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What Do Demons Do All Day?

(Part 1)

1341-A Series: Angels

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I- THE BATTLE RAGES

Ask any soldier who has been on the front lines, where the bullets are flying and the bombs are falling, what war is all about, and they will tell you it's all about <u>survival</u>.

Ask any politician who has been meeting in the halls of history trying to negotiate a cease-fire or a settlement to a conflict, and he will tell you that war is all about <u>negotiation</u>.

Ask any general who is meeting with his advisors in a tent somewhere in a secret place, and he will tell you that war is all about <u>strategy</u>.

Ask any wife or mother or child, whose loved one is at risk on the battlefield, what war is all about, and they will tell you it is all about <u>emotions</u>: fear, hope, comfort, longing.

They would all be right. War affects everything. When a nation is at war, all of its resources are redirected towards one thing: winning. When a nation is at war, all of the peacetime priorities that normally would be taken for granted must be set aside, if need be, in the interest of victory. When a nation is at war, its people must either learn to stand together or die together. They must either be willing to sacrifice or lose. The self-centered, egocentric interests that dominate our lives during the absence of conflict no longer seem crucial when the very bastions of our freedom are on the line. We will not compromise. We are at war.

But so often, after only a few years or even months of peace, how quickly we forget. We have retraced our steps, reorganized our labor, redirected our resources, regrouped our industry. How soon we forget. All wars have a beginning and an ending, we surmise. All wars have a winner and a loser, or so they say.

But there is one war that seemingly never ends. It is the war between good and evil. But it's much more than that. It is a personal war between the Creator God, who framed the heavens and the earth, and a fallen angel named Satan whose very existence is framed around thwarting the plan of the Most High God. The battle has raged for over 6,000 years, and it seems to be escalating with every passing moment; and, lest we forget, this war affects us very personally.

The armies involved are spiritual armies, for it is a spiritual conflict, and the stakes at risk are spiritual and eternal. The soldiers are called "angels", and though we mortals cannot see them, their existence is not in question. Scripture describes them fully, and for some reason, even fallen man seems to gravitate towards believing in these somewhat mysterious creatures. There are two armies of them, each bent on destroying the other. One is made up of an angelic host who has never tasted of sin, never defied their Creator, never thought of serving their own interests or of resisting or resenting God. The other group is a demonic disaster crew, whose only goal in life is to thwart the work of God and destroy the angelic host's ministering mercies.

The front lines are at your house and mine, in your church and mine, and on your job and mine. That's where the bullets seem to fly and the bombs seem to fall. But the masterminds behind the strategy are in the heavenlies. We are not wrestling against flesh and blood. The enemy is not your husband or your teacher or your boss or your ex-wife. It may seem that way, but they are only pawns in the struggle. The enemy is singular. His name is Satan. His army lives to do his bidding, and he wants your head on a spiritual platter. He wants to nullify your witness, diminish your pleasure at being God's child, and interfere at every turn with anything and everything you do to please the heart of God.

Unless you acknowledge his existence and examine his ploys, you will walk headlong into his gunfire and wonder what went wrong. So we must look at this demonic army of rebels and see what it is they want with us, and what it is God plans to do about it. Don't be afraid. They are not worth being afraid of. Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world. Compared to the God of eternity, Satan is a 90 lb. weakling who will soon be crushed into the sandpiles of eternal damnation.

But don't sell him short, either. He's not dumb, and he's not sleeping. So we must be neither, as well. Thus, we continue our journey through the land of the angelic host. That journey has taken us into the heart of this spiritual conflict, because the essence of the battle is taking place in the heavenlies, and we are the enemy. What makes it more frightening than that, however, is the fact that the average Christian, when asked what the war is all about and who these angelic armies are, seems to shrug his shoulders as though the battle were over. We do know the conclusion, Beloved, and it will be wonderful. But that does not mean that the enemy will give up before he is trampled underfoot. In fact, Scripture teaches us that the closer he gets to extinction, the more he will thrash about with every tool available in his arsenal of hate, and his very final days will see him wreak such havoc on Earth that even the vivid descriptions in Scripture seem hard to believe.

He is on the ropes, Beloved. His armies, though they appear to have gained control of so much of modern civilization, are nearing their Armageddon. And the closer they get, the more vicious will be their tactics. We are the target. The world is the battlefield. God will be the victor. But until then, we are called to put on the whole armor of God that we may be able to stand, and having done all, to remain standing. By God's grace, let's do that.

II- THE STATE OF THE DEMONIC UNION

As we make our journey through the Word of God, looking for wisdom from our Commanding Officer, we must carefully try to keep it in perspective. Satan is watching and listening to our study. If we insist on trying to investigate the conflict, he will want to move that investigation in one of two directions. He will either want to make us take it as an allegory or as something less than the real brutal war that it is; or he will want us to see him as so powerful and so wise with the world under his dominion, that we will crouch in fear, waiting for the bombs to fall upon us and crush us into oblivion. We must not let him succeed in either extreme.

We are looking at the state of the demonic union through the eyes of Scripture only. It tells it like it is, but it also shows us God as He is. Therefore, we need not be afraid; we need only be aware. We are the victors. Do not forget that. We have been assured that the wreath will be upon the shoulders of our King. He will stand in the victor's circle, and we will surround His throne, worshipping and praising. The enemy we now so fear will be shut up in a prison house of horror, there to be tormented day and night without end. Satan is a born loser. His armies, who have followed him into the abyss of darkness, will get to live there forever. But for a season, and for good reason, God has allowed him *limited access to the* saints in order to accomplish spiritual purposes in a physical world. I say limited, because the first chapters of Job make it clear that while Satan has certain freedoms to attack us, *they always come with the permission of God and are always used for the glory of God.* Satan is a deceiver, and he himself is deceived. He never has understood that what he means for evil, God uses for good. Since he doesn't, God continues to allow him to approach His holy throne, make accusations against us, take freedoms to harass us, and in the process, allow God to work His character into us. What a marvelous plan. Never forget that. Otherwise, you will miss the whole point of the conflict, and why God allows it.

A- The angelic Alcatraz

Where, then, is this multitude of rebellious spirit beings? How do we reconcile the fact that some of them seem to be shut up in prison, while others are free to do their evil master's bidding? We do not know the numbers or the ratio, but from two passages of Scripture, we do know that a great number of fallen angels now reside in a holding tank, if you will, waiting for their eternal execution. Peter writes:

> But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

> And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.

And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.

For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;

And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;

And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;

And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:

(For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and

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hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;)

The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished: (II Peter 2:1-9)

God knows how to deliver His children from the enemy's hands. We know that for He demonstrated it in advance, so Satan could have a preview of his eventual state, of what living in hell would be like. He spared not the angels that sinned. Obviously, some are now in prison. Others are free to do Satan's bidding to accomplish God's purpose. They are like an unwitting work crew assigned to jail, but allowed to go forth on God-allowed assignments. But the state of their compadres is their eventual sentence. Make no mistake about it, their buddies are locked up, and they will one day be locked up, as well. In verses 5 and 6 of Jude, we read further commentary:

I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not.

And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.

So the fate of part of Satan's army is already in concrete. He knows it and they know it. They are locked up and God has thrown away the key for now. They are in an angelic Alcatraz. They can't get at us, and they can't get at God.

B- The sons of Satan who think they're free

So much for that part of the not-so-heavenly host who are locked up in the eternal storage vault, awaiting their entrance into not so solitary confinement. But there are obviously a horde of them who are not in chains, whose sole intent is to bring us pain. Who are they? And what in the world are they doing?

These are the demons who think they are free because they are not, like their counterparts, prohibited from moving about on Earth doing the will of their evil master. The Scripture describes them as "spirit beings" (Matthew 8:29) and often refers to them as "unclean spirits" (Mark 9:25), a very descriptive title. They serve directly under Satan's authority (Luke 11:15-19), though, as we previously mentioned, they are ultimately under the authority and judgment of Almighty God (Matthew 8:29). Though they are in rebellion to all He stands for, they will not or cannot prevail in their ultimate objective, which is to destroy His Kingdom, for the gates of hell cannot prevail against it, and of His kingdom there shall be no end. They think they are free, but, in essence, they are in an even greater level of bondage than their imprisoned counterparts, because they do only the bidding of their leader. Everything they do only digs the pit deeper that they will one day fall into. Free? These demonic fools do not understand freedom, for even what they do to demonstrate their freedom only serves to further the ultimate plan of God. Hence, everything they do works ultimately against them.

C- What do demons do all day?

So we come to the inescapable question: "What do these demons do all day?" What keeps them so occupied in the spirit realm? How does Satan try to use them to eat away at the fiber of what God is trying to do in our lives? How much of what they do is obvious, and how much is subtle? How consistent are their ploys? How creative are their attempts to sidetrack us in our walk with God? What motivates them? What captivates them? What alienates them from reality? These questions we will attempt to answer from the Scripture in the next few lessons. "What do demons do all day?" Answer that question and you are on the road to understanding why God wants us to do what He wants us to do all day.

<u>They try to destroy our fellowship with God.</u> The great challenge facing any demon would have to be to try to bring about circumstances, relationships, or attitudes that would keep people from trusting Christ as their Savior, if they could. Anytime a man or woman, boy or girl receives Christ, the angels in heaven rejoice, and using the analogy of competing football teams, when one cheerleading squad has reason to celebrate, the other team's yell squad becomes bitterly silent. The whole object of the battle between Satan and God is to keep unbelievers from making a personal decision to trust Christ. To accomplish this, Satan will even promote religion, if through finding religion, someone misses the Cross. The Cross is the one thing Satan cannot tolerate. The reason is clear. The Cross finished Satan and sealed his doom. Look at what these verses tells us:

> Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath

raised him from the dead.

And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;

And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

(Colossians 2:12-15)

The cross marked the beginning of the end of the war of wars. It nailed Satan's coffin shut. Read what John wrote:

Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.

And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.

This he said, signifying what death he should die.

(John 12:31-33)

Jesus said that at the moment He was lifted up on that Cross to bear the sins of mankind, the solution to man's problem would be in place. It would be finished.

So every time someone says "yes" to Christ, Satan has suffered a very personal blow. The demons in chains, no doubt watching on "DNN" in the rec' room of the Alcatraz annex, weep and moan. They have literally lost a convert. But, you say, can they not prevent it? Don't they win some battles? I don't think so. I think they can interfere with God's plan, but only to the degree that God allows it, only to the degree that God knows it will ultimately work to His glory. God knows who will come to Him. Those who will, Satan cannot stop. I believe this because I believe God said it. This is what He said in Romans 8:

> For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

> Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

> What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? (Romans 8:29-31

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Now we'll not take that verse apart and get into the more controversial issues that govern how God does that. Suffice it to say, the Scripture is true. One thing we know, those God calls, be it His foreknowledge or His election or both, He will bring into the Kingdom. Nothing Satan can say, nothing Satan can do, nothing Satan can connive will stop Him. Those He predestinates, He calls; those He calls, He justifies; those He justifies, He glorifies. My Bible says,

Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake.

Wherefore should the heathen say, Where is now their God?

But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased. (Psalm 115:1-3)

Job adds this:

Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the LORD hath wrought this?

In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath

With him is wisdom and strength, he hath counsel and understanding.

Behold, he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again: he shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening.

Behold, he withholdeth the waters, and they dry up: also he sendeth them out, and they overturn the earth.

With him is strength and wisdom: the deceived and the deceiver are his. (Job 12:9-16)

Jeremiah 18:5-7 adds:

Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the LORD. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel.

At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it;

Ezekiel 18:4 reminds us:

Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die.

Beloved, God is sovereign. Nothing can keep Him from saving those who come to Him, and Satan cannot keep men and women from coming to Him. Satan can harass, influence, persecute, deceive, and even inhabit an unbeliever. That unbeliever has a free will. He can choose to say no to Christ. But it is the combination of God's sovereignty and man's free will that makes the difference. Ultimately, Satan is powerless to stop the blood of Jesus Christ from saving anyone if God calls them and they choose to say "yes". Don't give the devil more than his due. He is a master at conceiving scenarios to keep your loved ones from receiving Christ. But our God is in the heavens. He does whatever He chooses, and if that loved one chooses Christ, Satan is powerless to do anything but withdraw into the shadows and scratch another one off his list.

Satan's job is to hide the Cross. He does not mind men and women becoming Christianized. He does not mind hearing that God is love, because he can define love. He does not mind a full church. He does mind the Cross. The Cross forces man to think of sin. The Cross forces man to make a decision. The Cross eliminates the confusion that man creates by creating a gospel without the blood. Would you like to make it simple? Then memorize three verses of Scripture and you will have the plan of God. This is the gospel. I Corinthians is the first passage:

For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;

And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:". (I Corinthians 15:3,4)

John 3:3 adds:

Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of heaven.

John 1:12-13 closes the circle.

He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Sin. Death. Substitution. Resurrection. Salvation. Don't ever

get too busy learning about Christianity to forget that everyone you meet is either saved or lost, born again or destined for an eternity in hell, and they can be deacons, elders, pastors, priests or Sunday school teachers. Only one thing saves: the blood of Jesus Christ. You can believe in God until the rapture, Beloved, but if you do not understand that "no man cometh to the Father but by the Son," you are lost. Satan has sold you a lie and you have believed him. But he can't stop you from coming to Christ. The minute, no, the second you say to Jesus, "I repent of my sins, I choose to trust Christ as my Savior," Satan is finished as far as your salvation is concerned.

So Satan cannot prevent your salvation, but he doesn't know that. God will use everything Satan does to actually draw you to a place where you know you are lost. The very ploys he designs to destroy you, God will use to save you, if you'll let him. But Satan doesn't know that, either. So he will do anything to keep any unbeliever away from truth. Pray for your unbelieving friends. Pray that a spirit of wisdom would settle on them and that their eyes would be opened and that they would be able to see and understand sin, salvation, and substitution. As their eyes are opened by God, they will understand enough truth to repent, and as they repent, the Spirit of God will come to indwell them, and all Truth will be translated into an understandable language for them. Until that time, Satan will try to confuse them, or even make them think they already are believers because they "believe that God exists". My Bible says even the devils believe, and tremble (James 2:19). That's not enough. They must act on that belief by faith and ask Christ to be their Savior. If you have never done that, this very moment the demonic host is trying to harass you with all kinds of thoughts, some of which are outright lies, others of which are only distractions to keep your eyes off that Cross. Jesus paid it all. There is no residual balance on your account. Should you choose to accept His free gift, your account is paid in full. All you have to do is accept that gift and accept that fact.

So there will be a battle over your soul, unbeliever. God and Satan are wrestling over you. Satan is not strong enough to win. You hold the key. Say nothing and you are saying no. Say yes and you will instantly be adopted into the family of faith forever. And the battalions of demonic warriors who are grappling for your very soul will flee in confusion. They cannot keep you from Christ. He paid the price. It is finished. But once you are in the family of God by faith in Christ, the battle heats up royally. You have defected from the army of unholy rebels, and a defector is much more of a threat than even the enemy. One of your own who has gone over to the other side strikes fear in the heart of the generals who are plotting out the war on their computer screens. Once that happens, Satan goes to work big time. He has lost the big battle. You are saved. Now he pulls in the heavy artillery to make your defection of no effect. Now he has greater leverage, for now your free will allows you to choose, minute by minute, whether you will walk in the Spirit or in the flesh; whether you will obey your new commander, or serve as a turncoat, and serve the enemy while wearing the uniform of the Redeemed.

What Satan cannot seem to understand is that this is not a works religion. He cannot understand grace. As we studied earlier, even the holy angels have never experienced grace. No angel has ever experienced grace, and since a demon does not have the mind of God, even though he is a spirit being, he cannot grasp the things of God's Spirit. They are foolishness to him. Therefore, the Spirit-filled, God-centered life of faith becomes like a thorn in his side, and he will do anything and everything to keep you from growing spiritually.

They will attempt to do anything to separate us from the love of God. Another thing they cannot understand is the security of the believer. Without an understanding of grace, there is no way to understand security. If we are saved by works, then any act or attitude that defies God's laws would separate us from God. They cannot separate us from God's love, however, and it drives them crazy. Paul was clear about it.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able

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to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:35-39)

The Holy Spirit wanted that to be clear to us, though it is not clear to the demonic host. Our salvation is a gift, and once received, it is a no-deposit, no-return, non-refundable present from God. It is the gift that keeps on giving. Satan cannot take it from us.

What he can do, however, is anything and everything to make us take it lightly. He will interfere with our study of God's Word. He will create an atmosphere where we will take worship or fellowship lightly. He will make everything more attractive to us than time with God. He will tempt us at every turn to take our focus off of spiritual things, as he did with Jesus in the wilderness. He will offer us success, if that success will cloud our vision of things eternal. He will try to create even spiritual scenarios as he did with Jesus that will make something physical seem to be a miracle, as long as it's something God did not tell us to do.

We know sometimes he offers us success in this world. He did to Jesus. We know sometimes he tries to bring grief into our lives to cause us to curse God. He did with Job. We know he whispers lies to cause us to doubt God's word. He did with Eve. We know he uses even those we love to tempt us to do evil. He did with Adam. We know he uses spiritual pride to cause us to fall. He did with Paul. Sometimes he is masqueraded as a roaring lion. He is obvious, evil, and vicious. Other times he is masqueraded as an angel of light. He pretends to belong to the other army, just to trick us.

And whatever he does, his wicked demonic hosts do, as well. They live to do his bidding. They will find something to distract you from anything that requires application or obedience. They don't mind your learning about truth, if you don't obey it. They don't mind intelligent rebels. They hate obedient slaves.

In the weeks to come, we'll look at all the things the Bible says that demons do all day. They are busy little bees. They tempt, they test, they deceive, they distract; they can be a portrait of wickedness, daring you to try immorality, pretending it provides thrills that last. They can just as well be a portrait of self-righteousness, pretending that moral behavior is enough to justify you before a holy God.

And mark it well, nothing they do is even partially good. The Scripture says Satan is the father of lies, and there is no truth in him. That means you cannot compromise one iota with his plan. He will lead you into something that appears good, knowing that once you are there, you will lose your bearings and reject God's best. Read Matthew 4 again. Their tactics do not vary a lot, but they don't have to. We must learn what they are, and we must flee from them.

That's what demons do all day. They try to destroy you. Like their master, they go to and fro throughout the whole earth, seeking whom they may devour. They cannot rob you of your salvation, but if you choose to follow their evil temptations, they can rob you of your joy, your peace, and your intimacy with God.

That's what demons do all day, Beloved. Our job, should we choose to accept it, is to put on the whole armor of God that we may be able to stand. That's what believers do all day, if they want to please the heart of God.

Let's head for the armory, and put on the armor, shall we?

For Focus and Application

1- If someone were to ask you for the best description of the Christian life, how likely would you be to describe it as a battle? Why not? The battle is not ours; it's God's. That is one reason we tend to overlook the intensity of the conflict. But true faith would cause us to see the depth of the battle and simply trust God the more. What kinds of things does Satan do to keep us from having a "wartime" perspective?

2- How often do you discuss angels in your everyday conversation? Why not? What is it about the angelic host that seems to keep us from focusing on the heavenly conflict they are in? How does Satan capitalize on that?

3- How do you think you can best keep the balance between being aware of Satan's onslaughts while still focusing on God's victories? What keys have you found that work for you?

4- What two extremes will the enemy try to cause us to gravitate towards? What would he accomplish by doing this?

5- Read Job, chapter one, again. Pray through each verse, looking for principles. Answer these questions:

a- Who initiated the conversation?

b-What was Satan's argument to God?

- c- What was God's opinion of Job?
- d-What did God let Satan do?
- e-Could Satan have touched Job without God's permission?

6- Part of the angelic host is now in bondage. Having been sentenced, they are awaiting their execution. Why do you think God did this? Why not all the demons? What does II Peter 2:1-9 teach us about these fallen angels?

7- Why do you think fallen angels are described as "unclean spirits"? Are these demons really free? Explain your answer.

8- Do you believe that Satan is strong enough to keep someone from coming to Christ? On what do you base your answer? How should you pray for unbelievers? What does Romans 8:29-31 tell us about God's plan and His power?

9- What ways does Satan use to promote Christianity without the Cross? Why does he do that? Has the world bought the lie?

10- What are Satan's favorite tactics that seem to keep you from having the quality of fellowship with God you need? Examine them carefully. Are they consistent? What can you do this week to keep him from winning that battle?

11- Why does Satan think he can cause you to lose your salvation? How do you know he can't? Thank God every day that you are secure in Christ.

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