

# Notes for the Ones Called-Out to Meet

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## The Devil and the Disciple

“And I said, ‘Who are You, Lord?’ And the Lord said, ‘I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. <sup>16</sup> But arise, and stand on your feet. For this purpose I have appeared to you, to appoint you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen, and also of the things in which I will appear to you; <sup>17</sup> delivering you from the Jewish people and from the Gentiles, to whom I send you, <sup>18</sup> to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, in order that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.’”  
Acts 26:15-18

The NT has a great deal to teach us about the activity of Satan in the world around us, and the need to be watchful and prepared for his activity in our lives. Some people have a rather nonchalant attitude toward the devil, as if he is not much of a threat to us, at all. “After all”, they reason, “Jesus defeated him on the cross, so why worry about him? He is all just bluster and noise. He has no bite, anymore.” Does that square with what the scriptures teach? Are we to be unconcerned? Or, are we to be watchful, aware and vigilant? **Is it enough to “know Jesus”, or do we need to get more aggressive to effectively deal with Satan?** Are we in a “bubble of protection”, or do we need to *be aware* of his strategies, *take care* to avoid his traps, and *aggressively oppose* him?

**It is important to get a grasp of how much the activity of Satan, or the reality of spiritual warfare, is described or acknowledged in the NT.** It is mentioned in 21 out of the 27 NT books. It is present from the temptation of Jesus (Matt. 4:1-11), until the defeat and confinement of Satan at Jesus’ return, and his final destiny in the lake of fire at the end of the age (Rev. 19,20). Paul describes him as “the god of this age” (II Cor. 4:2). **He deceives the entire world** (Rev. 12:9), **and presides over a spiritual/political/economic/social network of influence and propaganda that steers people in a direction that is opposed to the Kingdom of God** (Eph. 2:1-3; I Jn. 2:15-17; Jas. 4:1-8). He is actively at work in those who are resisting and disobeying God (Eph. 2:2). **The entire commission of the church is to assault the “gates of Hades”, and set people free from the authority of Satan to follow God** (Matt. 16:18,19; Acts 26:16-18; Col. 1:13,14; II Cor. 10:4,5).

**How does he interfere? He blinds the minds of people** who hear the gospel, to try to keep them from perceiving what it really says (II Cor. 4:3,4). **He steals the Word from the attention of those who hear it**, and do not immediately lay hold of it, so that they do not think about it (Matt. 13:19; Mk. 4:15; Lk. 8:12). **He plants messages and false beliefs into our minds and emotional grid, to keep us from experiencing God and His love** (II Cor. 10:3-5). **He will plant people in our churches** who are not really Christians, to attempt to hinder the growth of those who are genuine, and to compromise the witness of the church (Matt. 13:24-30,36-43; I Jn. 2:18,19). **He attempts to tempt us to sin** (e.g., I Chron. 21:1; Matt. 4:1-11; I Cor. 7:5; I Thess. 3:5). **He will attempt to entrap or ensnare us** (I Tim. 3:6,7; 6:9; II Tim. 2:26). **He can introduce evil thoughts** into our hearts and minds (Acts 5:3). **He will try to find an occasion to reproach and discredit us** (I Tim. 5:14). **He will try to block or hinder our plans** to meet with people to share the gospel (I Thess. 2:18; cf. Rom 1:13; 15:22). **He will send false teachers** to lead us astray (II Cor. 11:14,15). Some of these may even do miraculous signs, so as to try to deceive us (II Thess. 2:9; cf. Matt. 24:23,24). In Job, Satan was able to utilize powerful acts of nature to destroy property and even to take life (Job 1:16,18,19). He can also afflict people with health problems and sickness (Job 2:7; Lk. 13:11-18). **The devil can utilize political power to cast Christians into prison, and persecute even to the point of death** (Rev. 2:10-13; 12:13,17; 13:4,7). At times, Satan may be permitted to “sift us” or try us through difficulty (Lk. 22:31,32). **We may even be “buffeted” or “smacked-around” by evil spiritual forces**, as part of the warfare we endure (II Cor. 12:7-10). God will give us what we need in such times, and promises to work all things together for His good purpose (Rom. 8:28).

**How are we to understand Satan’s status and level of threat? First, we are to understand that he is a defeated foe.** Jesus broke the legal basis of his dominion over us. We were put to death with Jesus, and all the accusations, charges, debts, or legal covenants that the enemy may try to use as a claim against us have all been nailed to the cross, paid for, and removed by the blood of Jesus Christ (Col. 2:8-15). Satan has no legal basis for holding us in bondage, if we are in Christ. **Secondly, while it is true that Satan is legally defeated, he is not just freely giving up, or vacating the territory he has obtained.** In many places, he is dug in, well-hidden and well-protected. He is not leaving without a fight, or at least the threat of superior force. **Jesus won the legal victory. Our job is to bring that victory to new places, and to see it enforced and established.** Revelation 12 makes clear that, **although Satan has been defeated and thrown down, he is still alive, rageful, and powerful. He continues to be motivated to resist God and to do evil.** He *still* “deceives the whole earth”, and he *continues on* as “the accuser of our brethren”, who “accuses us before God day and night”. **Thirdly, we need to understand that he is at war with us.** Revelation 12

tells us that, in particular, he *wants to* attack and persecute the children of God. This threat is real and significant enough that the voice from heaven said, "...woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has only a short time" (vs. 12). Why would God see fit to express and record this, ...unless the danger were *real* and *imminent*? The chapter ends with, "...the dragon [Satan] went off to *make war* with the [ones] who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus" (vs. 17). Clearly, **although Satan's legal authority has been removed in Christ, he continues to hold on to influence and power, remains watchful for opportunities to gain advantage and to attack the people of God. He is at war with us, ...whether we like it, or not! He is prowling about, looking to devour whomever he can. He is out to steal, kill and destroy (Jn. 10:10).**

**How are we to react in response to this information? How are we deal with him?**

**(1.) Be strong in the Lord.** Develop a deep and well-established walk with God. Get armored-up and ready for battle. Eph. 6:10-18; I Thess. 5:8; Rom. 13:11-14.

**(2.) Pray.** Drawing near to God is the first step. Asking for His intervention is the second step. Jas. 4:8; II Cor. 12:8; Matt. 6:13 (lit. "rescue us out from the evil one"); Matt. 26:41.

**(3.) Resist, oppose, stand-against.** Eph. 6:13; Jas. 4:7; I Pet. 5:9. Note that we are *not* to passively stand by, we are to *actively* stand-against.

**(4.) Tell him to "Get out!"** Matt. 4:10; 16:23.

**(5.) Rebuke** – The word means to: scold, show him his fault, warn, censure, lay a penalty against, sanction. Matt. 12:16; 17:18; Mk. 1:25; 3:11,12; 9:35; Lk. 4:35,41; 9:42. This is to be done firmly, but not flippantly or arrogantly – Zech. 3:1,2; Jude 1:9; II Pet. 2:10-13.

**(6.) Bind him** – Matt. 12:29; 16:19; 18:18. This seems to happen by command – For example, Jesus commanded a demon to "be muzzled" – Mk. 1:25; Lk. 4:35.

**(7.) Loose his victims and his bondages.** – Lk. 13:16; I Jn. 3:8.

**(8.) Legally confront him** – Acts. 19:13 – The Greek word for "adjure" is *horkizō*, which means "I put you under oath", "a demand that a person come under an oath to carry out with certainty what is commanded". To be an "ex-horkistēs" is to "swear someone out", i.e., to bring them under an oath to get them to leave. It is a process of legal argument and insistence that legal rights be carried out, all claims to the victim are dropped, and the unclean spirit is compelled to leave. The Greek work, *horkos*, was from a related word, "*herkos*", which meant a "fence, enclosure, that which restrains a person". An "oath", then was a legal restraint, obligation, commitment or promise, which was overseen by some other person, who would hold the oath-taker accountable for the fulfillment of his obligation. The Latin root for "to swear, or take an oath" was *jurare*, from which we derive a number of English words. A "juror" is someone bound under oath to fulfill a legal responsibility. Adding prepositional prefixes to this basic root changes the direction of the action. For example, to add the Latin preposition "com" (together-with) means to "swear together", implying a cooperative venture, a confederation between a demon and a medium, or "conjurer". By contrast, to "adjure" someone was to combine the Latin prefix *ad* (to, on) with the stem for "swear", or "bind by oath" To "adjure" someone, then was to solemnly put that person under oath, to put the oath *on* them, or bind them by an oath or obligation. The Greek structure is very powerful. There is no "*by* God" as in "I adjure you by God". No. Instead, the word, *horkizō*, takes *two* direct objects, ...the person being put under oath, and God. They are *both* being solemnly called to a legally binding promise. We can't do that in English, very well, so translators have chosen to utilize a prepositional phrase to help us understand that God is watching and enforcing the pledge, vow or oath. In reality, we are solemnly calling *both* God and the demon (or person) to an oath, or legal action. It is important that we understand that *this* is what we are doing when we seek to "exorcise" a demon. We are putting the demon face-to-face with God as the overseer and enforcer of legal matters in the spirit-realm. We are solemnly bringing legal constraint to *both* parties. We are appealing to God to enforce what Jesus has accomplished, and we commanding the demon to let go and get out. We are applying the legal victory of Jesus' defeat over the powers of darkness before the Judge of Heaven.

**(9.) Remove any false beliefs, lies, reasonings, which have formed a "stronghold"**, a fortress of thoughts behind which the enemy can hide and operate to block out the experiential-knowledge of God. These are messages which divert or shunt off the truth about God, what He has done for you in Christ, who you are in Christ, and what his calling for you may be. These lies must be "taken captive" and replaced with truth. II Cor. 10:4-5.

**(10.) Throw him out!** The Greek word is "*ekballō*" (Matt. 8:16,31; 9:33; 12:24,27,28,39; 17:18; Mk. 1:34,39; 3:22,23; 7:26-28; Matt. 10:1,8; 17:19; Mk. 3:15; 6:13; Matt. 7:22; Mk. 9:38; Lk. 9:49) You can see the word "ball" in there? It literally means to "throw or cast outside". Other definitions would be to "expel" or "drive out", but I like the image of giving the enemy the "bum rush" right out the door. As mentioned under # 5 above, we are not to be flippant or arrogant, but firm, and *insist on* his removal. It is the power of God that expels him, however, not noisy, dramatic exclamations on our part. It is instructive to observe the terse, no non-sense commands of Jesus, as He dealt with them.