

Msg #127 of Scripture Beneath The Surface

“Until Seven Times Passes Over”

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Hello! Thanks for being with us. Before we get started today, I would like to take a minute to explain our policy concerning CDs and transcripts of the messages we bring to you. Just in case it isn't completely clear, I want to emphasize to you that if you hear a message that you especially like, you can request it from us free of charge. There is no charge for shipping and handling, and we will gladly send out the CDs and transcripts at no cost. When we began broadcasting, we at first thought we would charge a nominal fee for each CD, but in just a few short weeks all of us here at Preparation Ministries came to the conclusion that God didn't want us to do that. Therefore, we decided that as long as God enabled us we would send out the CDs and transcripts free of charge. It is now going on into our third year of broadcasting, and we have been able to send out many CDs and transcripts to those who listened to our program, Scripture Beneath The Surface. At first we wondered how long we could afford to do this. We don't wonder anymore. God has supplied, and we believe he will continue to do so. So, we want to make it absolutely clear that if there is a message you hear, and would like a personal copy of that message, or if you would like a copy of that message to share with someone else, it is yours for the asking. Please do not hesitate to contact us. When you write to us or call, it encourages us to continue the Ministry, and, in addition, it lets us know that the radio station in that particular area is reaching people. It gives us a way to monitor our effectiveness. Our hope is to reach as many people as possible with what God has laid on our hearts. So feel free to contact us. We don't expect donations. We just want to be there for you the best we can.

Now, let's move along and get into today's subject. I'd like to talk about rebellion. You know, that rebellion that started with Satan sometime in the distant past before we were created. The thing I'd like to zero in on today is how rebellion is central to the concept of God being

omnipotent, to him being the absolute power, to him being the unquestioned Almighty God. As a Christian, we don't have any problem recognizing God as being almighty. We know that there is no greater power than God. However, sometimes I believe that current day Christians do not realize the magnitude of God's power, nor comprehend the overall significance of Satan's rebellion.

But just think of the implications of God not being 100% right. Think of what the impact would be on Christianity if there was any power whatsoever in Satan, or in any people of earth, and that power did not specifically come from God himself. If there was even one tiny thing that had power without that power being specifically given by God, then God would not be almighty. He would not be omnipotent. He would not be the one and only power. The very concept of God requires that God is not just very powerful, or that God is one of the powers in the universe, but that he is the only power. There's a big difference between a God who is the only power, and a God who just has a lot of power. The God I serve, and I'm sure the God you serve, is the only power in the universe.

Now, sometimes we misinterpret this concept when we recognize that many people on earth, let alone Satan himself, exercise power. Kings exercise power. Presidents exercise power. Satan has demonstrated power. However, the mistake that Christians sometimes make is in thinking that the power originated with that person, or that Satan's power was something he created within himself. Sometimes people think that Satan had some kind of power within himself, and that because of this he rebelled against God. This is an error of thought, because Satan has no power whatsoever that is not given by God.

Stop and think about this. God is the creator of all things. There is nothing that exists that God did not create. If you have a talent for playing the piano, where did it come from? It's simple enough to realize that you can't even have a talent for something unless God enabled you in the first place to have that talent. Just imagine thinking yourself having the talent to play the piano. How are you going to do that without fingers? If you think you have developed a skill to play the piano, think about how you would play the piano without having eyes to read the music, or ears to hear what you play. Think about how you could even play if you didn't have any nerve endings on your fingers to feel the touch of the keys. Besides all this, how would you play the piano if you didn't have a mind? And how can you comprehend in your mind to play the piano, if God hadn't created your mind to understand the very concept of a piano in the first place?

This may seem like overkill to you. But you must realize that even your very awareness of being alive has to be God-given. If the Bible tells us that God created all things, then one of the most diabolical lies ever conceived is that there is something which exists that God did not create. Therefore, it is absolutely positively impossible to have any kind of power, or any amount of power, without God creating that power, and without God specifically giving that power to you to use. It would be stupid. You have to be about as dumb as a brute beast in order to think that you possess something that God did not create, and that God did not give to you. If you think

that you somehow have some power that God has not authorized you to have, then you are making the same mistake that Satan made in the beginning of his rebellion against God. Now, don't let me lose you. And please, don't think this is not important. But, you can best understand the Bible and its purpose when you completely understand the concept of God being the one and only power. In the beginning of Satan's rebellion, the devil clearly demonstrated his ignorance of this simple fact. When God claimed to be all powerful, Satan had the audacity to question God's word. He might not have stated it this way, but just imagine him saying something like, "HmMMMMM! I don't know. Maybe God is all powerful, and then again, maybe he isn't. HmMMMMM! Maybe I've got some power in myself, and I can be like God. After all, God says he is the one and only power, but maybe that's not true. Maybe that's not right at all. Maybe God is claiming to be something he's not. HmMMMMM! I think I'll start using my own power, and then I can be like God. I can ascend up on high. I can be like the most high God."

Now, this is some pretty silly conversation. But in essence, this is specifically what Satan did. He questioned God's rightfulness. He questioned whether God was really righteous. In essence, whether he was right or wrong. Satan was actually saying that God was not righteous, because he was not right. Satan was saying that God was wrong when he claimed to be the all powerful God. Satan was claiming that although God was very powerful, yet he was not all powerful.

You see, this is the same mistake that Christians make many times. They think that God being all-powerful does not mean that God is the only power. But the concept of being all-powerful, of being the almighty God, requires that God is therefore the only power that exists.

When Satan began to reason within his own mind that he himself had any power which had not been specifically created by God, nor had been explicitly authorized by God, it was an error of stupidity. And, it demonstrated, now get this, it demonstrated Satan's inability to comprehend truth in a reasonable manner. It demonstrated an animalistic quality of thinking instead of demonstrating a thinking mind. Basically, Satan was acting with about as much sense as a brute beast. He had the audacity to think that he could be something in himself without being empowered by God.

Now, I've referred to this concept in prior messages, and have used the example of King Nebuchadnezzar, who was King of Babylon. In the book of Daniel we have the description of Nebuchadnezzar claiming that his great kingdom was established by the strength of his own power. This is a true historical record concerning Daniel and King Nebuchadnezzar, but it is much more than that. Not only is it a true historical record, but it is also symbolic of a much greater overall concept. What happened to King Nebuchadnezzar was that he was turned into a beast until, as the Bible describes it, seven times passed over him. This is extremely important, for this record of King Nebuchadnezzar is also a shadow picture, a symbolism, a physical event which describes a spiritual pattern, which can only be clearly seen in the spiritual realm. Because we are human beings, we cannot readily communicate in the spirit realm. Therefore God gives us shadow pictures, which are a symbolic representation of the spiritual concept. By looking at the symbolic description, we can more clearly comprehend the spiritual thing it is describing.

Now, here's the best part. King Nebuchadnezzar was the symbolic representation in the physical realm, and Satan is the spiritual equivalent of King Nebuchadnezzar. Just as King Nebuchadnezzar was King of Babylon, Satan is the King of Great Babylon. Come on now, stay with me. See if you can grasp this. You understand the story of how King Nebuchadnezzar attributed his power to himself, to his own hands. It is this very same thing, it is exactly this same thing, that took place with Satan. Satan looked at himself and decided that his power was from himself instead of being God given. He, Satan, was lifted up in pride. He became self conscious instead of God conscious. He started to look at himself with admiration. He began to think that he himself had something that existed without God giving it. Think of it. Satan acted with the brainpower of a beast. He acted with as much sense as an animal. He didn't use the reasoning power that God had created him to use, but he took his eyes off of God, and began to focus on himself. When he did that, it was the most ignorant thing he could do.

Now, what God did to King Nebuchadnezzar, was to represent symbolically what transpired at the beginning of Satan's rebellion. It was this same self centered focus that caused Satan's stumbling block, which also caused King Nebuchadnezzar's foolishness. Both King Nebuchadnezzar and Satan did exactly the same thing. And, the most interesting part of this is that God brought about the same response for both of them. God turned King Nebuchadnezzar into a beast until seven times had passed over him. God also did the same thing to Satan. God turned Satan into a beast, and Satan has been transformed into a beast until God's span of seven times has been accomplished.

Now, pause and think about this. Let it sink in. If you can grasp this, if you can comprehend this, that Satan is the spiritual equivalent represented by King Nebuchadnezzar, and that Satan is experiencing that same beast experience that King Nebuchadnezzar experienced, and if you can see this with your spiritual eyes, then you will be able to grasp the whole biblical concept of Satan as a beast in the Bible's historical record, and in the specific prophecies concerning Satan's beast nature. It is by understanding the connection with Satan's beast nature that the whole of revelation prophecy unfolds.

In the book of Daniel, we see that King Nebuchadnezzar was taken from his high and lofty position and made to become a beast, and to think in terms of an animal, and to exist like an animal exists. Satan had a position in heaven that was high and lofty. Just as King Nebuchadnezzar had the highest position on earth in his day, Satan had the highest position in heaven next to God. Satan, like King Nebuchadnezzar, was lifted up in pride. Therefore, God has determined to show Satan that it is not by the strength of anyone's own hand that empowers them, but that it is God who is the power and empowers all those who have it. Satan is being taught the same lesson that King Nebuchadnezzar was taught. At the end of seven times King Nebuchadnezzar's comprehension returned to him. At that time he lifted up his eyes unto heaven and realized what had happened to him. He then acknowledged that the God of heaven was truly the power, and that he himself had acted as a dumb animal, a brute beast that could not properly reason and comprehend that God truly was the one and only power.

When the timing of seven times has passed over, according to God's timetable, Satan's ability to reason will return to him also. At that time he will look up to God, and recognize that it is God, and only God, who has any power. And, he will realize that God sets up and takes down according to his own will. Of course, it will be too late for Satan at that day, and he will be cursed forever because he rebelled against God. But he will fully realize that to rebel against God is to act very foolishly, like a beast would act. When Satan's understanding returns to him, he will realize that his rebellion was the craziest idea anyone could ever come up with.

God has given us the book of Daniel so that we might more clearly understand the pattern of heavenly things. And if we can understand the pattern of heavenly things, then we can more easily comprehend the prophecies given to us in Scripture. Satan, at this current time, is a beast. Just as King Nebuchadnezzar was turned into a beast until seven times had passed over him, Satan has also had his angelic nature taken away and has been given a beast nature until seven times has passed over him. Now, whether these seven times are 7000 years, or from another time perspective of God, we don't know. I personally believe that the seven times that passed over King Nebuchadnezzar was probably seven months or seven years, or something like that. But I believe the seven times that will pass over Satan is a much greater and more lengthy time. In fact, I strongly suspect that the seven times that are passing over Satan in his current beast existence is 7000 years. This overall perspective would coincide with the concept of there being approximately 6000 years since the creation of Adam and Eve, and that the additional 1000 years which occur during the millennial reign of Christ, will bring us to the end of that 7000 years. Whether or not this is actually so, or not, I don't really know. However, it's an interesting possibility. But, let God be the judge. At any rate, we are in the last days, and we will soon find out, one way or another.

However, what I do know for certain, is that the concept of Satan being turned into a beast, is central to our earthly experience in our flesh and blood existence. Satan is described frequently in Scripture as an animal. He was the serpent in the Garden of Eden. Notice that the Bible describes him as being more deceptive than all the other animals. No, not more deceptive than the other people, or other angels, but more deceptive than the other animals. It is the animal nature that deceives us. We are flesh and blood. But it is flesh and blood which is subject to temptations. Flesh and blood will not inherit the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, in order to escape eternal damnation, we must allow our old original fleshly man to be crucified, and we must be born again in spirit. We are born again Christians, and therefore do not have the mindset anymore of thinking that we can be something within ourselves. We no longer think like brute beasts. When we receive the truth of God, and gladly accept the concept that it is only God who is mighty, and it is only God who has power, and that whatever God says is true and right, then we truly became born again in spirit, and we put off that stupid ignorant animal nature. When we accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, we started using good reason. We stopped acting like animals. The life we now live, we live in the spirit.

However, on earth, the animal nature is still a very strong force. We must remember that both animals and mankind were created on the sixth day of creation. The question remains for each

man on earth whether or not he will reject the animal nature and choose to put on the spirit nature of Christ. When we are born again in spirit, we become one with God who is spirit. Therefore, if anyone rejects God, they are, in essence, choosing to remain as brute beasts. And brute beasts act like brute beasts. Don't be fooled by the temptation to act like an animal. If you give into the temptation to think that you can trust in your own power instead of the almighty power of God, then you may end up some day realizing that you were also turned into an animal until, seven times has passed over you.

You know, the animal concept is more central to the Bible than Christians may think. We know that humans were commanded by God from the very beginning that we were to rule over animals. We humans have a love hate relationship with animals. By this I mean that we love animals that are submissive to us, such as the case of puppies and kittens , but we hate the thought of being attacked by a tiger or bitten by a snake.

Now, humans are the superior creation, and it is the animals which must conform to our human wishes. Otherwise, there is no harmony between humans and animals. I would hate to think of being dominated by animals. It's bad enough just having to put up with humans who sometimes act like animals.

No, we don't like it when we feel threatened by animals, or by people who act like them. And that's because God has given us the mindset that we definitely are superior, and we don't like to think that it might change. Animals are nice when they are non-threatening, but animals were never meant to dominate us.

But, the animal concept began before the earth was created. Satan clearly acted like an animal, refusing to submit to God's authority. And, in his attempt to assert his own authority, Satan drew a third of the other angels away with him. Now, the interesting part of this is that the Bible tells us that Satan used a certain tool to convince the other angels to rebel against God. The Bible tells us in Revelation 12:4 that the tool Satan used was his tail. Did you hear that? Satan used his tail to convince the other angels to rebel against God. Now, if that's not starting out rebellion with the beast concept, I don't know what is. Anyway, just try pondering that for awhile, and you might very well begin to see some interesting insights into Biblical prophecy, and might be better able to understand the correlation between King Nebuchadnezzar's temporary experience as an animal, and the Bible's portrayal of Satan as a beast. There's more to it than you might think.