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Our Invisible Enemies

*O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that
you should not obey the truth?*

—Galatians 3:1

In 1963, the first year I was in the United States, I was invited to become pastor of a Pentecostal congregation in Seattle, Washington. I was a bit naive in those days and unaccustomed to many of the things that go on in American church life. The invitation said that all twelve members of the board had unanimously agreed to invite me. So my wife, Lydia, and I packed up our belongings and took the journey to Seattle from Minneapolis (where we lived at the time).

When we arrived in Seattle, I discovered that the twelve members of the board were the only people left who still attended on Sundays! Furthermore, after just one month, all of them had resigned except one. My wife and I found ourselves in the midst of an extraordinary situation. This congregation had been filled with a couple hundred very good Pentecostals, baptized in the Spirit. They wanted to do right; they were not a bunch of wicked backsliders. As I met them, they were very respectful toward me. But it was like they were dazed. It didn't matter what I did or said; there was no real response. It was a baffling situation.

Lydia was a tremendous woman of prayer. Together we prayed, "God, You've got to show us what's wrong with these people." The Lord clearly directed me to Galatians 3:1. "*Who has bewitched you?*" Reading that passage really challenged my theology. I thought, *Pentecostals? Tongue-speaking, water-baptized believers—bewitched?* This called for further investigation.

I found out that the wife of the previous pastor had fallen in love with one of the board members, and he with her. They then engineered a scheme by which the wife

divorced the pastor. The board member divorced his wife, and the pastor's wife married the board member. The pastor, now her former husband, moved out of the area and, unfortunately, fell away from the faith. His ex-wife became, in effect, the new pastor of the church—until I arrived. This woman seemed to control the congregation just with her eyes. I was told afterwards that every time there was an issue in the church, she would say, "Now, how many of you are for me? Put your hand up." Anybody that didn't raise their hand got one of her penetrating stares. She had them mesmerized.

Once we had identified the problem, we immediately knew that we were to enter into prayer. As a result, some wonderful things happened in that congregation. But that experience opened a whole new dimension of the spirit realm to me in a very personal way. When Paul said, "*Who has bewitched you?*" he wasn't just using a figure of speech. Paul was talking about spiritual reality.

Invisible Enemies

It is a very dangerous situation to have powerful and active enemies working against you and not even be aware that you have those enemies. As Christians, the enemies we face are not persons of flesh and blood; they are invisible spirit beings. The themes we are going to deal with in this book concern matters that are not discerned by human senses. The Bible speaks about things that "*eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man*" (1 Corinthians 2:9). These things are invisible and spiritual. They are only understood through the Scriptures. There is no other source of reliable information.

A lot of people imagine that what we see, touch, hear, and taste are the only truly real items. Down through the ages, however, philosophers have come to the conclusion that what we see, touch, hear, and taste are not truly real; they are temporary, and they are very often deceptive. These philosophers have warned us that you cannot rely only on your senses.

And the Bible agrees! Paul said that the things that are seen are fleeting; the things that are not seen are eternal. In other words, our sensory world is passing away, and therefore only partly real because it does not endure. (See 2 Corinthians

4:18.) But the spiritual world that we cannot see, that we cannot perceive with our senses, is the true reality. It alone will endure.

So, when we come to the theme of invisible enemies, we have to begin by making a mental adjustment. We have to say to ourselves, “I’m not going to limit myself only to the things that I can see and touch and hear and taste; I’m going to open my heart and mind to the revelation that’s recorded in Scripture through the Holy Spirit, and to those things that are of a different world.”

Paul prayed that God would give the Ephesian Christians a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him. (See Ephesians 1:17.) I pray the same for us: that God may grant us wisdom and revelation as we open our hearts to His Word, because we are dealing with matters that are made known only through revelation.

What we are going to deal with, in essence, are two opposing kingdoms at war with one another. But they are not natural kingdoms such as Britain or Sweden or the United States. They are invisible spiritual kingdoms. One is the kingdom of God and the other is the kingdom of Satan.

The Morning Star

In Isaiah 14, we are introduced to a being called Lucifer. In its Latin root, the word *Lucifer* means “the one who brings light.” In Hebrew, the word is translated as “the morning star.” In any language, Lucifer was portrayed as a radiant, shining, and glorious being. I believe he was what is referred to as an *archangel*. The word *arch*, from its Greek root, means “ruling.” The same word occurs in the word *archbishop*, a bishop who rules other bishops. Thus, an archangel is an angel who rules other angels. So, Lucifer was one of the main archangels, along with Michael and Gabriel,¹ in God’s heavenly hosts.

At some point, however, Lucifer made a grave error. He became so taken with his own glory that he sought to make himself equal with God and turned in rebellion against his Creator. It is very interesting at this point to compare Lucifer’s rebellion with Jesus’ obedience. Lucifer was a created being, not equal with God, who sought

¹ Biblical references to the archangel Michael: Daniel 10:13, 21; 21:1; Jude 9; Revelation 12:7.
Biblical references to the archangel Gabriel: Daniel 8:16; 9:21; Luke 1:26.

equality with God and fell. Concerning Jesus, Philippians 2 states, “*Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped*” (verse 6 NIV). Jesus was equal to God, humbled Himself, and was ultimately lifted up.

Returning to Isaiah, we see the motivation for Lucifer’s rebellion.

How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations!

(Isaiah 14:12)

Notice how the phrase “*I will*” occurs five times in the next two verses. It exemplifies the will of the creature set up against the will of God.

For you have said in your heart: “I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.”

(Isaiah 14:13–14)

Lucifer’s ambition was to elevate himself to a position of equality with God. He considered himself so wise, so beautiful, and so glorious that he apparently thought to himself, *I could be God*. Scripture suggests that Lucifer undermined the loyalty of one-third of God’s angels and drew them with him into his rebellion and into his fall. In response, God said, “*Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit*” (Isaiah 14:15 KJV).

In Ezekiel 28, we get another picture of this same notorious being. The chapter is divided into two sections, each a lamentation or pronouncement of woe. The first section centers on the prince of Tyre; the second is about the king of Tyre. On closer examination, we know that the prince of Tyre was a human being. It is clearly stated that he was a man—even though he claimed to be a god. On the other hand, it is equally obvious that the king of Tyre was no human being. In this chapter, we are

given a glimpse into just how Satan operates. We have a human ruler, the prince of Tyre, and behind him, in the unseen realm, we have the satanic ruler, the king of Tyre. The human ruler is not much more than a puppet who performs as the strings from the unseen realm dictate his moves. When you begin to see this truth, history and politics take on a very different meaning. As we examine many of the so-called great and infamous men of history, we begin to see evidence of the strings that guided their movements.

You were the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering: the sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold. The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes was prepared for you on the day you were created.

(Ezekiel 28:12–13)

It is widely accepted by biblical scholars that Lucifer was responsible for orchestrating the worship of heaven. He was a musical expert and continues to use music as a means of captivating people to this day.

You were the anointed cherub who covers; I established you; you were on the holy mountain of God; you walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones. You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, till iniquity was found in you. By the abundance of your trading you became filled with violence within, and you sinned; therefore I cast you as a profane thing out of the mountain of God; and I destroyed you, O covering cherub, from the midst of the fiery stones.

(Ezekiel 28:14–16)

Now let us pause for a moment to examine a fascinating word that appears in this passage: “*trading*.” In Hebrew it means, “to go up and down as a talebearer, as an agitator, with secret, underhanded agitation.” Today we call it *campaigning* or

lobbying. That is how Lucifer alienated the loyalty of the angels: by going back and forth, declaring, in effect, “Look at me. See how beautiful and intelligent I am? Don’t you think I’d make a better ruler than God up there? And you know, God doesn’t really appreciate you. If you’ll join me, I’ll give you a much higher position in my kingdom than you have at the present time.”

Let’s look at some of the uses of the word *trading* in order to see the accuracy of its description, “*You shall not go about as a talebearer among your people*” (Leviticus 19:16). This verse describes a slanderer, a person bringing false insinuations and accusations. Lucifer falsely accused God of being a despot, a tyrant who only cared for His own grandeur and glory, with no appreciation of these angels who were so faithfully serving Him.

In Proverbs 11, the same word is used again, “*A talebearer reveals secrets, but he who is of a faithful spirit conceals a matter*” (verse 13). We see a contrast—the opposite of the talebearer is the man “*of a faithful spirit.*”

In Proverbs 20, there is another vivid instance of the same word, “*He who goes about as a talebearer reveals secrets; therefore do not associate with one who flatters with his lips*” (verse 19). The talebearer and the flatterer are very closely related to one another. In other words, Lucifer flattered these angels into believing that he would give them a much better deal than God was giving them. This is so vivid for me because I have seen this activity many times on the human level in churches and other places. And it is exactly the same person who is behind that activity all through history. Flattery and lies are Lucifer’s way of doing things.

In Jeremiah 6:28 and 9:4, and Ezekiel 22:9, the word is translated *slanderer*. It is the same Hebrew word: a talebearer, a slanderer, a person who goes to and fro sowing disaffection and disloyalty by using flattery and misrepresenting authority.

Lucifer’s Pride

Returning to Ezekiel 28, we see precisely what caused Lucifer’s downfall.

Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you corrupted your
wisdom for the sake of your splendor. (Ezekiel 28:17)

What was the initial motivation of Lucifer? What was the first sin? Pride. The first sin took place in heaven, not on earth. It wasn't drunkenness, it wasn't adultery, and it wasn't even lying. It was pride. And it is still the most deadly of all sins. There are scores of churchgoers who wouldn't dream of committing adultery or getting drunk but who are easily enticed into pride without realizing how dangerous it really is.

The archangel Lucifer was so beautiful he became proud. The transition from archangel Lucifer to Satan was made complete through his pride.

You defiled your sanctuaries by the multitude of your iniquities, by
the iniquity of your trading. (v. 18)

Lucifer had been responsible for the sanctuary of God in heaven. He was in charge of the worship. He was the cherub who covered the place where God's presence was manifested. He was responsible for the music. He was an artist. He was very accomplished. Then he rebelled and he fell. Pride!