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## **"PERILOUS TIMES SHALL COME"**

**"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come."  
– 2 Tim. 3:1.**

WE ARE to distinguish clearly between the restraint of the fallen angels "in chains of darkness," and the binding of Satan, who is the Prince of demons. The binding of Satan, as the Scriptures set forth, is at the second coming of Christ: "And He laid hold of the dragon, that Old Serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years." (Rev. 20:2.) And during that thousand years Christ and His saints shall reign as Kings and Priests unto God. The restraint of the inferior angels is mentioned by St. Peter and St. Jude. Speaking of these fallen angels, St. Peter says, "Which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah." – 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6; I Pet. 3:20.

As we examine the Scriptures we see that there were angels of light who became disobedient, who left their primary estate as angels, and sought to become men, who assumed the human form. We find the record of them in Gen. 6:1-4: "The sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose." There were children born to them. "And there were giants in the earth in those days,... mighty men which were of old, men of renown." Then the whole world was filled with wickedness more than during the sixteen hundred preceding years. And God swept away all mankind except those saved in the ark.

## **SPIRITS SEEK TO MAKE VOID THE WORD OF GOD**

The Apostle proceeds to show what was done with the angels who fell. They have less power, less privilege, than formerly. Then, they had the power of materialization, and could not only eat and drink, but perform all the functions of men. After the flood they were restrained

in chains of darkness; that is to say, they were restrained from materialization and from working their power in light, as they had previously done. However, they were still working, as when Saul sought the witch of Endor to inquire as to how the battle would go. – I Sam. 28:7-20.

The Prophet Isaiah says we should not have anything to do with those "who peep and mutter" and who pretend to have communication with the dead. (Isa. 8:19.) But these fallen angels seek to make void the Word of God; hence the various personations of the dead, as in the case of Samuel to Saul. It is not to be supposed that Samuel would come and give the information which God had said that Saul should not have. The same principle applies down to our day. The fallen angels have not been able to do their work except as they have gotten possession of *human bodies* by getting possession of their *wills*.

So we read in the New Testament that there are many possessed – not of devils, but of demons. Of these demons various accounts are given. When our Lord addressed the man who dwelt among the tombs, the Lord inquired, "What is thy name?" and the answer was, "Legion; for we are many." Not only one evil spirit had gotten into the man, but a host of them. When Jesus commanded them to come out of the man, they asked that they might go into the herd of swine. Jesus permitted them to go; and the swine ran down into the sea and were choked. It is recognized as a fact that swine are not easily stampeded. You could whip one of the swine, but if you want them to move, you must whip every one of them. Yet there were enough demons to enter the whole herd of swine.

The fallen spirits seem to be thoroughly degraded in their appetites and desires. And while they prefer to obsess human beings, yet, rather than have no animal body at all, they prefer, as shown in the foregoing, to have the bodies of swine. No doubt our Lord knew what the result would be. It was intended to give illustration as to what are valuable things for us to know: First, as to the number of evil spirits

indicated by the number in the herd of swine; and, secondly, to demonstrate that they have no power to enter even into dumb animals, to show that poor, dumb creatures are free from them, and to demonstrate that they cannot trouble us, except as we permit them, or tamper with, or allow our minds to come under their hypnotic or obsessing influence.

## **MODERN UNBELIEF IN EVIL SPIRITS**

And there are similar illustrations. On one occasion the evil spirits spoke out, and when the Apostle Paul could stand it no longer, he rebuked them. In the case mentioned above, the man was clothed and in his right mind, sane enough, when rid of the evil influence. (Mark 5:2-5,15,19,20.) So it has been ever since. There are physicians who tell us that more than one-half of all those in insane asylums are there because of obsession by evil spirits. But there are many physicians who do not believe in evil spirits or in obsession.

When the Apostles were sent out by our Lord, they returned to Jesus, saying, "Even the evil spirits are subject unto us through Thy name." (Luke 10:17.) Those who deny the Scriptures say that these people were deceived, and that our Lord was unscientific. Our holding is the reverse of this – that the Lord and the Apostles were scientific, and that the people of our day are deceived in supposing that there are no evil spirits. We see these operating today, sometimes foretelling the future, clairaudiently, so that mediums are able to hear and to **[R4976 : page 65]** know things that others about them are not able to hear and know. God's people should be on guard, lest they come under evil influences. We have known some people who have come under this power.

There was a brother in Florida who held conversation with the evil spirits and explained to them the Bible; and he thought he was about to convert some. They gave very respectful attention for awhile and asked questions which he answered. But after awhile they seemed to have their curiosity satisfied, and talked in all sorts of vulgar

language. The brother said he could not get rid of them. He wrote to us asking how to do so. We told him to exercise his will, and meantime to offer prayer to the Lord, as the only One who could rid him of the evil spirits. They finally left him. Their hold was broken. A lady who was a writing medium supposed that it was some dead friend writing through her. She came to believe that there were evil spirits taking hold of her hand to do this writing, and refused to have anything more to do with the matter.

### **FALLEN SPIRITS REGAINING THEIR LIBERTY**

The question may be asked as to how it will be in the closing time of this Age. The Apostle tells us that these evil spirits are to be restrained until the judgment of the Great Day. What would seem to be implied? We answer that this is the Day of Christ, the thousand-year Day. As He has been dealing with the Church, so in the thousand years He will deal with the world. Messiah's Kingdom is the Kingdom for which we pray, "Thy Kingdom come!" The Apostle says that the fallen angels are restrained in chains of darkness *until* the Great Day. And so we find at this very time, this very Day, not only evidences of the inauguration of the New Dispensation – the blossoming of the wilderness, the electric light, and all the blessings belonging to this New Dispensation – but also the evidences that these fallen spirits are obtaining more liberty. We have reason to believe, on what we think reliable information, that there have been materializations.

Spiritualists claim that, more and more, spirits will exercise this power of materialization. They say that it will be only a little while until the dead will be walking around amongst the living. And materialization is only one of the powers which they can use. It is the fallen angels who are representing themselves as dead humans, in order to deceive and operate contrary to the Divine arrangement and Plan; and these are still working as adversaries of God and opponents of righteousness. We should not be much surprised if there are some very startling things – very wonderful things – to happen in the near

future. If we get any conception of the time before the flood, we realize that the earth was full of violence. God perceived that the thoughts of men's minds were evil and only evil. And so today.

The Apostle tells us that in the dawning of this New Dispensation and the closing of this Gospel Age, men shall be truce-breakers – violent. He proceeds with an entire list. (2 Tim. 3:1-5.) This description is prophetic, we believe, of the time in which we are living. And this condition, we think, will be due largely to the evil spirits, just as in the days of Noah. Our Lord, giving an illustration of how things will be at His second coming, says that it will be as in the days of Noah – people will be eating and drinking, planting, etc. He mentions that people will be ignorant of the time of His coming; that as the flood came suddenly, so would come the time of the ushering in of the New Dispensation. Our thought is that probably there will be a good deal of similarity – not that the evil spirits will be able to break the bands, or chains, which have been put upon them, but that it will be part of God's Plan to let this happen. God has been restraining these evil spirits during the four thousand years since the flood.

### **KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH A SAFEGUARD**

Speaking of ourself: if we were living today under the ordinary knowledge of mankind in general, and no more, we feel sure that we should not be able to maintain our position as a Christian. Our faith might waver; we might not be able to believe in the existence of God. But we think the hour is coming when there will be a test of this kind. Mankind will have reason to doubt whether there is any other God than nature, which is a very cruel god. Many are coming to believe even now that the Lord is merely a God of nature, and by processes of *evolution* has been creating the race in the earth. These will certainly come to a place where there will be a severe trial of faith.

Already many are falling; many are standing aloof from God and the Bible. Incidentally, the Lord describes that time when He says He will proceed to "do His work, "*His strange work*" – the procedure

which will seem most [R4977 : page 65] strange to mankind, causing great trials and difficulties to come upon the earth and upon the nominal Church systems and all who have identified themselves with nominal Church Christianity. Many will be thus caused to lose all faith. We know to expect these things and we have, therefore, blessing and keeping-power now. And perhaps we shall need this special help *more* in the next few years. Who can say?

We can readily suppose that our Adversary will have increased power as this time of trouble comes on. We can suppose that the evil work which will be done will be done by Satan and his fallen angels, who will exercise a very baneful influence upon humanity. Some cases have been brought to our attention recently. One was a statement about a person who had had a picture manifestation. When the picture was developed, it showed a man who had been dead for some time. It is evident, then, that the evil spirits are able to exercise some influence which can produce a picture upon a camera. Another case drawn to our attention was that of a person who has "seen things." This person thoroughly believes that he has seen the things with his own eyes. How could this be so? We may not know all the powers which the evil spirits may be able to use, as, for instance, with those who are clairvoyant and are able to see at a distance. We have all heard of mesmerism – that a person under this spirit control would be able to tell accurately things taking place at a distance. This power was tested by having a person do certain things at a certain time; and the person under the influence of the evil spirits was able to fully describe the things that were taking place. We are not sure how these things were done. The person must have seen the thing pictured in the brain in some manner beyond our comprehension. We assume that it must have been the fallen angels who could give this picture upon the brain of the medium, who could give the medium the things she would see. In our dreams we see people walk and hear them talk. And if we could have such things given *naturally*, we can easily suppose the power the evil spirits could have in this matter. This does not, however, make us understand the philosophy of it.

To what extent these things will be used in the future, we know not. We have no doubt that the things which will be permitted will be very startling. Even to [R4977 : page 66] those who have the right understanding of the Divine Plan of the Ages, the things which will be permitted will be very strange. We are prepared for almost anything that might be told. We are convinced of the power of these evil spirits who pretend to do these various things. In fact, we can see that while materialization would be possible to them, a representation upon the mind would be much easier; it would be easier to paint a picture upon the brain.

The Lord's people should have on at all times the whole armor of God that they may be able to stand in this particularly evil day.

