

## **BINDING THE STRONG MAN.**

**"No man can come into a strong man's house and spoil his goods except he will first bind the strong man, and then he will spoil his house." – Mark 3:27.**

THESE WORDS were spoken in answer to the charge of the Pharisees that Jesus was casting out devils by the power of Satan, the prince of demons. Our Lord first showed how unreasonable was the charge that Satan had taken to opposing himself. His argument is that if that be true it would imply that Satan's power was tottering to a fall, if it was necessary for him to thus work against his own plans and arrangements, associates, etc. This does not imply that Satan will never be so cornered as to find it necessary to do good works in order to deceive if it were possible the very elect, but it does imply that when that time shall come, and the Adversary shall favor good works, the healing of diseases, casting out of devils, etc., it will be a sure indication that his kingdom is tottering. We believe that this is the case to some extent at the present time – that Satan has much to do with various faith healings that are done by Christian Science, Spiritualism, Hypnotism, etc.

But our Lord's argument was to the contrary of all this – that he was not casting out devils as the minion of Satan, but on the contrary that he was opposing Satan. Then he used the words of our text, which imply that he was already binding Satan, already spoiling his goods. Satan's control of mankind was certainly interfered with when our Lord cast out the demons and gave power and authority to his disciples to do the same throughout Palestine. This our Lord declared was a sign that a stronger one than Satan was at work. Satan was indeed powerful and had taken possession of the world and was exercising a great influence therein, and the fact that now he was interfered with to

any extent and demons were cast out proved that he had met one more powerful than himself, and that the time of the complete overthrow of his dominion would come.

This text then is analogous to and in harmony with another which declared, "Now is the prince of this world cast out." Our Lord again declared, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." Our Lord had come into the world for the very purpose of mastering Satan, and in order to vanquish him he had consecrated his life even unto death, that by means of death he might destroy death and him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. God had accepted the consecration, the sacrifice, and had granted our Lord the anointing of the Spirit at his baptism, and it was under the power and influence of this Spirit that he declared that as the Finger of God he cast out demons. However, the work of destroying Satan's house was not intended to go on to a rapid completion, but rather that merely the power of the Anointed One should be demonstrated for our comfort and joy and faith, and that he should be permitted to control the world for a time further, until the full end of this Gospel age, when his binding will be gradually accomplished and will be followed by the liberating of the whole world from his chains of error with which he has deceived all nations.

In Matthew 24:43 our Lord uses somewhat similar language, but applies it not to his own day but to the end of the age. He speaks of his second advent as being unknown to the world and therefore to them as a **[R3784 : page 167]** thief in the night, unexpected. He intimates that such a secrecy respecting the time is essential; that if it were generally known to the world the divine plan and arrangement in respect to the end of the age would be foiled. To the Church it would be given to know the times and seasons, through the holy Spirit enlightening their understanding respecting the Word of Truth uttered through the apostles and prophets of old for our admonition. But none of the

wicked would understand, only the wise, the truly wise with the wisdom that cometh from above, the consecrated. So far as the world would be concerned, its great ones, its master minds in Church and in State, in business, in finances, would all be surprised in the end of this age. The Master would be present as a thief in the night to take, first of all, his "jewels," his Bride, his saints, and then to utterly spoil, overthrow, the affairs of this present time, that on the ruins thereof he might speedily set up his everlasting Kingdom of righteousness.

"Ye brethren are not in darkness" – that day has not overtaken you as a thief, though it will thus overtake all the world. (I Thess. 5:3,4.) The thief-like work of taking the Church is already in progress; by and by it will all be completed, and shortly thereafter – 1915 – the kingdoms of this world, with all of their associated institutions, will go down in a climax of trouble such as the world has never known, because after gathering his Bride class the Lord will execute judgments upon Babylon.

At that time Satan will be bound that he should deceive the nations no more until the thousand years are finished. – Rev. 20:3.

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### **THE ANGEL OF GETHSEMANE.**

'Twas midnight, and the Man of Sorrows took his chosen three,  
And sought with weary step the shelter of Gethsemane  
To pray, his soul exceeding sorrowful, e'en unto death,  
And heavy laden with the sin and woe of all the world.  
In agony of bloody sweat he fell upon his face,  
And cried, with tears, "My God, my Father, if it be thy will,  
Oh, let this cup of shame and numbering with transgressors pass,  
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*If it be possible!* Yet, not my will, but thine be done!"  
And then his thoughts turned to the sacrifice, – a fear bore down  
With agonizing weight upon his heart, lest to comply  
With every jot and tittle of the Law, he might have *failed!*  
He saw the priestly type, he knew eternal death awaited,  
Should he seek to pass the second vail unworthily.  
*Eternal death!* Oh, anguish inexpressible, – to see  
No more his Father's face! He sought his well-beloved three,  
Perchance they might refresh his fainting heart with some sure  
word  
Of prophecy. Alas, their eyes were heavy and they slept.  
Three times he sought them, and three times *in vain!* Yet he was  
heard  
In that he feared. The Father sent a *heavenly* comforter  
To touch with tender, strengthening hand that dear, devoted  
head,  
And whisper, "I the Lord in righteousness have called thee, I  
Will hold thine hand and keep thee, neither shalt thou *fail* nor be  
Discouraged.' Lo, thou art 'a priest *forever*, and a king  
Upon thy throne, like to Melchizidek.' And *thou shalt see*  
*The travail of thy soul, and shalt be satisfied.*" His heart  
Revived, he knew his Father's faithful word could never fail;  
He knew it would accomplish that whereunto it was sent.  
He rose, and from that hour went forth to trial and to death,  
In peace, – a calmness born of perfect confidence in God.

How oft, throughout the many-centuried "night" of this dark age,  
The Father's "little ones" have knelt in sad Gethsemane  
To pray! E'en now the Garden's shade re-echoes with the cry  
Of God's elect, "*How long*, oh Lord, how long until we see  
The travail of our soul? How long until thou shalt avenge  
Thine own elect, who cry to thee, with tears, both night and  
day?"

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Dear Lord, oh, use *me* as the angel in Gethsemane!  
Oh, fill me with thy holy Spirit of divinest love!  
Oh, make me sympathetic, *wise*, that every anguished heart  
May come, nor seek in vain for consolation from thy Word,  
And strengthened, comforted, go forth to prison and to death,  
To suffer patiently the cruel mockings of the tongue;  
To bear the cross unto the bitter end, then calmly say,  
"Tis finished," and *with faith unwavering pass beneath "the  
vail!"*

– *G. W. Seibert*, May 6, 1906.

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