Had Jesus jumped as satan had suggested, the crowds of people would have seen Him floating down from the sky and would have immediately accepted Him as their Messiah. However, this would have meant His acceptance not as Savior and Lord, but as the military leader to overthrow the Roman Empire, something that was outside of God's plan to redeem mankind — something Jesus avoided.

Jesus said to him, On the other hand, it is written also, You shall not tempt, test thoroughly, or try exceedingly the Lord your God. [Deut. 6:16]

Matthew 4:7 (AMP)

Jesus saw through the twisting of the scriptures and responded by quoting Deuteronomy 6:16. It is important to test scripture against scripture to come out with an accurate analysis. Otherwise, one could easily be swept away by false prophets such as the Mormons, the Jehovah's Witnesses, or the old prophet who deceived the man from Judah (who was slain by a roaring lion). One point we should gain from this test is that it is foolish to test God to see how far you can go and get away with it. A person with that attitude could possibly be so far out that they are beyond the point of rescue.

I remember a good friend from college who went on to star in his own television series. One

⁴¹ See Matthew 6:33

⁴² See Genesis 3:1ff.

day, I noticed that he had been replaced and was shocked to learn that he was in a hospital dying of AIDS after years of an active homosexual lifestyle. Friends tried to share the gospel with him, but he reasoned that although he was on his deathbed, God would have to accept him as he was, or he wouldn't believe. I continued praying for him until the very end. It's hard to say what the end result was, but such a hard, unwavering attitude is frightening. Unfortunately, if you persist on testing God and pushing the limits, you may find yourself so far out that you don't even desire to come back.

8 Again, the devil took Him up on a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory (the splendor, magnificence, preeminence, and excellence) of them.
9 And he said to Him, These things, all taken together, I will give You, if You will prostrate Yourself before me and do homage and worship me.

Matthew 4:8-9 (AMP)

Anyone who ever doubted whether the devil is crazy or sane should take note of the above passage. Can you believe that satan actually thought that Jesus would bow down and worship him? But the "hook" that satan was using was a "shortcut" to God's plan of spreading the kingdom (with its teachings and ethics) around the world. This shortcut would bypass the cross altogether. Naturally, Jesus rejected it, as God's perfect plan was just that. Perfect. Satan's idea, however, is brought before and bought by many Christians of today. For example, a number of Christian record companies are selling out to major secular labels. The reasoning is that the economic influx will allow a wider distribution of their artists' materials. However, this trend also seems to precipitate a "watering down" of a lot of what is being produced. References to "God" and "Jesus" are being replaced with "He" and "Him." In fact, one popular Christian recording artist, who shall remain nameless, was told by his label to either tone down his hard hitting evangelical songs, or leave. He left.

When I was a teenager, the church that I grew up in began receiving government grants to distribute food to the poor in the community. That sounded like a good idea. Funding was also received for the upkeep of the church's community center. Seemingly, a great idea. Over time, unfortunately, the center became the home for wild heathen parties, as evidenced by the empty liquor bottles strewn around the church grounds. The end result of these endeavors was a watering down of the gospel. It proves that you can't mix God and the world... they just don't go together. It's like mixing the components of rocket fuel... it will blow up in your face⁴³.

Why would Jesus have to bow to satan in order to possess the kingdoms of the world? The earth already belonged to Jesus⁴⁴.

⁴³ See 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1 and James 4:4

⁴⁴ See Psalm 2:8, 24:1, and 72:8,11; Daniel 7:14; and Zechariah 9:9-10

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Then Jesus said to him, Begone, Satan! For it has been written, You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him alone shall you serve. [Deut. 6:13.]
Matthew 4:10 (AMP)

Therefore, having applied the word of God, Jesus successfully defeated the roaring lion. The only thing satan could do at this point, having been resisted by the word of God, was to flee⁴⁵.

Then the devil departed from Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him.
Matthew 4:11 (AMP)

You can't fool Jesus when it comes to the word of God. Why? Because He is the word of God (see John 1:1). And through our assimilation of God's word, we become equipped to vanquish our enemy, satan that roaring lion. Notice that Jesus didn't rebuke satan on the basis of His authority. Nor did He call angels down to do away with him. No, Jesus used the word. Why? Because *we* can use the word! We may not be able to pull rank on the devil or command battalions of angels, but we can speak the word of God in faith. Of course, this is not just a matter of memorizing scriptures that for regurgitation, sort of like a computer spitting out reams of data. You need to get the word of God so deeply ingrained into your being that they flow naturally, as they did for Jesus on the mount of temptation. And how do we manage to do that? Through the anointing!

I assure you, most solemnly I tell you, if anyone steadfastly believes in Me, he will himself be able to do the things that I do; and he will do even greater things than these, because I go to the Father.
John 14:12 (AMP)

Famed evangelist and author Leonard Ravenhill once said that **when the church loses Holy Ghost fire, men and women wind up in hell fire**. Christians need to get full of the fire of God, walking in the anointing of the Holy Ghost. We should aim to be like Jesus, the Anointed One, so that we can put that roaring lion in his place once and for all! When we achieve that level of Christlikeness (or, walking in His anointing), we will see people receiving the gospel, being healed of all manner of diseases, and being delivered from every bondage that roaring lion has them wrapped up with. God's power, you can simply preach and teach the word to whosoever will hear. There is great power in the word. God's word is spirit and life.

It is the Spirit Who gives life [He is the Life-giver]; the flesh conveys no benefit whatever [there is no profit in it]. The words (truths) that I have been speaking to you are spirit and life.
John 6:63 (AMP)

⁴⁵ See James 4:7

CHAPTER SIX

PETER'S PLAN OF BATTLE

Be well balanced (temperate, sober of mind), be vigilant and cautious at all times; for that enemy of yours, the devil, roams around like a lion roaring *[[1] in fierce hunger]*, seeking someone to seize upon and devour.

1st Peter 5:8 (AMP)

Now that we have examined the lives of the five men who faced the roaring lion, you may be contemplating your life and how the roaring lion may have attacked you in time past. Perhaps you have considered those areas of your life which are most vulnerable to his attack.

Hopefully, you have come to an understanding of the fact that, in Christ, we complete and absolute victory⁴⁶. We will end our study by taking an in-depth look at our key scripture, 1 Peter 5:5-10, and discern the key to our victory. The battle plan delineated in that scripture may be broken down into four steps:

1. Humble yourself in God's mighty hands, knowing that (in due time) He will exalt you⁴⁷.
2. Cast all your cares on your loving Heavenly Father. Don't worry about anything, God has it all covered—guaranteed!⁴⁸
3. Be disciplined and alert. A lazy or slothful spirit will open the door to defeat and ruin⁴⁹.
4. Resist and withstand satan, standing firm and established in your faith⁵⁰.

⁴⁶ See 1st Corinthians 15:57, 1st John 5:4-5, and Revelation 15:2-4

⁴⁷ See Matthew 23:12 and James 4:10

⁴⁸ See Matthew 6:25-34

⁴⁹ See Proverbs 15:19 & 21:25, Romans 12:11 and Hebrews 6:12

⁵⁰ See Ephesians 6:14

Step One: Humble Yourself in God's Hands

He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you but to do justly, and to love kindness *and* mercy, and to humble yourself *and* walk humbly with your God?
[Deut. 10:12, 13.]

Micah 6:8 (AMP)

The initial step in the war against the roaring lion (based upon Peter's battle plan) is for us to be humble in God's hands. It seems that one's level of humility is always proportionate with that person's efficacy as a servant of God. Those with more humility are more useful. Those with little or no humility (e.g., lots of pride) are of little to no use in the kingdom of God.

The Bible proscribes an almost military-like order to the body of Christ. Of course, we are all brothers and sisters in the Lord, fellow laborers doing the Master's work. Still, God has ordained a certain hierarchy which helps to maintain discipline and order in His church. When we fall out of step with that hierarchy, chaos comes in. Pride will be the first casualty in your campaign against the roaring lion. Let's review this aspect of Peter's battle plan, utilizing the Amplified translation to get a better understanding of the original Greek manuscript:

Likewise, you who are younger *and* of lesser rank, be subject to the elders (the ministers and spiritual guides of the church)—[giving them due respect and yielding to their counsel]. Clothe (apron) yourselves, all of you, with humility [as the garb of a servant, so that its covering cannot possibly be stripped from you, with freedom from pride and arrogance] toward one another. For God sets Himself against the proud (the insolent, the overbearing, the disdainful, the presumptuous, the boastful)—[and He opposes, frustrates, and defeats them], but gives grace (favor, blessing) to the humble. [Pro. 3:34.]

1st Peter 5:5 (AMP)

Notice that we are told to clothe ourselves with humility. Peter may have thought back to Jesus actions as recorded in John chapter 13. In that scripture, we see Jesus stripping Himself of His clothing and, clad in only a towel, stooping on His hands and knees to wash the disciples' feet.

3 [That] Jesus, knowing (fully aware) that the Father had put everything into His hands, and that He had come from God and was [now] returning to God, 4Got up from supper, took off His garments, and taking a [servant's] towel, He fastened it around His waist. 5Then He poured water into the washbasin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the [servant's] towel with which He was girded. 6When He came to

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Simon Peter, [Peter] said to Him, Lord, are my feet to be washed by You? [Is it for You to wash my feet?] 7Jesus said to him, You do not understand now what I am doing, but you will understand later on. 8Peter said to Him, You shall never wash my feet! Jesus answered him, Unless I wash you, you have no part with ([1] in) Me [you have no share in companionship with Me]. 9Simon Peter said to Him, Lord, [wash] not only my feet, but my hands and my head too! 10Jesus said to him, Anyone who has bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is clean all over. And you [My disciples] are clean, but not all of you. 11For He knew who was going to betray Him; that was the reason He said, Not all of you are clean. 12So when He had finished washing their feet and had put on His garments and had sat down again, He said to them, Do you understand what I have done to you? 13You call Me the Teacher (Master) and the Lord, and you are right in doing so, for that is what I am. 14If I then, your Lord and Teacher (Master), have washed your feet, you ought [it is your duty, you are under obligation, you owe it] to wash one another's feet. 15For I have given you this as an example, so that you should do [in your turn] what I have done to you. 16I assure you, most solemnly I tell you, A servant is not greater than his master, and no one who is sent is superior to the one who sent him. 17If you know these things, blessed and happy and [2] to be envied are you if you practice them [if you act accordingly and really do them].

John 13:3-17 (AMP)

Peter seemed to have difficulty learning that vital lesson. Sadly, many in the body of Christ are also having problems. Despite a multitude of scriptural warnings against pride⁵¹, there are a multitude of Christians who allow their talents/gifts/callings to entrap them into foolishness that will only destroy their Christian witness and severely hinder their walk with the Lord. As Jesus did in the above scripture, and as Peter exhorts us in verse five, we need to strip ourselves of pride and self-centeredness, and clothe ourselves with humility. Another interesting point in verse five is that God sets Himself against the proud. The reading of the Greek text suggest that God sets an opposing military force against those who are proud, insolent and arrogant. He is, as you may recall, the Lord of Hosts (e.g., the hosts of mighty angels and heavenly forces). Do you really want the armies of heaven arrayed *against* you?⁵²

Therefore humble yourselves [demote, lower yourselves in your own estimation] under the mighty hand of God, that in due time He may exalt you.

1st Peter 5:6 (AMP)

⁵¹ Including Leviticus 26:18-19, Proverbs 11:2; 13:10; 14:3; 16:18 and Matthew 23:12

⁵² 2nd Kings 6:15-18

Good advice, wouldn't you agree?

As Joyce Meyer emphasized in her teaching series on the anointing, we must always respect the hierarchy of authority that God has established. This applies both inside and out of the church, since our mindset or attitude should be consistent⁵³. A good example of our inability to submit to authority is the tendency for people to complain about policies made by the President of the United States. You may not respect the man or his ideology, but you **must** respect the office that he holds. Likewise, employees love to complain about their boss. Again, although you may not like how your boss behaves, you must respect his or her position and office. In fact, if you can maintain Godly humility even when your employer is behaving in a “crooked” or “unjust” manner, you will receive special rewards from God.

¹⁸ [You who are] household servants, be submissive to your masters with all [proper] respect, not only to those who are kind and considerate and reasonable, but also to those who are surly (overbearing, unjust, and crooked).

¹⁹ For one is regarded favorably (is approved, acceptable, and thankworthy) if, as in the sight of God, he endures the pain of unjust suffering.

1st Peter 2:18-19 (AMP)

In my own experience, I've found that when I've been mistreated by an employer, God honors an upright attitude that seeks to honor Him despite man's reaction. Rather than complain about how much you hate your job, you should thank God that you are employed and not homeless or standing in a soup line. God knows where you are and he will deliver you in the fullness of time.

If we are walking in a humble spirit, we will have a reverent and worshipful fear (or, respect) of the Lord. Let's consider a few scriptures that tell us about the fear of the Lord:

The reverent fear *and* worship of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom *and* skill [the preceding and the first essential, the prerequisite and the alphabet]; a good understanding, wisdom, *and* meaning have all those who do [the will of the Lord].

Their praise of Him endures forever. [Job. 28:28; Prov. 1:7; Matt. 22:37, 38; Rev. 14:7.]

Psalms 111:10 (AMP)

The reverent *and* worshipful fear of the Lord is the beginning *and* the principal *and* choice part of knowledge [its starting point and its essence]; but fools despise skillful *and* godly Wisdom, instruction, *and* discipline. [Ps. 111:10.]

Proverbs 1:7 (AMP)

⁵³ See Romans 13:1-12 and 1 Peter 2:17

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The reverent *and* worshipful fear of the Lord is the beginning (the chief and choice part) of Wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight *and* understanding.

Proverbs 9:10 (AMP)

The reverent and worshipful fear of the Lord brings instruction in Wisdom, and humility comes before honor.

Proverbs 15:33 (AMP)

From the above scriptures, it should be rather obvious that the key to gaining wisdom, knowledge and understanding is to fear the Lord. The question is, what does it mean to fear the Lord? Does it mean that we should be terrified of God, cowering in fear that if you step on a crack, He will break your back? The Hebrew word translated “fear” in these scriptures is (transliterated) **“YIR’AH”** which means moral reverence. It reminds us that our Heavenly Father loves us.

Or are you [so blind as to] trifle with *and* presume upon *and* despise *and* underestimate the wealth of His kindness and forbearance and longsuffering patience? Are you unmindful *or* actually ignorant [of the fact] that God’s kindness is intended to lead you to repent (to change your mind and inner man to accept God’s will)?

Romans 2:4 (AMP)

As Christians, we have been brought into a family relationship with God through Jesus Christ, the first-born among many brethren. Paul explains, in Romans 8:14-17, that we are not just servants of God, we are the sons (and daughters) of God. And, as with earthly parent/child relationships, a child has no fear of his Father *unless* he has been behaving disobediently. Still, when we fall short of God’s standard, we have the promise of forgiveness that follows repentance⁵⁴.

So then why is it that so many believers maintain the mindset that one must be terrified of God? The idea of a “mean” or “angry” God existed as far back as the 13th Century. Perhaps even farther. Typical of this attitude was a sermon delivered by Johannes Tauler, a German mystic of the Dominican order. Entitled “2e sermon pour le saint sacrement,” contains the following quote:

“God does not wish to be the only one to punish us, He wishes that we may be punished by all creatures. Man is hunted like game offered to the Emperor; he is hunted, torn, and bitten by dogs, and he is thus more pleasing to the Emperor than if he had been taken gently. God is the Emperor who wants to eat the

⁵⁴ 1st John 1:9

game taken by the hunt. He also has his hunting dogs; it is the Enemy who hunts man through temptations of all kinds; he slithers toward you from all corners, in all kinds of ways, and hunts you through diverse temptations; first through pride, avarice, and all sorts of vices, then through despair and excessive sorrow. Dear child, hold steady, that will not do you any harm; your needs must be hunted."

Unfortunately, this attitude survived (to some extent) the Protestant reformation of the 16th century. Even today, many Christians hold fast their belief that it is God's will and purpose to throw obstacles in their way. They fail to realize that it is satan who puts obstacles in our way. Jesus sits on the right hand of the Father's throne, constantly making intercession for us—that we might victoriously overcome those obstacles⁵⁵. How many times have you heard someone sing, "Lord, don't move my mountain... just give me strength to climb?" One of the most popular American gospel songs in the late 1980's was entitled, "*I'm Climbing Up The Rough Side of the Mountain.*" These people are objectifying the obstacle (e.g., mountain) when they **should** be adhering to what Jesus had to say about mountains in Mark 11:22-24. We must learn to recognize when satan is throwing fiery darts at us and not accept his lies that God is sending those things to teach us a lesson. If we allow the Holy Spirit to perform an "attitude adjustment" in this area, we will no longer cower in fear when disaster strikes. Rather, we will repent from our sins and run boldly to the throne of grace into the arms of our loving father for healing and mercy⁵⁶. Don't take on Esther's "If I perish, I perish..." attitude when approaching the throne of our Father. God does not have pernicious or malevolent intent towards you. But does that mean that God will never deal with us for our sins? Let's see what the scriptures have to say about this:

Thou shalt also consider in thine heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son, [so] the LORD thy God chasteneth thee.
Deuteronomy 8:5

⁵ And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:

⁶ For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

⁷ If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?

⁸ But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.

⁹ Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected [us], and we gave [them] reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?

⁵⁵ See Romans 8:34, Hebrews 1:3,13, and Hebrews 8:1-2

⁵⁶ See 2nd Chronicles 7:14 and Hebrews 4:16

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¹⁰ For they verily for a few days chastened [us] after their own pleasure; but he for [our] profit, that [we] might be partakers of his holiness. {after...: or, as seemed good, or, meet to them}

¹¹ Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.
Hebrews 12:5-11

The above scriptures demonstrate that when God chastens us, it is not so that He can “get even with us.” His chastisement is for our profit—and a sign of His great love for us. God is not out to get you. He is out to bless you.

For I know the thoughts *and* plans that I have for you, says the Lord, thoughts *and* plans for welfare *and* peace and not for evil, to give you hope in your final outcome.

Jeremiah 29:11 (AMP)

⁶ Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near:

⁷ Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. {the unrighteous...: Heb. the man of iniquity} {abundantly...: Heb. multiply to pardon}

⁸ For my thoughts [are] not your thoughts, neither [are] your ways my ways, saith the LORD.

⁹ For [as] the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

¹⁰ For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater:

¹¹ So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper [in the thing] whereto I sent it.

¹² For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap [their] hands.

¹³ Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the LORD for a name, for an everlasting sign [that] shall not be cut off.

Isaiah 55:6-13

God’s perfect will **is** for us to be victorious over the roaring lion by His Spirit!

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For God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power,
and of love, and of a sound mind.

2nd Timothy 1:7

In the above scripture, Paul uses the Greek word “Deilia” which expresses a timid, fearful and faithless spirit that no Christian should be under. Just how bad is deilia fear? In Revelation 21:8, we read that the fearful (in Greek, “Deilos”) will be cast into the lake which burns with fire and brimstone. Why such a harsh penalty for fear (and unbelief)? Faithless fear denies the power and the love of God. It is a force that can short-circuit God’s blessings in your life. Kenneth Copeland described the force of fear as the opposite of faith. For example, Acrophobia (the fear of heights) is faith that you will fall. Agoraphobia (fear of being in public or in a crowd) is faith that someone “out there” is going to harm you. In that manner, fear activates satan’s destructive activity in your life (just as faith activates God’s power in your life. If you are walking in cowardly “Deilos” fear, pray and ask the Lord for an “attitude adjustment.” Otherwise, you will be blatantly denying God’s lovingkindness (which, in itself, is a powerful study topic) and his ability to save, heal and bless you. Don’t be like Thomas⁵⁷, operating in **willful** unbelief. Serve God with gladness⁵⁸ and a spirit of faith that worketh by love⁵⁹. 1st John 4:16-19 tells us that God’s perfect love casts out fear (in Greek, “Phobos”). When you are made perfect in His love, your phobias (those things that cause you alarm, fear and terror) will be cast out.

When we serve God out of an attitude of faith and love, we come into a full understanding and experience of the reverent fear of the Lord, which is like the fear a child has for his father. We read, in Psalm 103:13 (KJV), that the Lord pitieth us like a father pitieth his children. The word “pitieth” in Hebrew is “Racham” which has an interesting etymology. An amalgamation of the protective love of a father and the nurturing love of a mother, it literally means to fondle, love, have compassion on, show mercy to, and have pity upon. God has “Racham” for us. When we (by the assistance and inward guidance of the Holy Spirit) bring ourselves in line with the faithful love of the Lord by walking in humility and reverent fear, we can expect to receive great rewards from our Father.

The reward of humility *and* the reverent and worshipful fear of
the Lord is riches and honor and life.

Proverbs 22:4 (AMP)

Whoever will humble himself therefore and become like this
little child [trusting, lowly, loving, forgiving] is greatest
in the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 18:4 (AMP)

⁵⁷ in John 20:25

⁵⁸ Psalm 100:2

⁵⁹ Galatians 5:6

Whoever exalts himself [with haughtiness and empty pride] shall be humbled (brought low), and whoever humbles himself [whoever has a modest opinion of himself and behaves accordingly] shall be raised to honor.

Matthew 23:12 (AMP)

But He gives us more and more grace (power of the Holy Spirit) to meet this evil tendency and all others fully). That is why He says, God sets Himself against the proud and haughty, but gives grace [continually] to the lowly (those who are humble enough to receive it). [Prov. 3:34.]

James 4:6 (AMP)

Step Two: Cast All Your Cares On A Loving Father

Casting your cares involves submission. We must be willing to let go of our worries and embrace God's peace.

Casting the whole of your care [all your anxieties, all your worries, all your concerns, once and for all] on Him, for He cares for you affectionately *and* cares about you watchfully. [Ps. 55:22.]

1st Peter 5:7 (AMP)

⁷ Keep on asking and it will be given you; keep on seeking and you will find; keep on knocking [reverently] and [the door] will be opened to you.

⁸ For everyone who keeps on asking receives; and he who keeps on seeking finds; and to him who keeps on knocking, [the door] will be opened.

⁹ Or what man is there of you, if his son asks him for a loaf of bread, will hand him a stone?

¹⁰ Or if he asks for a fish, will hand him a serpent?

¹¹ If you then, evil as you are, know how to give good and advantageous gifts to your children, how much more will your Father Who is in heaven [perfect as He is] give good and advantageous things to those who keep on asking Him!

Matthew 7:7-11 (AMP)

Step Three: Be Disciplined And Alert

Be well balanced (temperate, sober of mind), be vigilant *and* cautious at all times; for that enemy of yours, the devil,

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roams around like a lion roaring [in fierce hunger], seeking someone to seize upon *and* devour.

1st Peter 5:8 (AMP)

Sitting in front of the television for hours upon hours will not help you in your battle against satan. Even Christian television has its limits... nothing can substitute spending time alone with God. Or, can you perhaps imagine a wife watching a video of her husband as a substitute for her time with him? Would you try watching a video of food to try and satisfy your hunger? I thought not.

⁵ Declare in Judah and publish in Jerusalem and say: Blow the trumpet in the land; cry aloud and say: Assemble yourselves, and let us go into the fortified cities.

⁶ Raise a standard toward Zion [to mark out the safest route to those seeking safety within Jerusalem's walls]! Flee for safety, stay not, for I bring evil from the north, and great destruction.

⁷ A lion has gone up from his thicket, and a destroyer of nations is on his way. He has gone forth from his place to make your land a desolate waste; and your cities shall be left in ruins without an inhabitant.

Jeremiah 4:5-7 (AMP)

Peter is warning us that satan is looking for any opening to jump in and devour you. Will you be a Samson or a Daniel? Will you be like the disobedient prophet, or will you be like God's Son who was obedient even unto death⁶⁰?

¹ And the word of the Lord came to me, saying,

² Son of man, speak to your people [the Israelite captives in Babylon] and say to them, When I bring the sword upon a land and the people of the land take a man from among them and make him their watchman,

³ If when he sees the sword coming upon the land, he blows the trumpet and warns the people,

⁴ Then whoever hears the sound of the trumpet and does not take warning, and the sword comes and takes him away, his blood shall be upon his own head.

⁵ He heard the sound of the trumpet and did not take warning; his blood shall be upon himself. But he who takes warning shall save his life.

⁶ But if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet and the people are not warned, and the sword comes and takes any one of them, he is taken away in and for his perversity and iniquity, but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand.

⁶⁰ See Philippians 2:8

7 So you, son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; therefore hear the word at My mouth and give them warning from Me.

8 When I say to the wicked, O wicked man, you shall surely die, and you do not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his perversity and iniquity, but his blood will I require at your hand.

9 But if you warn the wicked to turn from his evil way and he does not turn from his evil way, he shall die in his iniquity, but you will have saved your life.

Ezekiel 33:1-9 (AMP)

The watchman is like an evangelist whose heart is consumed with the passion for preaching the gospel to a lost and dying world. It is sad and unfortunate that most “Christians” are only consumed with getting out of church in time to watch the game. Those who do involve themselves with the “work of the Lord” are only interested in putting together good services and having their names published in the program. It might also be worthwhile to note that the watchman does not lose interest if someone is of a different ethnicity or skin color. Nor does he judge based upon his perception of that person’s lifestyle. The word of God will take care of that... trust me.

The sluggard says, There is a lion outside! I shall be slain in the streets!

Proverbs 22:13 (AMP)

The sluggard says, There is a lion in the way! A lion is in the streets! [Prov. 22:13.]

Proverbs 26:13 (AMP)

Step Four: Withstand Satan, Firm In Your Faith

9 Withstand him; be firm in faith [against his onset – rooted, established, strong, immoveable, and determined], knowing that the same (identical) sufferings are appointed to your brotherhood (the whole body of Christians) throughout the world.

10 And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace [Who imparts all blessing and favor], Who has called you to His [own] eternal glory in Christ Jesus, will Himself complete and make you what you ought to be, establish and ground you securely, and strengthen, and settle you.

1st Peter 5:9-10 (AMP)

Note that Peter does not at all imply that spiritual lion taming is easy. In fact, there is certainly *some* suffering for all of us (even if it is only the inconvenience of putting aside pursuits

and pleasures to consecrate yourself to God). Yet, the rewards are immeasurable... both in this life and in the world to come.

In [this] freedom Christ has made us free [and completely liberated us]; stand fast then, and do not be hampered *and* held ensnared *and* submit again to a yoke of slavery [which you have once put off].

Galatians 5:1 (AMP)

¹³Therefore put on God's complete armor, that you may be able to resist and stand your ground on the evil day [of danger[, and, having done all [the crisis demands[, to stand [firmly in your place].

¹⁴Stand therefore [hold your ground], having tightened the belt of truth around your loins and having put on the breastplate of integrity and of moral rectitude and right standing with God,

¹⁵And having shod your feet in preparation [to face the enemy with the firm-footed stability, the promptness, and the readiness produced by the good news] of the Gospel of peace, [Isa. 52:7.]

¹⁶Lift up over all the [covering] shield of saving faith, upon which you can quench all the flaming missiles of the wicked [one].

¹⁷And take the helmet of salvation and the sword that the Spirit wields, which is the Word of God.

¹⁸Pray at all times (on every occasion, in every season) in the Spirit, with all [manner of] prayer and entreaty. To that end keep alert and watch with strong purpose and perseverance, interceding in behalf of all the saints (God's consecrated people).

Ephesians 6:14-18 (AMP)

O GOD the Lord, the strength of my salvation, thou hast covered my head in the day of battle.

Psalms 140:7

¹⁶At my first trial no one acted in my defense [as my advocate] or took my part or [even] stood with me, but all forsook me. May it not be charged against them!

¹⁷But the Lord stood by me and strengthened me, so that through me the [Gospel] message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. So I was delivered out of the jaws of the lion.

2nd Timothy 4:16-17 (AMP)

CHAPTER SEVEN

SING PSALMS OF VICTORY

One key to effectively fighting satan, that roaring lion, is to maintain the correct attitude. So often, we lose battles when we allow spirits of doubt, fear, depression, unforgiveness, etc. to come in and dominate our minds. Something seemingly as simple as an “attitude adjustment” can go a long way in changing defeat into victory. For example, you may, like Samson, be enticed by an attractive woman (or man). If you have been feeding your mind soap operas and Harlequin romance novels, you will have a tough row to hoe. If, however, your mind is immersed in the word of God, you can more easily win that fight. What is a good way of keeping the word of God in and on your mind? By singing it! Consider the prophet from Judah. Have you been receiving bad advice from a wolf in sheep’s clothing? Knowing the word for yourself will prevent you from being caught up in a wind of doctrine. Even if you are like Daniel, set up and accused in your work place, home, or church, you can operate in love and forgiveness... not in plotting revenge or calling down fire from heaven on their heads. It is imperative for us to remember that we are not fighting against people, but against the spirits (demonic forces) that provoke people to operate against us.

⁴ For the weapons of our warfare are not physical [weapons of flesh and blood], but they are mighty before God for the overthrow and destruction of strongholds,

⁵ [Inasmuch as we] refute arguments and theories and reasonings and every proud and lofty thing that sets itself up against the [true] knowledge of God; and we lead every thought and purpose away captive unto the obedience of Christ (the Messiah, the Anointed One),

2nd Corinthians 10:4-5 (AMP)

We can either get mad at those individuals who hurt us, or we can place our anger into its most productive direction: targeted against the devil. The key to defeating the devil is through the word of God, “IT IS WRITTEN.” So, get into the habit of planting God’s word in your heart (and activating it to work in your circumstances) through the avenue of music. You may not realize just how powerful a tool music is. Consider how most people have a difficult time memorizing scriptures, or even material they may be studying in school or on the job. Yet, those same individuals could recite the lyrics to virtually every top-10 song they hear on the radio. Give yourself this little test: can you recite the lyrics to the theme song of “The Flintstones?”

What about that catchy tune in the McDonalds® commercials? Anything set to music is easier to remember. In the 1970's, the American Broadcasting Company ran a series of music videos which emphasized the multiplication tables. One of these vignettes would run between succeeding cartoon series. The success of this effort led to the expansion of "Schoolhouse Rock" into English grammar and American history. Some local teachers were even using music to help their students learn.

From the perspective of spiritual warfare, the children of Israel recognized the power of music (specifically, praise and worship) as they faced their toughest enemies. In fact, praise often superseded the need for *any* armed conflict whatsoever. Considering the fact that God inhabits the praises of His people⁶¹, it is only natural to conclude that praise is the key that opens the door for God to come in and for the devil to run out. Singing praise to the Lord give us the victory over any circumstance. Consider Jehoshaphat's dilemma in 2nd Chronicles, chapter 20. The children of Ammon, Moab, **and** Mount Seir had all ganged up against the children of Israel. From the natural perspective, it seemed that the Israelites were doomed! It was, perhaps, the darkest hour of King Jehoshaphat's reign. From the spiritual perspective however, it was a "piece of cake." Rather than give up or give in, Jehoshaphat placed his trust in the Lord and discovered that the solution was not in the totality of his military forces, but in the power of praise and worship.

²¹ And he consulted with the people, and appointed singers to Jehovah, and those that should praise in holy splendour, as they went forth before the armed men, and say, Give thanks to Jehovah; for his loving-kindness [endureth] for ever!

²² And when they began the song of triumph and praise, Jehovah set liers-in-wait against the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Seir, who had come against Judah, and they were smitten.

²³ And the children of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of mount Seir, to exterminate and destroy [them]; and when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, they helped to destroy one another.

2nd Chronicles 20:21-23 (Darby)

When the people began to lift their voices in praise, their enemies destroyed themselves. By the time the army of Israel had arrived, all they found were dead bodies. Rather than having to expend their energies on a bloody conflict, they spent three days stripping wealth and valuables off of the bodies of the dead soldiers. It can be the same for you. You can either fight the enemy and risk getting bruised and bloodied, or you can praise the Lord, watch Him win the victory, then collect the blessings.

⁶¹ Psalm 22:3

So, what are you going to do? Will you just sit back in your rocking chair and let the devil dump all over you, or will you follow the example of Paul and Silas⁶². When they were in prison, they lifted up praises. The power of praise caused the fetters that bound them to drop off, and the secured prison doors to swing open.

Begin to live a lifestyle of praise, filling your mouth with heart-felt psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. And I don't mean songs like "Do not pass me by..." or "I'm going up the rough side of the mountain" or "We're so footshod and weary sore." As Kenneth Copeland would say, you'd be better off singing "Pistol Packin' Mama" than a bunch of religious-sounding doubt and unbelief. Sing songs that are scripturally based, songs that emphasize our victory through the completed work at Calvary.

¹⁹ Speak out to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, offering praise with voices [and instruments] and making melody with all your heart to the Lord,

²⁰ At all times and for everything giving thanks in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father.

Ephesians 5:19-20 (AMP)

Let the word [spoken by] Christ (the Messiah) have its home [in your hearts and minds] *and* dwell in you in [all its] richness, as you teach and admonish *and* train one another in all insight *and* intelligence *and* wisdom [in spiritual things, and as you sing] psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, making melody to God with [His] grace in your hearts.

Colossians 3:16 (AMP)

⁶² See Acts 16:25-26



Whip the Devil

"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death."

(Revelation 12:11)

*Whip the devil
he's defeated
by the blood of Jesus
Whip the devil
Drive him under
by the word of your testimony*

*There is no sting in death
no victory
Does he not know i'm blessed
God rescued me!*

*Whip the devil
he's defeated
by the blood of Jesus
Whip the devil
Drive him under
by the word of your testimony*

*Temptation has no power
i won't give in
This is my glorious hour
i'm free from sin!*

*Whip the devil
he's defeated
by the blood of Jesus
Whip the devil
Drive him under
by the word of your testimony*

*i will rejoice the day
when that old liar
is cast into the lake
that burns with fire*

APPENDIX

OVERVIEW FOR CONTINUED STUDY

THE CARNAL MAN

MAN: Samson (Judges 14:1-9)

LION: Flirting with sin, riding the fence, taking God (and position with Him) lightly.

RESULT: Defeated by the roaring lion

THE SHEPHERD

MAN: David (1st Samuel 17:32-37)

LION: Intercession/Spiritual Warfare. Rescuing the perishing.

RESULT: Defeated the roaring lion... went on to even greater victories.

THE RELIGIOUS MAN

MAN: The man of God from Judah (1 Kings 13:1-32)

LION: False prophet. Jealousy within the body of Christ.

RESULT: Devoured by the roaring lion

THE RIGHTEOUS MAN

MAN: Daniel (Daniel 6:15-27)

LION: People who despise your godly living and oppose your freedom to worship God.

RESULT: Received the victory... his enemies were devoured by roaring lions.

THE ANOINTED MAN

MAN: JESUS CHRIST (Matthew 4:1-11)

LION: satan

RESULT: Victory — for Himself and for us who follow Him

Key to our defeat of the roaring lion is the application of the appropriate Biblical principles in our lives. We find these principles delineated in what we have taken the liberty of referring to as “Peter’s Battle Plan.” You should add to this list from the references contained in our text, as well as from verses that the Holy Spirit prompts to your memory during continued study.

- 1) Humble yourself in God’s Hands (1st Peter 5:6)
 - a. Proverbs 15:33
 - b. Proverbs 22:4
 - c. Micah 6:8
 - d. Matthew 18:4
 - e. Matthew 23:12
- 2) Cast all your cares onto your loving Heavenly Father (1 Peter 5:7)
 - a. Psalm 105:13
 - b. Matthew 7:7-11
- 3) Be disciplined and alert (1st Peter 5:8)
 - a. Jeremiah 4:5-7
 - b. Ezekiel 33:1-9

Five Men Who Faced the Roaring Lion

4) Withstand satan (the roaring lion), standing firm in your faith (1st Peter 5:9)

a. Galatians 5:1

b. Ephesians 6:14-19

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(Ephesians 3:14-19 and 1st Thessalonians 3:11-13)

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