

## CHAPTER XI.

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### *War upon the Powers of Darkness.*

**I**N the path to freedom from deception and possession, the believer discovers the need of **MAKING WAR AGAINST THE POWERS OF DARKNESS**, for the undeceiving and the dispossession which follows, reveals to him the depths of the wickedness of Satan and his hosts of wicked spirits. The believer sees that he must (1) make war against their possession of him; (2) against all their works; and (3) against their deception and possession of others, as well as the need of a perpetual daily fighting against all their onslaughts, which come upon him apart from his giving them ground. The believer who is dispossessed is born into the war, and compelled to fight to maintain his freedom. Just as a child is born into the natural world, and must breathe to maintain life, so there is a birth into the warfare through the sufferings and pains of being undeceived, and delivered from the thralldom of Satan.

Through his aggressive warfare against the foe, the believer understands the systematic workings of the forces of Satan. Through the knowledge gained by reading the symptoms of deception and possession in his own case, he is now able to read them in others, and see their need of deliverance, and finds himself compelled to pray for them, and work toward that goal.

#### AGGRESSIVE AND DEFENSIVE WARFARE

In war, whether natural or supernatural, there are two principles governing the warfare, viz.: aggressive and defensive, *i. e.*, the attacking force must be able to defend itself as well as to take the aggressive against the enemy.

Between the period of undeceiving and dispossessing, the believer learns to know his weak points, and vulnerable parts; and becomes able to recognize the methodical, planned and systematic attacks of the forces of the enemy upon those points. By these attacks, the knowledge of the active operations of the lying spirits, and of the need of unceasing warfare against them, is deepened in him. He knows that he must stand against them daily, or again be entrapped by their wiles, and fall a victim to their wicked devices; for he discovers that even the lesser attacks, which, before the time of his deception and possession, would be unfelt, quickly overwhelm him, and cause him to lose his equilibrium, or spiritual balance, immediately. He knows, therefore, by the lessons of his fight to freedom, that he must ever after be on his guard,\* and watch against the attacks of the subtle foe, whether they come through things around him, or directly—or indirectly—through others, the indirect onslaughts being often the most violent.

During the period of his undeceiving, the eyes of the believer also become open to the supernatural operations of the forces of evil; for just as God is seen by His workings (John xiv. 10, 11), so the powers of darkness are to be recognized by their activities. Both the Divine and Satanic workings are invisible to the physical eye, but the effects are perceptible to him who has the power to read the signs. The one who has been dispossessed, can see how much that others attribute to God's sovereignty is nothing else but the results of the Satanic world-rulers' work. He sees that the primary cause of the apathy and deadness of the Church is Satanic, and that much which has been put down to sin, or the evil nature, is nothing but the work of evil spirits. Hence he must war against the false teaching, which settles down to accept Satanic workings in the world as the "operations of God." Through his own undeceiving his old thoughts about things connected with God, and with Satan, fall to the ground as untested

\* Pages 201, 206.

theories, and he receives two blessings through his undeceiving; *i.e.* (1) a purified "theology," (2) and a true demonology.

#### SOME OF THE RESULTS OF THE UNDECEIVING

The undeceived and dis-possessed believer also becomes intensely practical. He finds that God is "practical." The devil is practical, and man must be practical to join with the One against the other. The believer sees that one of the ways in which the Son of God destroys the work of the devil, is through the instrumentality of prayer, and that he must now live a prayer-life, since prayer is the mightiest weapon against the foe.

Through his undeceiving, the undeceived believer has been made conscious of the actual force which the powers of darkness bring to bear upon and against his tripartite being, and thus learns that all the strength of his redeemed, renewed, and liberated powers—mental, spiritual and physical—must be set against them in order that he may keep at liberty. In the experience he has gone through, he has become more and more conscious of his own spirit, and the need of using it in strength, purity, and power against them. He has also discovered that in the perpetual war which the deceiving spirits wage against him, neither time, place, nor season, are exempt from their attacks. Therefore, wherever he is, whatever he does, whatever state he is in, he must wage equally persistent war upon them. If he finds himself in keen suffering and anguish, he knows that it is "the hour and power of darkness"; and learns by the suffering they cause that they are unmerciful, as well as evil; intensely evil; nothing but evil; aiming at nothing but evil, and with all the power they are able to wield, endeavouring to draw him into evil, doggedly, silently, persistently, wickedly, always at work; actuated by undying hatred and malice against the human race.\* Enemies they are, and will be. What they are they were, and what they

\* Cf. pages 37, 38.

were, they are still—evil, and evil only. Thus he learns and knows that he must resist them and, that the fight to keep his spirit strong, pure and buoyant for victory over them needs all the force of his being, in the power of God, to enable him to be victorious.

#### THE BELIEVER FINDS HE IS AT WAR WITH ALL HELL

In the discovery of the wickedness and hatred of the supernatural powers of evil against him, the believer learns he is not fighting against the intelligence of one supernatural being, but against principalities and powers, with vast resources at their command, and that IF HE STANDS VICTORIOUS AGAINST THEIR WILES, HE HAS CONQUERED, NOT ONLY ONE EVIL SPIRIT, BUT ALL HELL. He finds that the powers of darkness will not allow one single believer to be victor over them, until they as a whole (Ephes. vi. 12) have failed to conquer him. Hence their onslaught on him who elects to be victorious over them all, in vital union with the Victor Lord, Who put them to open shame through His death on the Cross of Calvary.\*

The believer is called to triumph over all the powers of darkness, but to reach the goal he must put on the whole armour of God, and lay hold of Divine strength, truth, righteousness, peace, faith, the mighty sword of the Scriptures, watchfulness and prayer. This armour, and the weapons belonging to it, will enable him to "stand against all" the wiles of Satan. If he stands, all heaven sees it; if he is defeated, all hell knows it. If he triumphs, the hosts of darkness are not only conquered, but discouraged, and rendered less effective in their schemes. The believer who would overcome such a disciplined and pertinacious foe, will never dare put his armour by, or give himself to careless work, for he finds that the foe is as tenacious and desirous to conquer as he himself is. But he who fully knows the foe and the warfare, and its eternal issues, finds his joy in the joy of war against an enemy devastating the earth, and the joy of victory, as a

\* Cf. pages 183, 198, 206.

foretaste of the future triumph with the Lord Christ over all His foes. (Heb. x. 13; 1 Cor. xv. 25, 26).

It is essential to study the powers of darkness from the point of view of their depraved nature. \* To be conquered, or to lose a point, is torment to them, for the fallen nature, both of men and angels, rebels against confessing itself vanquished. In the days of Christ, to be driven out of their hiding places, commanded to go, and thus be deprived of rest, was to demons "torment" before their time (see Matt. viii. 29). They are being thus tormented by any truth made known about them to-day. The truth concerning them and their workings, with its consequent liberation of men from their power, is disturbing their rest at the present time, and what happened when Christ was on earth, will happen again when the casting out of evil spirits will become a recognized part of all Christian and ministerial activity. † The Gospels record how Satan and his minions objected to Christ's presence on earth, for He moved about as the Victor, and they were shown to be the vanquished ones.

#### THE USE OF CHRIST'S AUTHORITY OVER THE POWER OF THE ENEMY

The believer who has thus learnt, through fire, the real schemes and workings of the Satanic forces, and realizes that he must make war upon them for his own defence, as well as for the liberation of others, now discovers that Christ has given authority over "all the power of the enemy" (Luke x. 19) to all who will lay hold of it, as part of the finished redemption of Calvary. That in union with Him He gives the believer power to wield His Name, and in His name to have authority to cast out demons. This was one effect of the enduement of power upon the believers of the early Church. Christ said, on the eve of His Cross, "Hitherto ye have asked nothing in My name." But after Pentecost they wielded the Name, and found the Spirit of God witness to its authority. "Such as I have, I

\* Pages 36 and 38. † Cf. pages 29, 43, 44.