KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

Part 220

THE BINDING OF SATAN (continued)

"And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and *bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled..."* (Rev. 20:1-3).

As we continue our study of the binding of the serpent, the devil, another clue to the mystery is found in the opening chapters of Genesis where our story begins. With what divine genius does the Holy Spirit on the inspired pages of God's Word portray the blessed scene of that first earthly son of God, in the image and likeness of God, abiding in the lovely, fragrant Garden of the Lord in Eden. There was a lovely Presence that walked in the Garden in the cool of the day, and the man presented himself there before the Presence of the Lord and walked and talked with God. We know for a certainty that there was a continual presentation of man in the Presence of the Lord, for as soon as man sinned he heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the Garden and rather than joyfully going forth to meet Him Adam and his wife "hid themselves from the Presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the Garden." God was in the Garden. Man was in the Garden. What sweet, holy communion passed between them in that blessed hour of man's innocence! But no sooner does Adam, the son of God (Lk. 3:38), present himself before the Lord than suddenly and mysteriously the *serpent* appears on the scene! There is a man that is perfect, but

innocent — and the amazing thing is that in the presence of God and that man, there is a devil!

The patriarch Job discovered this same fact of life in his experience with God and with Satan. The record states, "Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them" (Job. 1:6). Can we not see how it is, my beloved, that when the sons of God present themselves before the Lord, Satan comes also among them? It is always that way! Adam, the son of God, presented Himself before the Lord and the serpent was right there in the Garden of his life! Job, the perfect man, presented himself before the Lord, and Satan showed up at the same place! This very experience happened to none other than our blessed Lord Jesus — the Pattern Son. Have you noticed how strangely Matthew and Mark speak of Christ's temptation? "And immediately the Spirit drove Him into the wilderness to be tempted of the Devil" (Mk. 1:2; Mat. 4:1). What a strange statement! Jesus had just presented Himself before the Father at Jordan, and the Father witnessed of Him before all: "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." Just as God declared Job to be a perfect man, so He declared His Son to be well pleasing to Him in every way. The Holy Spirit manifests Himself there upon the Son of God. Then immediately the Spirit of God drives the sinless Son of God into the wilderness to be tempted by Satan, the arch enemy of all righteousness, a murderer from the beginning, and the father of lies! Ah, but it was necessary for the Son of God to be proven, to be made strong, to overcome in these realms before proceeding on into His glorious ministry and the agony and death of the cross. Before plundering Satan's kingdom He had first to **bind** the strong man!

Do you suppose the devil came to Jesus there as a weird-looking creature, with little, evil-looking horns protruding from his temple, and a pointed tail? How often with our childish and distorted understanding have we pictured Jesus confronted by that legendary figure in the red suit, with fiery red eyes burning from their sockets, a sadistic grin on his countenance, with pitchfork in his hands! This is nought but foolishness, for Satan is spirit, even that *spirit* which now worketh *in* the sons of disobedience (Eph. 2:2). How many times have you been tempted by the devil? Can you count the times? How often has he spoken to you, suggesting, enticing, urging, compelling? Have you ever seen him? Have you sometime heard his audible voice? I think not! Yet — you have sensed his presence, you have heard his voice, you have felt his power! And was it not all within yourself? It was in your *mind*, in your *emotions*, in your *desires*. Does not our Lord, the Spirit of Truth, speak to us in the same way? That still small voice, the inner urging, the inward knowing, the spiritual consciousness and hunger — all from a dimension beyond the natural senses! God speaks from within because He is within. In the same way Satan speaks from within because he is within. God speaks out of our spirit, Satan speaks out of the abyss of our fleshly heart.

Because it is all in our mind, spirit, and heart does not mean that it is imagination or hallucination! In the depths of my spirit I am absolutely certain that there was not some hideous personality *materializing* before the eyes of Jesus in that Judean desert. Remember — Jesus was not only the Son of God, He was also the son of man. Being both He was capable of not only hearing from God, but hearing those things that be of man. So when we speak of that ancient serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, we are not talking about some mighty fallen angel, but that *mind* that savors the things of man — the carnal mind — just as Jesus told Peter when Peter tried to turn the Lord away from fulfilling the will of God for Him, "Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men" (Mat. 16:23). The apostle James put it this way: "But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James 1:14-15). The Moffatt translation reads, "Everyone is tempted as he is beguiled and allured by his own desire, and Desire conceives and breeds sin, while Sin matures and gives birth to death." Everyone has desires of one kind or another, and that really can be quite natural. When we see the word "lust," most Christians think it is used exclusively in a negative, sensual, or sexual context. The word simply means *desire*, and a person's desires are not always adulterous or murderous. One may desire to be wealthy, or famous, or to be a great and popular ministry whom multitudes will acclaim! Even in the things of the spirit one must be keen to discern between his own desire and the desire of the spirit. "Nevertheless, not my will, but Thine, be done." That is where the battle lies, and that is where sin is born.

The record states that after fasting for forty days, Jesus hungered. When you're hungry, what kind of desire do you have? You want to eat! In that crucial moment the Tempter came to Him. He began to feel the physiological pangs of hunger, and then the *thought* occurred to Him. Jesus dropped down from the high and holy thought of God, into the reasoning of the human mind. He descended in consciousness from the Son of God, to the son of man. The suggestion was just this: "I know who I am; I am a manifest Son of God. I have power. No need to walk for miles and perhaps faint from weakness in the heat of the day — I can turn these stones into bread!" And in His natural mind the Voice cunningly urged, "If you are the Son of God, go ahead and do it! Use your sonship powers to fill your belly! Why should you only bless others? Use it to satisfy your own needs and desires!" Jesus quickly discerned that wily Devil and knew how to nip that idea in the bud before it had time to blossom. He got to it before it had time to conceive by entering into union with His will. When the seed of desire and the seed of will join together into one, a conception takes place — this conception makes a baby called Sin! Jesus answered out of the depths of His spirit, "It is written — man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Mat. 4:4). In other words — if my Father speaks and tells me to turn stones into bread, I shall do

so. But if the voice is any other than my Father's voice, I must do only those things which I hear from my Father. That ended the temptation! His will in union with His Father's desire conceived and brought forth the baby of **righteousness!** And with that victory the first coil of the "great chain" of the word of God was wrapped tightly around the "strong man" who needed to be securely "bound" before Jesus could come up out of that wilderness in the **power of the spirit** to begin His **sonship ministry!**

The battle lay not with some mythical personage outside Himself. The conflict was *within*. The voice was an *inner voice*. The suggestion was in His *mind*. its powers in His emotions, desires, and will. God speaks to our mind out of our spirit. Satan also speaks to our mind out of the old fleshly Adamic heart. There is no monster without. There is only the dragon within! There are three things in this vast world, and only three — the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life; briefly, appetite, avarice, and ambition. I do not think you will be able to avoid the conclusion that all the inventions, creations, and contrivances of man are in existence to cater to these three things. It was with these three things that Eve was tempted. She saw the tree was good for food (the lust of the eyes), a tree to be desired (the lust of the flesh), and a tree to make one wise (the pride of life). The temptation was not from without but from within! How remarkably the three temptations of Jesus in the wilderness parallel these three! And when Jesus, as the second man, and the last Adam, had passed the same test Adam and Eve had met in the Garden, that ancient serpent had been securely bound with the chain of truth, cast into the abyss of His human heart, firmly shut up, and a seal set upon him! Oh, yes! That is the mystery! Every temptation of the devil comes to us through the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. There are no others. Not for Adam and Eve, not for Jesus, and not for us!

Let us return to the patriarch Job for a moment, for we see this same principle fulfilled in him. "Now there came a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and *Satan came also among them*" (Job 1:6). May I reverently add that *every time* the *sons of God* present themselves before the Lord — Satan comes *also among them*! It bespeaks of a condition within these sons — *our* mind versus *His* mind, *our* will versus *His* will, *our* ways versus *His* ways. It is a heavenly place within the sons of God wherein we must be tested to show whether we be sons indeed. The devil is not bound on behalf of the unregenerated sinning masses of humanity; he is bound in the life of a man who is becoming an *overcomer*. Now all men will come to that place in God's appointed time, but when you *see* Satan being bound know that an overcomer is being born! This impudent devil of self-will is in every man, and even our Lord Himself surrendered His own will to the Father's, saying, "Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not *my will*, but *Thine*, be done" (Lk. 22:42).

Until every son has been thoroughly tested in all points it is not possible for the sons of God to come and present themselves before the Lord without Satan coming *also* among them. Does he not walk in the natural mind of every man? It is written, "And the Lord said unto Satan, Whence cometh thou? Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro *through the earth*, and from walking up and down in it" (Job 1:7). Now the Lord's questions are never for His own enlightenment. He knew well whence Satan came. Oh, yes, Satan had been walking to and fro throughout the earth — God knew this — for he walks in our earth, even that earth which we are, from the east to the west, from the north to the south, from sea to sea and from pole to pole he walks *in man*, in the earthly places of our souls, in the secret chambers of our minds, in the fleshly motions of our bodies, in the deceitfulness of our hearts; he travels up and down in us from the heights of our heavens to the depths of our hells. There is not a day that he leaves us, for dust is his habitation and his food. All the way to glorification this inner antagonist is present. Of course, the one who operates *within* also manifests and works outwardly through us. All of the "works of the devil" that Jesus spoke of were wrought in and through men. All of them! The seat of Satan is in man, but his manifestation is outward, affecting all things through man and because of man.

Now, what does God do but deliberately hand over Job, the man who God Himself pronounced to be perfect and upright, into the hands of Satan to do his worst upon him, only that he should not touch his life. It was because God desired to *test* Job, just as Adam and Eve were tested in the Garden, and Jesus was tested in the wilderness, that the Lord brought forth "the smith to blow upon the fire." Please note that it was not Satan's idea to persecute poor old Job. Oh, no! It was God Himself who brought up the subject! There Satan was, presenting himself before the Lord, showing up for duty, and God asked, "Where have you been?" Satan replied, "Walking up and down in the earth." There was no mention of Job at all. "Well, Satan," the Lord queried, "have you considered my servant Job? Have you noticed that he fears God and eschews evil? Have you noticed that, Satan?" You can be assured, dear ones, that Satan *had* noticed Job, but he wasn't doing anything to him.

One of the most glorious testimonies of the preservation of the saints of God is given here in this passage by Satan himself. "Doth Job fear God for naught? Hast Thou not made a hedge around him and about his house and about all that he hath on every side?" Praise the Lord! Yes, there truly is a hedge around the people of God, and that hedge is Jesus Christ Himself. The Psalmist recognized and rejoiced in this fact when he said, "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, HE IS MY REFUGE AND MY FORTRESS: my God, in Him will I trust" (Ps. 91:1-2). "You've put a hedge around him," Satan said, "and I can't get to him!" Then he went on to say, "You must put forth **Thine hand** and touch all that he hath, and he will curse Thee to Thy face." The Lord, however, who searcheth the reins and the heart, who knoweth

them that are His, knows who can be trusted with affliction, and will not allow any to be tested beyond what they are able to bear. He therefore said to Satan, "Behold, all that he hath is in thy power — in thy hand — only upon himself put not forth thine hand."

One can only know God by vital relationship with Him. Job KNEW God! Job knew in his deepest heart that God is good, loving, true, righteous, just, omnipotent, omniscient, immutable, and faithful in all His ways. At one point in his trial he exclaimed, "I KNOW that my Redeemer liveth...and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." And again, "I KNOW that Thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from Thee." Being a perfect man Job understood the nature of God, he knew what God is like — how He is. Armed with this knowledge he was unshakable and unmovable as the hand of Satan moved against him. With lightning swiftness the misfortunes fell as tribulation and affliction smote this man of God. All hell broke loose upon him! His possessions were gone. His servants were gone. His cattle, his family, and his dwelling place were as though they had never been. And now he was desperately ill, tormented with pain, and without even a bed to sleep on he lies down in the ashes of what was once his beautiful estate to listen to the relentless arguments of his friends, monotonously attempting by lengthy speeches and elaborate philosophizing to make a fool of him and prove that his present despair was the result of his own sin and disfavor with God. I do not know how many days their debate continued, but such miserable comforters as these are always at hand, ready to attest that those who have entered the furnace of affliction have been bad examples as Christians, they have somewhere failed God, lacking in faith, falling short in revelation, unfaithful to God's purposes, or that they harbor secret sins and so are deserving of punishment. Unless the Lord Himself has convicted them of sin, or unbelief, or disobedience, sufferers should pay no attention whatever to them. "If our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence before God" (I Jn. 3:21).

In one tragic day all Job's earthly wealth and glory had vanished as a mist before the rising sun. But did Job curse God for all this calamity? Did he even curse the Devil? Was he a fair weather saint without spiritual understanding? No, indeed! He rent his mantle, shaved his head, and falling upon the ground, he WORSHIPPED GOD with the unmistakable words of reverence, "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: THE LORD GAVE, AND THE LORD HATH TAKEN AWAY; BLESSED BE THE NAME OF THE LORD!" (Job 1:22). You see, beloved, all the external evidence shouted aloud that God did *not* love Job, that God had *forsaken* him, that God did not *see* him, that God was not *concerned* about what happened to him, and that God wasn't *just*. It seemed that God had now revealed Himself to be *the opposite* of all Job had experienced and known of Him. But, praise God! Job *knew* God! He therefore *knew* that in spite of all the apparent external evidence to the contrary, in spite of how terrible and hopeless things

appeared, God had *not* forsaken him, God *did* love him, God *did* see him, God *was concerned* about what happened to him, God was *in control* of everything, and God was *just*. Ah, this is faith — trusting God's goodness, wisdom, and faithfulness — that ALL is according to His purpose, IN SPITE OF ALL EVIDENCE TO THE CONTRARY! Faith declares with Job, "Though God slay me, yet will I trust Him" — and then after being slain — TRUSTS HIM! Job, stripped of all, tried by fire, tested in the furnace of affliction, found that the key to life is not some creed or doctrinal statement about what we believe *about* God, but that which we *know of Him* by virtue of intimacy of fellowship and vital union with Him. Truly, "the trial of your faith is more precious than gold that perisheth" (I Pet. 1:7).

I am convinced that Job is none other than a picture of God's Christ. The first man Adam walked in the same land of fertility and blessing, the kingdom of heaven on earth, in the quickening presence and shimmering glory of God — but when the adversary appeared and he was put to the test — he flunked the test. But blessed be God! the second man was tested in all points like as we are and — He **passed** the test! When the Lord Jesus told His disciples that He beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven, He was saying that He had seen Satan FALL OUT OF HIS (JESUS') HEAVEN, or actually, Jesus had seen Satan FALL BEFORE HIM and become subservient to Him in the realm of spirit. He had bound the strong man! So far as Jesus was concerned Satan was no longer in possession of any authority whatsoever. Jesus spake not of a historical event, not of some mighty archangel that was expelled from heaven before the foundation of the world, but a living reality that He had seen occur within His own consciousness, life, experience, and ministry. THIS WE ALL MUST SEE AND KNOW if we are to know victory in our lives, if we are to truly walk as the sons of God. We must realize that if Satan has fallen he is not the powerful and formidable head of a mighty kingdom, but a serpent slithering about in the dust realm expressing himself through corrupted flesh. This must be embraced as reality within ourselves. When we realize that Satan has fallen before the Christ within us, then we are ready to be set free! All that remains is for us to lay hold upon that Devil, bind him with the chain of the living word of God, cast him into the pit, shut him up, and set the seal upon him!

Jesus saw Satan as lightning fall from heaven. In chapter twelve of the Revelation Satan is seen being cast out of the heavens of the manchild, the manifest sons of God. He must first be cast out of our heavens, out of our spiritual domain. To those who have Satan yet in their consciousness elevated to a position of power, and who carry on in their thinking an image of him as some god-like formidable foe — HE HAS NOT YET FALLEN, HE HAS NOT YET BEEN CAST OUT OF THEIR HEAVENS. Such people have made a god of him, but in your life, precious one, he is to be cast down, and you are to know once and for all that THERE IS ONLY GOD THAT RULES ALL. When this truth is revealed in power and glory within your life you are well on your way to that blessed heavenly land where

THERE IS NO DEVIL ANYMORE! It is now time for the prince of this world to be cast out, the spirit of blindness in men's minds, which veils the glory of the Christ within. It is time for the Son of man to be glorified. When the life of the spirit is raised up in us SATAN IS BOUND — bound in the presence of the Lord and by the authority, power, and victory of the spirit within! This is the revelation of KINGDOM DOMINION!

The one thing that terrifies the forces of darkness is the fear that someday those who know and believe in Christ will *awaken* to the dynamic potential in the life of the spirit within them and begin to live fully out of that realm. When this happens, the great problems that plague mankind will begin to disappear. Ignorance will go; sin will go; disease will go; limitation will go; Satan will go; death will go; bondage of every sort will fade away and the kingdom of God will be demonstrated in men. What a hope! What a day! The wonder of it all is that this Day is even now breaking in the hearts and lives of God's elect! I proclaim to you that the crisis hour in the history of the world has come, and God's people must now arise and shine and courageously take hold of life and kingdom dominion and bring deliverance to the whole world. Truly, we have come to the kingdom for such a time as this!

Men of God throughout the church age have tasted the earnest and firstfruits of this kingdom dominion, but just as the seed planted eventually produces a harvest of many seeds in which the life *settles*, reproducing in form, quality, and power the original seed, so now the life of the all-triumphant Jesus is settling in fullness of form, quality, and power within the lives of His "many brethren," the sons of God. We who have received the call to sonship are learning, growing, developing and maturing into His dominion within ourselves, the rule of His kingdom raised up within us. We can never understand the deep mystery of kingdom dominion until we clearly see that Jesus does not now enforce His own victory over Satan and His acquisition of All Power on behalf of all creation. If He did, there would be no sin, no darkness, no sickness, no sorrow, no death, and no works of the devil anywhere! Though Jesus truly has all power in heaven and in earth, and has fully and forever overcome sin, Satan, and death within Himself, billions of men still continue to be ravaged by fear, carnality, sin, and death. It is like a boxer who fights the world champion boxer and defeats him. He has defeated him for himself, but no one else has defeated him. Now suppose that the new champion trains every other man to box as he does, and one by one they are developed into world-class boxers and enter into a match with the former world champion and each in turn defeats him. The new world champion's ability has thus been *transferred*, *conveyed*, and *imparted* to all men, making them champions. This is the law of kingdom dominion! This is the law of laying hold on the dragon, binding him, and defeating him! We do not merely glorify the victory, power, and authority of the man Jesus two thousand years ago, but through His Spirit we are brought into the same relationship with God that He knew. Then by the gracious ministry of the sons of God all men shall be ushered

experientially into the same victory! Then Satan will be so bound as not to deceive even the *literal nations* anymore! How awesome is this Day!

The kingdom of God speaks of the sovereign royalty, the absolute domain of God's government ruling in the spirit and by the spirit. The kingdom of God is the rule, the authority, and the power of God fully manifested in the earth in and through a people, kings and priests unto God. It's a pace, a walk, a lifestyle, an experience, a reality, and a ministry in the Spirit of God where the power of all darkness is absolutely dispersed. Satan is bound — every injurious thing shall be bound for a thousand years — that is, bound by the illumination of the presence, glory, and power of God coming upon men in and by the DAY OF THE LORD! The power and authority flowing from the ministry of the manifest sons of God is the dominion of the kingdom of God in the day of the Lord. Within that function of the Spirit the enemy with all his works is bound!

Think about it — when deception is bound in men's lives, when superstition is bound in men's lives, when ungodliness is bound in men's lives, when hatred and strife and violence are bound in men's lives, when darkness and religion and carnal works are bound in men's lives, when sickness, sorrow and pain are bound in men's lives, when carnality and greed and bigotry, are bound in men's lives, when crime and injustice and sins of all kinds are bound in men's lives — what release we will have in the earth! Oh, my soul! Behold the truth that lies hidden here! If Satan were a personage *outside* ourselves, as the church systems teach, then how could binding *him* and casting *him* into a pit change human nature or make men holy? How could removing an external influence bring such life, victory, righteousness, peace, joy, glory, and power into the world of men? Therefore it is of great importance that we see that Satan is indeed *the spirit that now worketh IN the children of disobedience.* Bind *that* spirit, my beloved, and you have broken the power of darkness in man!

"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: **in whom** the god of this world hath blinded the **minds** of them which believe not, lest the **light** of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image (expression and revelation) of God, should shine unto them" (II Cor. 4:3-4). "But even unto this day...the veil is **upon their heart.** Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away" (II Cor. 3:15-16).

Can we not see by reading these instructive statements that if we can effectively express outwardly the reality of the indwelling Christ, the world will *see* God. The Christ is unveiled in and through the members of the Christ body. The good news we are proclaiming is **hid** to those that are lost because the god of this world has blinded their minds and put a veil upon their hearts. The word "lost" is from the Greek *apollumi* meaning "to die or perish." The good news is hid to those

who are still dying or perishing. Are you perishing? Is it not because the good news of life in Christ is still veiled to you — is not living and energetic in your experience? When the power of Christ becomes more operative and energetic in your life than the dragon in your heart, the dragon — the god of this world — will be bound, the scales will fall from your eyes, and the veil will be stripped away from your heart! Then you will be living in what men call "the millennium," in the brightness of the day of the Lord! This wonder is not reserved for some future day, it is a NOW revelation!

It is now time for the prince of this world to be cast out, the spirit of blindness in men's minds, which sets up a barrier to the glory of Christ. Turn, O man, and behold the Lord! See the Lord *as He is* in His temple! The god of this age doesn't want this for any man. The god of this age is old Adam, the outer man, the man of your first birth, the man of flesh, who minds earthly things. It is your manhood, your humanity that doesn't want to fully see the Christ, because for you to really see the Christ is to give up all the reasonings, preconceptions, understanding, knowledge, decisions, and pursuits of the flesh to find the life-source which is the antithesis of SELF. The Adamic mind of selfhood will seek to keep you looking away from the tree of life by every means at its disposal. Contrary to what some New Age Philosophies teach, Self is not the Spirit or the Christ within, for except a man *deny himself* and take up his cross he cannot be a disciple of the Christ. Except a man hate his own life and lay it down He cannot find the Christ. That is what Jesus taught! Self will blind you so that you will not turn to the Lord. Why must the prince of this world be cast out? So that the light of the glory of Christ, who is the very *image (Greek: character)* of God may shine to men! The character is in you, it is in the Christ, in your spirit. When you behold this Christ within the glory of Christ begins to shine and the veil is done away; the character of God is seen by all about. But there is a deep mystery here. If the "god of this world" is the one who blinded your mind, and put the veil upon your heart, does it not follow that HE HAS BEEN BOUND in order for the blindness and the veil to be removed! Oh, yes! When the Christ has sufficiently arisen in your life it is HE who lays hold on the dragon, binds him, and casts him into the pit. Then the Christ shines forth more and more, revealed in all His glorious and eternal reality! And that, my friend, IS THE "MILLENNIUM"!

To be continued...

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