

**Authority of
the Bride
of Christ**

**Volume VI
The Way Of Enoch**

by
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Authority Of The Bride - The Way of Enoch Volume VI

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Walk With God Ministries adopted these Chinese characters that are part of a course created by Pastor Archie Parish as a symbol of the message that is at the heart of our vision. Over the years these characters have been used by many believers to introduce the Gospel.

2500 years before the birth of Christ and 2100 years before the first recorded crucifixion, the Chinese language gave us the secret of how to live forever... *the secret to eternal life*.

Cross The first character depicted is a cross.



Man Next is a man placed on a cross... a great man dying.



Two Men Two men are crucified along side of this great man. The full character depicts Jesus dying on the cross with the two thieves crucified alongside Him. One thief rejected Him (Luke 23:39) and the other one believed Him (Luke 23:40-42). This is the character Lai, which means *Come*.



Mouth



The second character begins with a man's word coming out of his mouth.

Standing



This character represents a man standing by his word. Combined this is the character Xin, which means *Believe*.

Lai Xin



When these two characters are taken together they represent *Come and Believe*. The circle surrounding them represents eternity.

2500 years before the birth of Jesus the Chinese language clearly stated the Gospel message and depicted the only road to eternal life... Jesus. Come to Jesus and Believe that He died for your sins, that you might have eternal life. Here we are some 4,500 years later and His Word is still true:

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life.

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INTRODUCTION

Authority is a term that many have a very difficult time dealing with. To some it causes an immediate bristling of the hair on the back of their necks and yet to others it causes a feeling of helplessness. To the Christian it should mean both being in authority and being submitted to authority. Jesus built His Church on these principles and they haven't been altered in the past 2000 years.

While we need to understand both sides of authority, the main focus of this book is to examine the authority that we, as believers, have over our enemy; Satan and his army. However, before we begin let me take a few moments and discuss the importance of every member of the bride of Christ being under authority.

Jesus has been established by the Father as the Head of the Church, and He has established offices within the church to carry out that continuity. If we look at a single group of believers, which we commonly refer to as a "church," there will be different levels of authority within that group. The Pastor, as God's under shepherd, heads it and he has a staff under him comprised of assistant pastors, teachers, administrators, worship leaders, etc. In most cases the church has a board of deacons or elders. And over the Pastor is the apostolic covering for the church; an individual or an organization.

Everyone reports to someone who has responsibility for the department in which they work. It's generally the same structure you have in most companies with the obvious differences. But it's not the structure that's important.

The key ingredient in spiritual authority is that everyone submits to the authority above him or her, all the way to Jesus at the top. As long as that line of authority is followed there is harmony and the job gets done. But, just like in a business, when someone refuses to submit or the one in authority doesn't follow the authority delegated to them the system breaks down.

Now, not to belabor the issue, this is the exact point at which most churches get into trouble. Someone is either abusing their authority or someone is rebelling against authority. Yes, it's true that the Pastor has the ultimate responsibility and authority to resolve the problems, but more often than not you're dealing with volunteers, and the Pastor is often not an experienced administrator. Larger churches are able to hire the staff necessary to successfully administer all the necessary departments, but they too struggle with rebels to authority.

We, as the bride of Christ, must refrain from becoming those rebels to authority. We need to look to Jesus as the head of the church and follow His leading. Unless the Pastor is leading the congregation into sin, it is our responsibility to pray for and help him to carry out God's plan for the body. Now, one word of caution here, this is why it's so important, in fact it's mandatory, that we seek the Holy Spirit before we settle into or leave a church. He is the One who has the responsibility to place each one of us within the bride; the body of Christ. We each have special gifts that God wants to use within the bride, and when we rebel and

refuse to go where He wants us we break down the system and the entire bride suffers.

The reason this occurs is that someone wants to be in another position, which is usually one for which they aren't called or equipped. It's just like Paul said, how can the eye do the job of the hand? It results from one thing, selfish interests. I'm not called to do that; I can't work for that person, they don't know what they're doing; nobody appreciates what I do; I can sing better than that person can; or I should be on the worship team. Sound familiar? These excuses are as common as dust, and they all represent the enemy's fertile ground for dissension and division. They can, however, be overcome by submission to spiritual authority.

There is much that has been written by many authors on this subject, and I am not going any deeper than the preceding. My objective is to bring this problem into the light so that we are all aware of it and take personal responsibility for our own actions. I strongly suggest that you take the time to read a most wonderful book on the subject by Watchman Nee: *Spiritual Authority* (it's available on Amazon). It's an excellent treatment of the subject and covers this brief introduction in complete detail, based upon the Word of God.

It is also important to bear in mind that if we don't fully understand spiritual authority, we open ourselves up to the same issues the face the unbelievers.

2 Cor 4:3-4 But if our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: 4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

Often we, as the bride of Christ, still buy into Satan's lie that we don't have any authority over him. He has always taken advantage of the veil that sin has placed over man's understanding. That's why the Holy Spirit is so important in the work of sharing the Gospel. He alone has the power to lift the veil and open one's spiritual eyes.

It's interesting to note that the word for light (*footismon*) refers to illumination or the act of enlightening. Paul referred to what has been hidden in his letter to the Romans (*Rom 16:25*). He said that it wasn't unintelligible but was "concealed" or "unrevealed." In other words, it is not the Gospel that is unclear.

*2 Cor 3:13-16 And not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished: 14 But **their minds were blinded**: for until this day remaineth **the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which veil is done away in Christ.** 15 But even unto this day, when Moses is read, **the veil is upon their heart.** 16 Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away.*

If Satan blinds the unbeliever to the glory of the Gospel in Jesus, you can be sure that he won't let up when they become a believer. Our authority as a believer in Jesus is also "concealed" in the Word of God and is "revealed" by the Holy Spirit. The enemy will blind our eyes unless we allow the Holy Spirit to take the veil away, just as He did when we, by faith, accepted Christ as our Saviour. Revelation of the Word of God is, by faith, a long-term

proposition, and we shouldn't expect full understanding the moment we become believers. It takes submission, obedience, and effort on our part to discover and enforce the authority we have over the enemy. But remember, spiritual authority is ours the moment we believe.

*James 4:7 **Submit** yourselves therefore to God. **Resist** the devil, and he will flee from you.*

Look at the two requirements contained in this verse for exercising your authority: *submission* [being obedient] and *resistance* [standing against). We need to understand that we are not exercising our own authority, rather we have a “delegated authority” from God. If we face the enemy in our authority we'll lose every time, but if we face him in Jesus' authority we'll win every time.

With this in mind, let's put a face on this thing called spiritual authority. For the bride of Christ it's critical because we “are” engaged in spiritual warfare each and every day, whether we recognize it or not. And that spiritual warfare is personal, deeply personal!

CHAPTER 1

WHAT IS AUTHORITY AND WHERE IS IT?

WE HAVE AUTHORITY

Luke 10:19-20 Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you. 20 Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.

The key to these verses stands out in the opening words; *I give unto you*. Jesus has given us the power given to Him by the Father (*exousia; jurisdictional power*). Let's look at what Webster says about the word jurisdiction: common ownership or joint dominion (control). Jesus has given us power "with" Him, not separate from Him, *to tread on serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy*. While we later see Paul exercise this authority over snakes (*Acts 28:3-5*), I would like to look at the more practical

application in our lives today, which does involve some spiritual snakes.

In referring to serpents and scorpions we see the application to the bitter and vicious enemies that we encounter in men under the influence of Satan. It's that power within man that desires to do us harm, not man himself. Therefore it's important to remember that Jesus told us that it requires our joint use of His dominion over the power of the enemy; *I give you power.*

You might picture a traffic cop standing in the middle of the road with his hand held up, signaling us to stop. Now we don't really stop because of the cop standing in the road. We could very easily run him over without so much as a by your leave. No, the reason we stop is because of the authority behind him, the authority his presence represents as signified by his uniform and badge. If we fail to respond to his "delegated" authority then we are subject to the seat of that authority.

It's the same for the bride. The enemy has no choice but to recognize that we have Jesus' delegated authority over him. Why do you think he works so hard to keep us from recognizing, understanding, and walking in it? Satan is going to go right over the top of you unless you stand up and operate in your delegated authority and show him your badge; the blood of Jesus.

Now, the second definition of "power" in this verse is *dunamis* or potential power. Satan uses this potential power to attempt to destroy us, but God has given us the delegated authority to tread on his power; jurisdictional or ruling power.

Eph 6:16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

The primary focus in this context is in the spirit realm.

*Eph 6:12 For we wrestle **not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.***

Our daily battle isn't against man but against spiritual principalities and powers that are under Satan's control, which unfortunately are often manifested in man. Jesus may have been referring to the Scribes and Pharisees in this verse as He did in *Matt 23:33*, those who used the Law as a lever over others. We need to be aware that our battles are "always" rooted in the spirit and not in the flesh; man may be used but he isn't the source of the stings. The idea of treading on them was to infer complete victory over them as you would over a general or king taken in battle (*Josh 10:24; Rom 16:20*). This is often difficult to keep in perspective when the attacks get personal and come from someone close.

Now look back up at *Luke 10:20* to put this issue of authority in perspective. In spite of this—our spiritual authority over the enemy—don't get all excited because the greater joy is in the fact that we are in the Lambs Book of Life.

Just as an aside to this issue. Some believe that this last statement (*your names are written in heaven*) shows us that we all start out in the Lambs Book, but our failure to respond to the Gospel and receive Jesus' gift of salvation will cause our names to

be erased (*Phil 4:3; Rev 3:5*). Here is where I think that concept comes from.

In the first century it was the custom for someone born in a town to be put on the public roll, and he would remain there until he died or some act caused him to be erased. This provided a clear written record of anyone laying claim to an estate. We note that Jesus made that statement to His disciples before He went to the Cross to redeem their souls, and we can easily infer the estate to which He was referring. I happen to agree with this view but even if you don't, the point is well made that being in the Lamb's Book of Life is the important issue, and that brings far greater joy than overcoming the power of the enemy.

This same commission, which Jesus gave to the 70, is given to us. We've been given the power to exercise spiritual authority "with" Him "in" His name. This authority is both offensive (*power to tread on*) and defensive (*nothing shall by any means hurt you*) and applies to *all the power of the enemy*. But as impressive as that is, it's far more awesome to be inscribed in the Lambs Book of Life, and not found in "the books" (*Rev 20:12*). This authority was given to us to carry out the will of God for our lives and should always be kept in perspective, as well as in the spirit and not in the flesh.

OUR AUTHORITY IS POWER

*Eph 1:19-20 And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the **working** of his **mighty power**, 20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him*

from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,

Let's take a look at three very key words in verse 19 that give us a better understanding of what Paul said:

Mighty (*ischus*)—force, forcefulness, ability, power or strength.

Working (*energeia*)—efficiency, energy, strong, or effectual.

Power (*kratos*)—vigor, dominion, power, or strength.

Put these three words together in context and we have the full “potential power” that has been given to us as the bride of Christ. The source of that power is Jesus and He has given it to us in the Holy Spirit. We have the ability to operate in dominion over the enemy by the authority of Jesus, which is backed by the same power the Father used to raise Jesus from the dead; the Holy Spirit.

Rom 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

He is the same Spirit that lives in us and quickens our mortal bodies. The appropriation of that power occurs through faith and belief in the One who placed it within us, Jesus.

One additional thought here. The ultimate power to save a lost soul is the power within us. The Holy Spirit is resident within us as the full embodiment of that *potential power*, ready to work the

mighty miracle of salvation through us. All God wants is a willing and obedient heart that trusts in Him. With that He adds the power and we can see others literally “raised” from their spiritual death right in front of us by the Holy Spirit. Every time we share the Gospel under the direction of the Holy Spirit Jesus exercises dominion over the enemy. No wonder all of heaven rejoices when someone becomes a believer in Jesus Christ (*Luke 15:7, 10*). We should also take great joy in those times when it results in the “dead being raised to eternal life.” Yes, it’s clear that the enemy doesn’t want us exercising our authority over him.

WHERE IS OUR AUTHORITY?

*Eph 2:6 and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together **in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:***

As the bride, we are identified with Jesus in both His death and resurrection. First we die with Him and then we live with Him. This very moment, every believer is experiencing eternal life as he or she goes through daily life. The problem is that many of them don’t think of it that way. They just drudge their way through life’s circumstances, waiting to die and to begin eternity with the Lord. That is not His plan!

In verse 6 we note that God *hath raised us up*. That is past tense and denotes a completed act. This is followed by *made us sit*, which also indicates a completed task; *together* (with Him). Where? *In heavenly places*. We’ve taken a sitting position “in” Christ because we are partakers “of” His redemption. Because of our identification with Him in death and resurrection with Him in

life, we are effectively seated next to Him in heaven. This follows from *Eph 1:20* in which we are told where the Father seated Jesus upon His return to heaven; *at his own right hand in heavenly places*. That is the same *heavenly places* referred to in *Eph 2:6*, compared with *Rev 3:21* where it is rendered: *hath given us a joint seat*.

*Rev 3:21 To him that overcometh will I grant to **sit with me in my throne**, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.*

Can it be any clearer? When we overcome through the blood of Jesus we are immediately seated with Him on His Throne, which is connected to the Father's Throne. In the Spirit we are already there. That is so awesome I have a hard time visualizing it. Why did He do that? God loved us because of Himself, not because of us, and He cares for us and loves us enough not to leave us in the condition in which we were when we came to Him. He gives us a new life and then raises us up out of sin, giving us a seat with Him in heaven.

*1 Sam 2:8 He **raiseth up** the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and **to make them inherit the throne of glory**: for the pillars of the earth are the LORD's, and he hath set the world upon them.*

Here is that same verse in the living translation:

*He **lifts** the poor from the dust—yes, from a pile of ashes and treats them as princes **sitting in the seats of honor**. For all the earth is the Lord's and he has set the world in order.*

God accomplished the work of redemption through His Son. Jesus was the One who took our place and paid the price for our sin (*Rom 6:23*). Note that God, because of who He is, couldn't substitute for man and therefore man had to substitute for man. So Jesus became a man and died in our place so that we would have authority in heavenly places. While I am at this point let me pass on to you a word picture painted by Pastor Adrian Rogers that has helped me to understand something about the Cross that has always been a little troubling. It relates directly to what we have been discussing in this section.

*Matt 27:46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, **Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?** that is to say, **My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?***

When Jesus *wept great drops of blood* (*Luke 22:44*) it was because He saw what was coming. He saw firsthand the sin that would separate Him from the Father. He saw what you and I should have seen. If you take this to the next step verse, 46 begins to make more sense.

Jesus didn't go up on that Cross in the same relationship He previously had with the Father. Note that this is the only time He spoke to His Father directly and referred to Him as *My God*. Why? He called Him My God because at that moment in time God was not His Father. He was covered in all the sin of the world, and the result of sin was separation from God. Jesus cried out with your

voice and mine because in our sinful state we did not have a heavenly Father, but we did have a God to call out to, just like Jesus. His cry was our cry because, in effect, it wasn't Jesus on that Cross crying out it was us; His cry was our cry. Jesus was in a forsaken state, completely separated from God because of our sins. This was a place He had never been before, and because of His sacrifice it's a place to which we will never go, even though we deserve it. We have a God who is more than just God, He is and always will be our heavenly Father. At the moment of death our lips will never cry out *Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani*. We have already died and when we cross over it will be the heavenly realization of the resurrection we have already experienced in Jesus.

When Jesus was raised from the dead we were raised up. When Jesus ascended to heaven we ascended. When Jesus was seated in heaven we were seated. We were crucified, made alive, raised together, and made to sit in heavenly places with Jesus. It's in Him that *we live move and have our being (Acts 17:28)*. But as His bride, our biggest problem stems from the fact that we forget that we are already spiritually seated high above the principalities and powers.

Eph 6:12... against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places

We need to look at this verse again because this is who we battle, and God has given us a seat of authority to deal with them. We simply need to remember that we have that authority, and in whose name it's been delegated. We exercise the authority of *Eph*

1:19 from our position “in” heavenly places “in” Him. We have that right and can take it up in the spirit because the enemy is already under His feet (*1 Cor 15:27; Eph 1:22; Heb 2:8*), and because He has seated us next to Him the enemy is under our feet. Our problem is that we forget that and let him out from under our heel far too often.

CHAPTER 2

KNOW YOUR ENEMY

In chapter 1 we talked about rebels to authority. Well, Satan is the prince of rebels, and because of his prideful challenge of God (*Isa 14:12*) he has been inciting rebellion ever since. This is who our battle is with, so we need to equip ourselves with an understanding of what that entails and who those rebels are.

THE REBELS TO AUTHORITY

Those Unseen

*Isa 24:21 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the LORD shall punish **the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth.***

The *ones that are on high* refers to the fallen angels who have authority over the rulers of darkness in this world. These are unseen to us but, while *in that day* (His second coming) the Lord will punish them, for now we must battle with them over spiritual matters. However, if Satan can keep us battling with our

circumstances and people here on earth he effectively steals our authority over him in the heavenly places.

When we battle with Satan in the natural in the areas of life—health, finances, etc.—we will always wear ourselves out. Remember that Jesus told us not to worry about the cares of this life for our Father knows our every need (*Matt 6*). He has made it clear that our action in the natural is a straightforward one; trust and obey. When we do, we're able to use our “spiritual authority” to remind the enemy that he has already been defeated. If, however, we're holding sin in our heart, the enemy is quick to challenge us with condemnation and accusation. When faced with that situation we need to just as quickly deal with that sin by the greatest of all weapons, the Blood of Jesus.

It is equally important to remember that when we wage spiritual battles against the enemy in the heavenly places we are in the power of the Holy Spirit. It's true that *in that day* the Lord will punish Satan and his host, but that doesn't relieve us from fighting the personal spiritual battle going on around us right now. The Holy Spirit is all we need in that realm and He will never lead us into an area where we aren't fully equipped in Him. But the problem is that we sometimes go into those areas without Him and without His power... ouch!

Those Judged

Isa 26:21 for behold, the LORD cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.

One day Jesus will judge all those who are enemies of heaven and we will participate with him in carrying out the sentence. Look at Enoch's prophecy:

Jude 1:14-15 and Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, 15 To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

We have spiritual battles that we fight each and every day here on earth, and we will have them until the day that He calls us home or when He judges their iniquity. In the meantime, we wage these battles from our heavenly seat of authority next to Jesus. We need to remember that these battles are not against flesh and bone but against spiritual wickedness in high places. Put another way, we should hate the sin and not the sinner. One day the earth will *disclose her blood*, and all covered sin will be revealed because it's God who does the judging. In that day all the wrongs that have seemingly gone unpunished will be avenged. In the meantime, we are called upon to carry out the judgment that has already been given to Satan and his followers; *those already judged*.

One of my favorite pictures is the punishment that we inflict on Satan and his host through our worship. Pause and read *Psalms 149* in its entirety and picture our worship to God punishing the god of this world. This is a call for a New Song full of praising, singing,

and dancing. Look how this psalm invokes our participation in carrying out God's judgment:

Verse 1 – *Praise God*

Verse 2 – *Worship God*

Verse 3 – *Dance and rejoice in music before him*

Verse 4 – *Praise Him because He brings salvation*

Versus 5-9 – *Singing to God executes judgment upon His enemies*

While this psalm speaks to the day when Jesus will return as the Lion of the Tribe of Judah with His saints to judge the nations, it's comforting to realize that our worship punishes the enemy right now. The thing which Satan fought God over (worship) is the very thing that causes him the greatest pain. Our worship becomes one of our greatest weapons for spiritual warfare. The next time the enemy comes at you, remind him that he has already been judged and that you intend to carry out part of his sentence—*right now!* Then begin to worship the Lord with all your heart. Not only are you binding the enemy, you are also uplifting and edifying yourself to your rightful place in the heavenlies. The Word makes it personal: *this honor have all his Saints. Praise ye the Lord (Ps 149:9)!*

THE REAL ENEMY

*Eph 6:12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against **principalities**, against **powers**, against the **rulers of the darkness of this world**, against **spiritual wickedness in high places**.*

Once again we come back to this all important verse. In Joshua's time as Israel laid claim to the Promised Land the battle was against flesh and blood. But the battle today isn't waged in the natural, it's against demonic forces in the realm of the spirit. Satan and his army are well organized, dedicated, bold, unrelenting, and determined.

The best advantage an army can have is knowledge of the enemy and his plans. One of the reasons we won the Battle of Midway in World War II was that we had the key to the Japanese code, and we knew their battle plan, strength, and schedule. Well, God has given us a clear understanding of the enemy and his battle plan, so let's see who and what he is.

The agents in this verse are the demonic powers controlled by Satan that are behind fallen man. They operate in the spirit realm so we need to remember that the armor and weapons God has given us are spiritual, and are meant to protect us from and to destroy spiritual beings.

2 Cor 10:3-5 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: 4 (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) 5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the

These weapons are *not carnal* (fleshly). We need our armor because *we wrestle not against flesh and blood*. This doesn't mean that there aren't men who are our enemies. It's that our fight isn't with them, it's with the spiritual forces that drive them. Therefore,

the meaning of wrestling as used here is a face-to-face spiritual conflict to the finish, and that's what we face every day. And when we choose to ignore that fact, that's when we become easy prey for the enemy.

1 Peter 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

We need to be mindful that Satan is constantly trying to catch us unaware and unprepared. That's why in our prayers we need to come against the demonic influences over those in authority and those who wish to destroy us. Let's look at them in order to understand our enemy, because God warns us not to be ignorant of the devil's devices (*2 Cor 2:11*).

Principalities—This word in the Greek is *arche*, and it encompasses those demons that are of the first rank in Satan's army. The word means in the beginning or chief in power or dominion (*Jude 6*).

Powers—The word used for powers is *exousia*, which means authorities. This is the next lower level whose authority is delegated from Principalities; a spiritual potentate (*Col 1:16*).

Rulers of the Darkness of This World—*Kosmoskratoras tou skoutous*—the world rulers of the darkness of this age. The word for "world" is *kosmos* and it represents the world's system. They are the demons that influence the world's rulers, the ones who fight against the light (Jesus) with darkness (sin).

It is an emblem of ignorance, misery, and sin; and no description could be more accurate than that of representing these malignant spirits as ruling over a dark world. The earth—dark, and wretched and ignorant, and sinful—is just such a dominion as they would choose, or as they would cause; and the degradation and woe of the pagan world are just such as foul and malignant spirits would delight in.

Albert Barnes

But note that while they rule the world they “do not” rule the universe (2 Cor 4:4).

Spiritual Wickedness in High Places—In Greek it is translated *against spiritual forces “of” wickedness in the heavenly places*. These are the demons that control nations. This has also been translated as *the spiritual things of wickedness*, which refers collectively to the whole body of wickedness that is active in *the air* (Eph 2:2).

All of this is organized by the devil, and the only reason he is organized is that he learned it from God. When he was Lucifer he was just under God in a position over all of the angels. Now his host is organized in the same manner under him. This is one we're directed to wage our battle against, and we're told to wage it in heavenly places in the name of Jesus and in the power of the Holy Spirit. I like one translation that says in high places refers to about heavenly things—*we contend with these fallen spirits for the heavenly things that are promised us; and we strive against them, that we may not be deprived of those we have*. In other words, as

the Holy Spirit gives us revelation (*rhema*) of the spiritual things God has already given us, we need to stand firm in our authority and not let the enemy take them away, as we continue to gain revelation of the things unknown to us. Consider it the same as when we receive The Word. We need to protect it like the sown seed (*Mark 4*), and not let the ravens (evil) come and snatch it away.

Our spiritual battle against these agents of Satan is all about pressing into God through His Word and His Spirit. The enemy sends forces against us to stop our advancement and he uses every discouragement he can to get us to buy into his lie so we'll not draw closer to Jesus. He knows that we have the authority to blast him out of the way, and so the only thing he can do is try and blind us to that authority. If we don't know we have it we can't use it. If the cop didn't know he had the authority to stop the traffic he sure wouldn't stand in the middle of the street, and if the cars thought he didn't know he had the authority they would run him over.

CHAPTER 3

WHAT IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY?

Eph 3:9-12 And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: 10 To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, 11 According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: 12 In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.

FOLLOW GOD'S WILL

This is really exciting if you think about it. Our job is to make known to all the principalities and powers that God, in His wisdom, reconciled all men unto Himself through Jesus. Just think, there are beings in heavenly places (good and evil) observing the unfolding of God's wisdom in the bride of Christ. Dr. Bob Yandian, in his commentary on the book of Ephesians, summarized Verse 10 as follows: *God doesn't come down and tell*

the devil how smart He is. He shows him how smart He is through us, the church.

It's the job of the bride to enlighten man as to the mystery that is Jesus Christ. We are, if you will, the spiritual traffic cop, authorized by Jesus to do the Will of the Father. We can't make known the manifold wisdom of God in our name, but when we use the name of Jesus and operate in His authority it's a different story. When you look at that phrase, *the manifold wisdom of God*, consider that it has the same meaning attributed to Joseph's coat in *Gen 37:3*. Like Joseph's coat had many colors, the wisdom of God is varied or greatly diversified. His wisdom and power will overcome any obstacle the enemy can put in our path.

Through the Church, God's wisdom in its infinite variety is to be displayed (the many-tinted wisdom of God) in different modes of power, different characters, methods of training, providences, forms of organization, etc.

Vincent's

If you think about it, we are inferior beings to the angels, and yet we are superior to them by our position in Christ. He has chosen us as part of His eternal purpose, or as the Greek puts it: *the purpose of the ages*. God is now revealing to the angels what has puzzled them from the beginning: why God made man and why Jesus died for man. It's our purpose and responsibility to utilize the authority Christ has given us to carry out the revelation of this mystery to the world; His Perfect Will.

This is why He created us in the first place, that He might be glorified in the revelation of this mystery to both man and the angels. The angels in heaven are working with us in accomplishing

this wonderful revelation (*Rev 19:10*), and make no mistake about it, the enemy doesn't want this mystery revealed. He will come against us with everything he has to try and stop us.

It's also critically important to understand that the enemy is much more familiar with God's power than His wisdom (*1 Cor 15:24; Col 2:15*), and he recognizes that a believer standing in the authority God has given him is fully backed by that power. If you hold up your hand and flash your badge (the name of Jesus) he MUST stop!

Now look at what Paul said in verses 11 and 12 about how we accomplish this. We have *boldness* (freedom of utterance) and *access* (freedom to approach and have an audience) to God through *faith*. And where does that faith come from? It comes from God as a personal gift by which we boldly have access to His throne (*Acts 3:16; Eph 2:8*). It's by entering into the throne room by faith that we obtain all that we need to appropriate the authority God has given us to accomplish His perfect will. When we enter into our personal relationship with Him we have already obtained that right, but it's our responsibility to understand and use that authority with boldness in carrying out the individual ministry He has given each one of us. Once again, remember how critical it is for the bride to abide with Him in the Holiest Place, where His grace will be found to fulfill her calling according to His perfect will.

Phil 4:13 I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

POSSESS HIS KINGDOM

*Dan 7:22 Until the Ancient of days came, and **judgment was given to the saints of the most High**; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.*

*Dan 7:27 And **the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.***

Our authority brings with it the responsibility to possess the kingdom and take dominion over it. This sounds a great deal like *Genesis 1*, but this time we're dealing with the second Adam (Jesus), the Adam who didn't fail. There is a time coming that Daniel saw in which the saints of God are going to rule with Jesus (*the Ancient of Days*) here on earth. The saints are those who are gathered out of both Jews and Gentiles that have received their Messiah, their Saviour (*Rom 9:24; 11:24*). And in *Dan 7:27* we see that it is initially here on earth, not in heaven: *the kingdom under the whole heaven*.

When Jesus came in the flesh and paid the ultimate price for our redemption, we were given dominion as saints of the most high. In other words, we were given the authority in Him to take dominion over the kingdom under the whole heaven. While Daniel was speaking in a time and place clearly identified in Old Testament history, he was also speaking prophetically regarding an age to come. If we look a little deeper into this kingdom we can

see that it goes beyond the millennial one into the new heaven and earth (Rev 20:4; 21:1; 22:5).

Now, until the devil is cast into the bottomless pit, till the thousand years should be fulfilled (Rev 20:3) and then finally cast into the lake of fire (Rev 20:10), the bride must never disregard his reality, strength, or durability. Our lives may be rather peaceful when considered next to Daniel's, but we can't ignore the fact that the devil and his host continually cause suffering all around us. It's true that God's kingdom is still suffering at the hands of the enemy, but the good news is that the bride will ultimately prevail. Our hope doesn't lie in the world or its system but in the fact that God overcometh [present tense; continues to overcome] the world (1 John 5:4), and those of us who believe in Him share in that victory by our faith. It is our faith in the fact that Jesus is the Son of God that continually reflects that victory to the world and the enemy.

As His bride we are authorized to reign in Him and with Him. But are we ready? The opposition has a way of wearing us down for a time and sometimes we even buy into the lie that we have been completely knocked out. It's during those periods that Jesus doesn't seem to be present in our life and we forget "who" we are and "whose" we are. That's when we need to be conscious of the fact that our authority never diminishes, it's just our faith that can fade if we don't persevere. Don't forget, Jesus would not have put us in this position without equipping us to complete the job. The key is to continually build up our faith, especially in the midst of an attack:

Luke 22:31-32 And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: 32 But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.

BE WHERE THE AUTHORITY IS

The constitution and the laws of the spiritual world are perfectly orderly and logical, and must be adhered to and carefully obeyed if the desired and promised results are to be gained.

John A. Millan

We have already looked at this subject, but let's go a little deeper and consider what it means to be seated in heaven with Jesus.

*Eph 1:20-23 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and **set him** at his own right hand in the heavenly places, 21 **Far above** all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, **not only in this world, but also in that which is to come** 22 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, 23 Which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.*

First the Father made Jesus *to sit* (His mission on earth was finished on the Cross), *far above* (not down here or in the heavenlies but far above), *in the age to come* (this is the here and now; the church age), with *all things under His feet* (not some or a few but all things), and He is *head over all things*.

Jesus has given us (a completed act) the right to sit and rule with Him in the heavenly places, far above principalities. This right is given to us in this present time (the church age), which began in the *Book of Acts*. Jesus has been made the head of the body and we (His bride) are the body. Therefore, because we sit with Him in heavenly places, all those things that are under His feet are under ours: *all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named!*

Jesus has been placed far above the kingdom of Satan, whose kingdom is below the feet of Jesus, and the bride is between the two. Jesus is the head of the church and the bride is the head over the devil; he is under her feet. Jesus has given us authority over Satan and his minions, but it is up to us to exercise that authority through the power of the Holy Spirit.

In *Rev 19:16* Jesus is called the King of kings and Lord of lords (note the difference) and His bride (the saints) are the kings and lords who will rule with Him. We are the very ones being prepared right now to do that for all eternity. Therefore, we have in every spiritual battle we face, the opportunity to exercise our faith in the authority He has given us to be overcomers, and as we exercise that authority we become more like the kings and lords He has destined us to be.

But if we are going to accomplish that we must leave the unfulfilled Christian Life behind us and move on from the Cross into the Rest of Christ; the Spirit-filled Christian Life. It's only there that we will be firmly seated with Jesus and enjoy the full power of the Holy Spirit in dealing with the enemy. Our battles take place in the heavenlies and that is where we will find our spiritual authority, not down here in the natural.

CHAPTER 4

THE WEAPONS OF OUR WARFARE

Eph 3:11-12 According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. 12 In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.

Let's look at these two verses again and discover how they affect each of us. We have *boldness* and *access* with confidence by *faith*. Access to what? To the very throne of God, whereby we appropriate the boldness of authority in Christ to rule in that authority. This is all according to God's *eternal purpose*, which He designed in Jesus. He has an eternal plan for the salvation of man through Jesus. Part (b) of verse 11 states that this plan, *which He purposed in Christ* (which He made), is now being executed by the Gospel through Jesus Christ. This then is the purpose of eternity, that we receive it by the Gospel and believe it by faith. In other words, God always had an eternal plan. When man fell He would restore him through His Son if he would believe in Him, and in so doing man would once again have bold access to God. Jesus was to be revealed to the Jews and preached to the Gentiles.

By (or through) whom we have liberty to open our minds freely to God, as to a Father, and a well-grounded persuasion of audience and of acceptance with him; and this by means of the faith we have in him, as our great Mediator and Advocate. We may come with humble boldness to hear from God, knowing that the terror of the curse is done away; and we may expect to hear from him good words and comfortable. We may have access with confidence to speak to God, knowing that we have such a Mediator between God and us, and such an Advocate with the Father.

Matthew Henry

Here are some points to consider as we boldly believe in Jesus and our spiritual authority.

HUMILITY

*2 Cor 13:4-5 For though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God. **For we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you.** 5 **Examine yourselves**, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?*

Another way of reading verse 4 would be: *humility in Christ brings power by the Spirit in His name.* Continue reading verse 5 and we see that Paul told his readers to *examine themselves*. The Corinthians had been criticizing Paul and he suggested that a little introspection might be required. He challenged them to examine their faith and see if they passed the test. We all need that from

time-to-time to clear out some of the “self” that has a tendency to build up. We must be weak in Him that his power can be manifest in us.

When He was crucified, Jesus appeared weak in His humanity because He didn’t exert His divine power. He chose to take our place and therefore, since we did not have that power, He elected not to exercise it. But Paul said *yet he liveth* by that power. The next time He comes He will exert that power as He brings judgment to this world. It’s the same for us in that our enemies regard us as weak and powerless in the present world. He also said that we “are” powerful and will, through the power vested in us by Jesus, exert that power in strength. We are to exercise that power through a humble spirit that is led by the Holy Spirit. We need to take our lead from Jesus, He was strong in the Spirit when He needed to be.

PUT ON THE FULL ARMOR

This subject really excites me because it reminds me how a loving God has provided everything we need to survive as aliens in this world. I have taught on this subject many times and every time I’ve learned something new. Let’s focus on getting a basic understanding of the armor and how we’re to use it as we stand in our authority. You will find more detail in my book, *The Battle for Rest—The Brides’ Armor*.

*Eph 6:10-18 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. 11 **Put on the whole armor of God,** that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12*

*For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. 13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to **withstand** in the evil day, and having done all, to **stand**. 14 **Stand** therefore, having **your loins girt about with truth**, and having on the **breastplate of righteousness**; 15 And your **feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace**; 16 Above all, taking the **shield of faith**, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. 17 And take the **helmet of salvation**, and the **sword of the Spirit**, which is the word of God: 18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;*

The whole example of armor relates to the dress of the Roman soldiers when they went into battle. In these verses Paul painted a vivid picture of how God has equipped us to enter into the spiritual battles before us. But while this armor was especially designed for us, there are some conditions that must be met before wearing it.

Firstly, verse 10 states that we must be strong in: *the Lord and the power of His might*. We are to be strengthened in the Lord (*kurios; supreme authority*) because He is the One who is all-powerful. Paul told us that it is from the *power (kratos; dominion) of His might (ischus; ability)* that we are to draw our strength. He painted this picture for the Corinthians.

2 Cor 12:9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

Note that we are the ones who are to be strong by appropriating the dominion authority of Jesus, it's our action to take.

Secondly, in verse 11 we are told *to put on the whole armor of God*. The Lord has provided the armor but we have to put it on.

Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ. On putting on Him, and the new man in Him, we put on "the armor of light;" "the whole armor of God." No opening at the head, the feet, the belly, the eye, the ear, or the tongue, is to be given to Satan. Believers have once for all overcome him. On the ground of this fundamental victory already gained, they are ever again to fight against and overcome him, even as they who once die with Christ have continually to mortify their members upon earth; Rom 6:2-14; Col 3:3,5.

Jamieson, Fausset, Brown

Now, before we go on, go back to the first word in verse 10—*finally*. Paul had just laid out before the Ephesians a great high calling to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, but he wanted them to know that it wouldn't come without a fight. Lest they faint at the challenge, he told them where their strength and authority came from and showed them that they were well equipped to fight the battle. In verse 12 he defined whom the battle is to be with, the same ones we have been considering. We are always to remember that we *wage a spiritual battle against spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places*. Now, before we look at the armor itself, we need to examine one of the prerequisites to using it.

In verses 13 and 14 we see a key word used to indicate an action required on our part. In the first part of 13 we are told to take up the armor so we can *withstand* (resist, oppose) the enemy. Then we are told to *stand*. The first stand (*steenai*) in verse 13 means to stand like the victor after winning the wrestling match. After having done everything to prepare for the battle, stand your ground in victory. The second stand (*steete*) in verse 14 means to then take your stand and “resist every attack.” We are to do everything to get ready to stand as the victor (be strong in the Lord and take up the armor), and when that’s done we’re to take up the position of the victor and take on the enemy. The only way we can do that is by our faith in the fact that Jesus has already won the battle. Then Paul told them how they were to prepare themselves for the battle.

The best example he could use was something they were very familiar with, the dress of the Roman soldier. Without going into a great deal of definition, let’s take a look at the major parts of that armor and what Paul intended each to represent. The first pieces are the defensive ones designed to protect the soldier.

The Girt (Belt) of Truth

The girt (*girdle*) was the belt that held the armor together. For us it represents the “truth,” which holds our spiritual protection in place and provides the common thread that knits all of the pieces together. From it were hung the offensive weapons such as the sword and knife. Without the truth of the Word of God, no believer can ever enter into the spiritual battle with any hope of winning.

Everything hangs on the Word of God, without which we have no Saviour and no hope.

The Belt of Truth reveals to us who are our enemies, where they come from, and how they intend to attack us. It's all there in God's Word for us to see. The enemy hasn't changed in all these years and his devices are always the same. I once heard it said that the only weapon the devil has is deceit, and he is the master at using it. The Word reveals his devices and the methods he uses to employ them. Our Belt of Truth is just like having the enemy's battle plans given to us with all the right responses. Remember the example of the broken code at the Battle of Midway?

The Breastplate of Righteousness

The breastplate of righteousness (*justification*) protected the chest area, which contains the heart or the center of life. So does righteousness protect our heart or Spirit in the justified relationship we have with Jesus. We have been given "right standing" with God once again by the blood of Jesus. The breastplate is to protect that justification from the attacks of the world. It's to remind us of what the blood of Christ has purchased. Like the breastplate protected the soldier's vital parts, so ours protects the vital parts of our spirit by defining the life of God within us. Our right standing is a life regulated solely by the Word of God.

The Gospel of Peace

The sandals (*greaves or boots*) were tightly secured to the feet to protect them as the soldier marched over great distances to battle, going all the way up from the foot to cover the shinbone. A

soldier would be no good in battle if his feet were torn, cut, and sore from a long march, and in battle if he were to get his feet or legs wounded he wouldn't be able to stand and fight, pursue the enemy, or flee when being overcome. Just as he was to be properly shod and ready to move on short notice, so are we commanded to be ready to spread the Gospel of peace. But in another way we are also told to rest in the peace of the Gospel that we already know.

The peace that exists between the believer and God stands him well in the time of battle. It's the peace that passes all understanding, which we have in Jesus (*Phil 4:7*), the peace we are to carry wherever we go. A picture occurs to me as I write this of an enemy you would hate to face. One who is standing in full armor, ready to do battle with you with a peaceful and serene expression on his face. He has complete confidence in his leader, his armor, and his weapons, and he stands in stark contrast to an enemy that knows he has already lost before he takes the first step. God has given us that peace and the enemy recognizes it when he sees it (*2 Tim 1:7*). All we need to do is read the last book of the Bible—we've already won! Everywhere we set our feet we bring the Gospel of the good news of Jesus Christ (the Prince of Peace).

Rom 10:15 Blessed are the feet of them who bring good news.

The Shield of Faith

The shield (*large, oblong door shaped*) was a defensive weapon to ward off the arrows and blows of the enemy. It was large so that it could be placed in front of the body to protect all the parts. The shield was made of wood and covered in leather,

which was soaked in water to quench the enemy's fiery arrows. We note that Paul said we are to "above all" or "over all the other armor," take up the shield of faith. Faith acts like a shield by quenching the fiery darts of the enemy.

The Roman soldiers used their shield to deflect the flaming arrows (fiery darts) and in the same manner we are to use our faith to deflect *the fiery darts of the wicked*. These are the evil thoughts that are designed to upset us and uproot the peace of God within us. We need to soak our shield of faith in the Word of God to ensure that we extinguish those fiery darts.

Think about the picture I described above and replace the peaceful soldier with one who is unsure of himself and reflects fear. As you approach him you know there is a weakness and you look for a way to exploit it. The devil operates the same way and he recognizes fear in us the instant it is present. Without our shield of faith those fiery darts will strike fear deep into us.

Looking at it another way, the darts are always coming at us (in our mind) but our shield (faith) protects us from their getting in to replace our peace. *Faith is the substance (Heb 11:1)* that makes all the other pieces of armor active and available. It can be moved to protect every part from attack; spirit, soul, and body.

The Helmet of Salvation

The helmet (*head armor*) was designed to protect the head from blows of a sword, club, or arrow. It was often decorated with some ornament or crest designed to strike fear into the heart of the enemy. The helmet of salvation protects our soul and as Paul wrote in his letter to the Thessalonians, it is the *hope of salvation (1*

Thess 5:8). The crest on our helmet is hope and it strikes fear in the heart of our enemy.

The blood of Jesus bought our salvation and that blood protects our soul (our mind) from all the blows of the enemy. Each and every blow he makes is founded in deception to try and get us to lose our hope. Just like the soldier had hope in his helmet to protect him from a blow to the head, so we know that Jesus is our hope of salvation. He will protect our mind from the lies of the enemy that would try and cloud that truth. He always strikes at our mind (head) to try and get us to believe the circumstances and not our salvation. He wants us to use our natural eyes and perceive that the battle is lost (the lie), not our spiritual eyes that show us all is won (the truth). He wants us to forget that we have *the mind of Christ*.

...The hope of continual safety and protection, built on the promises of God, to which the upright follower of Christ feels he has a divine right, protects the understanding from being darkened, and the judgment from being confused by any temptations of Satan, or subtle arguments of the sophisticated ungodly. He who carries Christ in his heart cannot be cheated out of the hope of his heaven.

Adam Clarke

Now we move to the one offensive weapon that the Lord has given us. The weapon with which we aggressively move forward into battle with the enemy... the sword of the Spirit.

The Sword of the Spirit

The sword referred to here (*dagger like knife used by the gladiators in one-on-one combat*) was short and had two sharp edges. It was designed to cut both going in and coming out. The *machaira* was unlike the enemy's swords, which were long, heavy, and took a great deal of energy to swing. It was the most efficient fighting instrument of the time and nothing could compare with it.

We have our sword today in the Word of God, which cuts sharply and penetrates quickly. It is efficient and cuts to the heart of the matter without effort on our part. The Word only needs to be guided by the Holy Spirit in a willing, obedient soldier. In our hands the revealed Word of God becomes the Sword of the Spirit. When we use it in the right place (trials) at the right time (temptations) it will cut into pieces the snares of the enemy. This is a sword in which we can have total confidence for it will never dull or break, no matter how often it is used. In fact, the more it is used the sharper it becomes.

I believe the sword (Word) and shield (faith) are the principal pieces of our armor. When employed together they defend us well from anything the enemy can throw our way. When we have faith in our sword we will use it, but without faith we are open to defeat. A sharp sword hanging at our side is useless, it's still sharp and ready to perform but we can't use it. When faith is gone, fear is present and we begin to take a beating from the enemy. No Roman soldier would go into battle without first being well trained in the use of his sword. How many Christians today move into battle without so much as a rudimentary understanding of how to use their sword?

The following is from one of Charles Spurgeon's sermons in which he summarized just how important this only offensive weapon is to the believer:

Dear brethren, is it not a very high honor put upon you, as soldiers of the cross, that you should be allowed, nay, commanded to take the sword of the Spirit? The raw recruit is not trusted with the general's sword; but here are you armed with the weapon of God the Holy Ghost, and called upon to bear that sacred sword which is so gloriously wielded by the Lord God himself. This we are to bear, and no other. Does the timid heart inquire, "Wherewithal, my Master, shall I meet my adversaries"? "Here," saith the Holy Ghost, "take this! This is my own sword; I have done great marvels with it; take it, and nothing shall stand against you." When you remember the potency of this sword, when the Spirit tests it upon yourself, you may take it with confidence, and use it in your holy war with full assurance. That Word of God, which could convert you, can convert anybody; if it could kill your despair, it can remove another man's despondency; it has conquered your pride and self-will, it can subdue the like in your children and your neighbors. Having done what it has certainly done for you, you may have a full persuasion that, before its power, no case is hopeless. Wherefore, see to it, that you use from this day forth no other weapon than the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

How wonderful to know that the Word of God, the sword of the Spirit, doesn't just belong to the Holy Spirit. It's our sword and we are to use it... *take the sword of the Spirit*. It's offered to us as our only weapon against the enemy, and if it weren't sufficient the

Lord would have given us something else. He expects us to use the shield and sword together as we defend ourselves and advance against the enemy. God's Word and our faith in it make us a confident and peaceful soldier that will instill fear in the enemy!

Complimentary Parts of the Suit of Armor

In concluding this chapter I want to add a couple of pieces complementary to the armor that I found in the Word. We find them worn by Jesus as the conquering Messiah. These pieces are complimentary to the whole suit of armor worn by the Roman soldiers. We find them mentioned in *Isa 59:17* and the first is the *garment of vengeance*. It is taken from the tunic the Romans wore under their armor. Jesus wears this as He goes forth to vindicate and deliver His people.

The second piece is the *cloak of zeal* and we see it represented in the robe that the Roman soldiers wore on the outside. A warrior wore it and indicated his readiness to be either defensive or offensive, defending his people or going on the offensive against the enemy. In battle it was secured in the girdle so as to serve its purpose yet not get in the way. The Hebrew word zeal (*qinah*) carries the idea of "jealousy" and indicates the jealous nature of God for His children. He desires that not one be lost to the enemy and is "zealous" for their salvation.

These last two pieces are only found being worn by Jesus. I am not asserting that we are to go forth avenging others for vengeance is left to God as His sole prerogative. I do feel, however, that we carry in the Gospel His desire to see people vindicated and delivered. To that end, what we wear under our armor will, in

some measure, determine how comfortable it fits and wears. For us, to remember that Jesus “fights for His own” is a tunic worthy of wearing and it fits well with the righteousness that He gives us. We need to wear His cloak with our armor and, like the Roman soldier, remember to tuck in when we go to battle so we don’t lose focus and trip on it.

*Col 4:12-13 Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.13 For I bear him record, that **he hath a great zeal for you**, and them that are in Laodicea, and them in Hierapolis.*

Paul took note of Epaphras, whose heart was focused on serving the Lord and the Lord’s people; *he has great zeal for you*. The word zeal (*ponos*) as used here means pain or anguish. Contrast this with the zeal used in Isaiah (jealously) and you can see the connection. Jesus is jealous for the vindication of His people, and Epaphras was in pain for God’s people. We need to carry some of that pain with us as a reminder of what is in our general’s heart when He sends us into battle. We need to be caring for the pain of our brothers and sisters and jealous for their salvation. In fact, in the light of the Gospel shouldn’t we be this way for all man... *not one should be lost (John 17:12)*.

CHAPTER 5

HOW DO WE EXERCISE OUR AUTHORITY?

WITH PRAISE AND THE WORD – IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH

Ps 149:6-9 Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand: 7 To execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people; 8 To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; 9 To execute upon them the judgment written: this honor have all his saints. Praise ye the LORD.

We hold the blood of Jesus over the enemy and execute judgment upon him with praise. As noted previously, every time we sing praises to our God, the enemy is bound with chains and fetters (verse 8). We—all His saints—have been given the honor of carrying out this judgment while doing the one thing God has asked us to do, praise Him.

Remember, our battle is with spiritual authorities. They are the ones whom God has already judged and are punished with our

praises. I don't think anything hurts the devil more than to hear one of God's children lift up his or her voice in praise. And even more punishing is our praise being lifted up when Satan has engineered the circumstances to appear as if all is lost.

*Acts 16:22-25 And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them.23 And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely:24 Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.25 And **at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God:** and the prisoners heard them.*

We honor God when our praises rise up to heaven in accordance with His Word, when we stand on the truth, when all around us is a lie, and when we exercise our authority in His name by the power of the Holy Spirit.

I remember a very dark time in my life when I would stay up late into the night seeking the Lord for answers to my troubles. The entire world seemed to be closing in around me and there seemed to be no hope. It went on for weeks until one night I was totally spent and wrung out with worry and fear. It was so quiet in the mountains, the fire had died down and I could almost hear my heart beat. A little voice in my heart said, "Just lift up your heart and praise me." I grabbed onto that word like a drowning man would a life preserver. It may not be a spiritual law but it certainly rings true in my life that when you come to the end of yourself and you finally stop talking your ears get opened up.

As I began to just praise God for the only thing I could think of—my salvation—I began to feel my spirit rise up and the darkness recede. That is when I began to notice that my fear was being replaced with a renewed faith in the Lord. My confidence began to return and in a very short time so did my authority as a believer in Jesus Christ. I was able to once again stand on the Word of God and face the enemy with my armor in place.

I learned a very valuable lesson that night. There are times in our lives when we either ignored or didn't hear the call of the Holy Spirit to war. He tried to tell us the enemy was going to attack but we missed it for whatever reason. When that happens we generally let the enemy (circumstances) get us down in the pit and we find ourselves deep in the hole without any strength facing the enemy called fear. At those times, I don't seem to be able to even put faith behind the Word of God that I know. It just feels like some rote exercise or something I know I should be doing. But turning to praise at that moment changes the complexion of the whole thing.

When we begin to praise God for just who He is and the price He paid for us it all begins to change. The Holy Spirit can begin to show us our hope and lead us out of the pit, leaving fear behind and picking up joy along the way. With joy comes strength, with strength comes the will to fight, with the will to fight comes the armor of God, with the armor of God comes the sword of the Spirit, with the sword of the Spirit comes faith, with faith comes authority, and with authority comes victory!

We have the authority to rule in Jesus name and it is sad indeed that the bride of Christ is so weak and defeated today while the battle grows stronger by the hour. We must move into our rightful position of authority as His arm here on earth. Jesus is "sitting" at

the right hand of the Father and all authority has been given unto His bride. If things aren't getting done today there is no one to blame but the bride.

Jesus is calling us to a new level of holiness and purity that we haven't walked in before. It will take great sacrifice on our part to become the spiritual army He needs to complete His work here on earth. But if we find ourselves constantly battling Satan for our very existence and calling it spiritual warfare, we have no hope of moving into the real battle for men's souls. It is impossible for us to go forward without a deep and abiding relationship with Jesus, one that is founded on total trust in Him with a daily relinquishing of ourselves to His perfect will.

We have the absolute right to stand on the Word of God for each and every one of our needs. That right was bought and paid for over 2,000 years ago and to reject that thought is, as *Hebrews* says: *to crucify Him all over again (Heb 6:6)*. That right is built upon a relationship of trust, and that trust is based upon love.

We have been called to a mighty work for the kingdom of God in these last days, but we won't be able to stand without the full armor of God and we won't be able to put it on if we don't understand our position in Him. The armor is ours, it will work, it has been tested in battle, but it comes with a price, a total commitment to Jesus in every aspect of our life. There must be a willingness on our part to let Him lead us into those painful places in our lives where He wants to deal with issues once and for all. It requires a daily letting go of those things we so desperately want to hang onto, those things that we hold up to keep out the pain that inevitably holds out God. We must truly "die daily" so our old nature won't be able to deny Him as Lord of our life. It is all there

for us if we will deny our flesh, pick up the cross and follow Him (*Matt 16:24*).

Is seeking Him first such a hard price to pay when, in fact, to do so brings the greatest joy we can experience? We each have our own cross to bear and God knows what it is. Consider for a moment that to pick it up is to give it to the only One that is able to carry it for us. I have come to the place in my life many times when I had to admit that the cross I was carrying was too heavy and I needed Him to carry it for me. That's where the victory lies.

When we refuse to get "self" out of the way we continue to stand in our own weak authority, which is no match for the enemy. Our authority over a circumstance or situation comes from the Creator of the universe who is sovereign in His dominion. He bought us with the dearest price ever paid and has freely given us His authority over our circumstances. How foolish of us not to use it.

The source of our authority resides within each of us and it is always there, ready to be used to the obedience of God's word and the exercising of our faith. We have a perfect example to follow in Jesus: the Jesus of the wilderness (*John 4*), the Cross (*Heb 12:2*), and the grave (*Col 2:15*). The authority He has over the enemy He now freely shares with us.

KNOW your authority, **SEIZE** your authority, **EXERCISE** your authority, **WALK** in your authority and give the enemy notice!

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Pastor Tom Mitchell has spent the better part of his ministry years exhorting, challenging, and encouraging the bride of Christ to move ever deeper into her relationship with her bridegroom. Over the past 30 years through Walk With God Ministries he has authored 13 books, written numerous articles, and has taught the Word of God from the pulpit, in the classroom, and through his weekly blog at: <http://WalkWithGod.org>.

His published works include *Wake Up And Rest – The Bride of Christ Sleeps at Her Own Peril*, along with its four companion books, *The Doorway to Rest*; *The Pathway to Rest*; *The Dangers to Rest*; and *The Battle For Rest* that challenge Jesus' bride to wake up and fulfill the role He has given her in preparing the way for His Kingdom. By anyone's clock, the time until His return is growing very short. *Wake Up And Rest* is a timely challenge the bride can ill afford to ignore, for if she does she does so at her own peril. This series reflects the urgency of the message the Lord has impressed upon Tom for His bride, to wake up and remember to whom she has committed herself and make herself ready for His soon return. The hour grows short and there is much at stake, both here and now and for all eternity. The question is... *will she wake up?*

His most recent work is the eight volume series, *The Way of Enoch*, that explores the foundation and sound scriptural doctrine that underlies God's plan for our lives. It is a journey that begins with learning who God really is and culminates in discovering how

we are to walk out a loving and obedient relationship with our bridegroom. *The Way of Enoch* is a great resource for both the bride of Christ and for those who have just begun their walk with Jesus. Each book is solidly based on the Word of God, looking at how it to be applied in the Christian life. The message is presented in a straightforward look at eight key areas of our Walk With God.

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Volume 2—The Spirit-Filled Christian

Volume 3—Foundations of Faith

Volume 4—The Word of God

Volume 5—Principles of Prayer

Volume 6—Authority of the Bride of Christ

Volume 7—Walk The Walk

Volume 8—The Obedient Lifestyle

OTHER BOOKS BY THOMAS M. MITCHELL

www.WalkWithGod.org

Wake Up and Rest Series

The Bride of Christ Sleeps at Her Own Peril... This book is a wakeup call to those who have made their personal commitment to their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. They are the ones who hold the key to survival the world is looking for and they cannot fail to share it. But to do so they have to overcome their human side and allow their spirit to take charge and lead them through this “wilderness” we find ourselves in. And the key to that is to stop and take a long hard look at their relationship with the One to whom they’re engaged to be married. Do we really know Him? What is He expecting of us? How can we find the answers? These questions and many more have to be answered if we’re going to be able to step up and become all that He created us to be. *Wake Up and Rest* is a guidepost to a fruitful walk with our bridegroom as we prepare ourselves for our wedding day.

The Doorway To Rest—The Brides’ Invitation... When we consider Solomon’s Song we can easily see the relationship between Christ and His bride portrayed in many ways. Think of the “sun’s” relationship with the moon being like our relationship with the “Son.” This book is a detailed, verse-by-verse study of the

Song of Solomon, revealing the true view of bride of Christ through His eyes and a life changing view of the bridegroom through the eyes of the bride as she opens *The Doorway to Rest*.

The Pathway To Rest—The Brides’ Purpose... As we looked at the message of the *Song of Solomon* we were given a clear picture of not only who our bridegroom is, but equally important how He sees us and how we should see Him. His invitation opened the doorway to His Rest and now, as we walk out the days of our *ketubah*—our betrothal—we need to find out what that means and what it entails along *The Pathway To Rest*. For that we turn to the book of *Hebrews*, where we learn through each verse what sewing our wedding dress means and how important it is for us to be ready and watching for His soon return as we move up the path to spiritual maturity.

The Dangers To Rest—The Brides’ Warning... We have been inundated with not the shout of triumph but the incessant worldly scream of pending disaster. The country’s economics have been turned upside down and fear and panic have grabbed the headlines as the Middle East falls into chaos. The news is full of rampant pandemics, meteorological disasters, hopeless individuals committing tragic acts and families destroyed. And sadly, the majority of the bride of Christ is not prepared for His return. We have allowed the world and its supreme ruler to distract us from the path the lies in front of us. Now He has finally released me to write this verse-by-verse study—*The Dangers To Rest*—out of the book of *Revelation* that He put on my heart 18 years ago concerning His letters that not only deal with why He is coming back but also what we, His bride, are supposed to be doing and not doing as we wait and watch.

The Battle For Rest—The Brides' Armor... Spiritual warfare is a war between the forces of God and the forces of rebellion led by Satan. And the bride is engaged in this spiritual war between light and darkness, good and evil, heaven and hell and Christ and Satan. But sadly, many aren't even aware of the fact that they are in a spiritual battle every day of their life. As believing Christians we're in a grim conflict and we're not on a worldly cruise ship or a showboat; it's a battleship. It's a fight to the finish with no holds barred and we can't be neutral and we can't call a truce. This war is a personal one; very personal. In *The Battle For Rest* I have taken a detailed verse-by-verse study of the part of the book of *Ephesians* that deals with the enemy, his strategies and his goals and most importantly the battle orders we have been given to ensure victory over those personal strongholds.

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