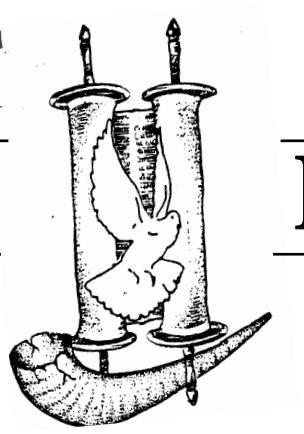
GELOOF FAITH

In Die Woord In The Word



Geloof is uit die gehoor en die gehoor is deur die Woord van God Rom. 10:17

Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. Rom. 10:17

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Onsself aan God aanbied

Die dele van my liggaam is instrumente van geregtigheid, oorgegee aan God tot Sy diens en Sy heerlikheid.

God se oplossing vir die ou natuur kan in een woord opgesom word; *teregstelling*. Teregstelling is wat aan die kruis plaasgevind het, toe Jesus gesterf het en ons ou mens saam met Hom gekruisig is. Hoe wend ons God se oplossing in ons eie lewens aan?

Laat die sonde dan in julle sterflike liggaam nie heers dat julle aan sy begeerlikhede gehoorsaam sou wees nie. En moenie julle lede stel tot beskikking van die sonde as werktuie van ongeregtigheid nie, maar stel julleself tot beskikking van God as mense wat uit die dode lewend geword het, en julle lede as werktuie van geregtigheid in die diens van God. Want die sonde sal oor julle nie heers nie; want julle is nie onder die wet nie, maar onder die genade (Rom. 6: 12 – 14).

Paulus se opdragte kan slegs deur diegene gevolg word wat hulle geloof in Jesus geplaas het en Sy plaasvervangende offer in hul plek aanvaar het. Iemand het eenkeer gesê: "As jy ooit hemel toe wil gaan, sal jy moet leer om nee te sê." Dit is sekerlik die waarheid. Paulus het gesê dat ons sal moet besluit en ferm standpunt inneem teen sonde. Beide sonde en Satan ken die verskil tussen wanneer ons net woorde sê en wanneer ons dit werklik bedoel. Ons moet hierdie woorde met oortuiging verklaar. Dan, deur geloof in Jesus, is ons wil vrygemaak van die heerskappy van sonde. Dan word dit ons verntwoordelikheid om ons wil reg te beoefen. God gaan dit nie vir ons doen nie. Hierdie is die punt wanneer ons ons verantwoordelikheid moet monitor.

Oorgegee aan God

Paulus het gesê: "**Laat die sonde dan in julle sterflike liggaam nie heers dat julle aan sy begeerlikhede gehoorsaam sou wees nie. En moenie julle lede stel tot beskikking van die sonde as werktuie van ongeregtigheid nie, maar stel julleself tot beskikking van God as mense wat uit die dode lewend geword het, en julle lede as werktuie van geregtigheid in die diens van God" (Rom.6:12 – 13).**

Ons is bevry. Sonde moet nie beheer neem oor ons hande, voete en tonge nie. In teendeel sê Paulus dat ons onsself aan God moet oorgee en ons lede as instrumente van geregtigheid aan God. Daar is 'n dubbele oorgawe.

(Vervolg op bls. 2)

(Vervolg vanaf bls. 1)

Eerstens gee ons ons wil aan God oor, deur te sê: *"Nie my wil nie, maar U wil geskied"*. In die Onse Vader Gebed, is die tweede petisie: **"U wil geskied op aarde soos in die hemel" (Matt.6:10).** Wanneer ons bid *"laat U wil geskied"*, begin dit met die wil van die een wat bid – die een wat wil hê dat God se wil sal geskied.
Eers wanneer ons ons wil oorgegee het, dan gee ons ons fisiese lede aan God oor as instrumente van geregtigheid. In Grieks beteken die woord "lede" letterlik "wapens", dit insinueer geestelike konflik. Hierdie is nie net enige lede (instrumente) nie, soos 'n skoffelpik of ploeg nie – hulle is gevegsinstrumente, soos 'n swaard.

Die doop in die Heilige Gees is die sleutel omdat ons daarin eerstens ondervind dat ons ons wil aan God oorgee; dan gee ons die een onbeheerde lid, wat ons magteloos is om te beheer oor; die tong. Wanneer ons in die Heilige Gees gedoop is, vervul ons werklik die opdrag om ons lede oor te gee aan God as instrumente (wapens) van geregtigheid. Wanneer die tong werklik aan God oorgegee is en deur die Heilige Gees oorgeneem is, word dit 'n wapen: in gebed, in getuienis en in prediking.

Beweeg Vorentoe.
Ons moet 'n keuse maak. Iets gaan ons beheer. Wat sal dit wees: sonde of geregtigheid? As ons sê geregtigheid, kan ons glo dat ons getoets gaan word! Die duiwel sal nie opgee, solank hy dink dat hy 'n kans het om te slaag nie.

Wanneer 'n persoon getoets en versoek word, sal die duiwel aanhou totdat daardie persoon op die plek kom waar die versoeking geen invloed meer op hom het nie. Hy koester dit selfs nie eers in sy gedagte nie. Die duiwel is slim genoeg om sy tyd nie op sulke mense te mors nie. As daar egter enige dubbel gedagtes in ons bestaan, sal die duiwel dit uitbuit. Ons moet 'n ferm besluit neem.

Ek spreek menslikerwys ter wille van die swakheid van julle vlees; want net soos julle jul lede diensbaar gestel het aan die onreinheid en wetteloosheid om wetteloos te wees (Rom.6:19).

As ons wetteloosheid kies, sal dit vermeerder. Dit sal al meer en meer wetteloos raak. Baie van ons kan daardie werklikheid in ons lewens sien.

In plaas daarvan dat wetteloosheid toeneem; **moet julle nou jul lede diensbaar stel aan die geregtigheid tot heiligmaking (v.19).**

Dit is feitlik onmoontlik om in die geestelike lewe stil te staan. Ons sal of vorentoe of agteroe gaan. Ons sal of vorder in heiligheid of verder gaan in rebellie.

Kies Genade.
Ek vermaan julle dan, broeders, by die ontferminge (genade) van God, dat julle jul liggame stel as 'n lewende, heilige en aan God welgevallige offer (Rom. 12:1).

Dit gaan daaroor om eerste ons wil te bepaal en dan oor te gee – in daardie volgorde. As ons nie *wil* nie, dan, deur gewoonte, sal ons aan die verkeerde ding toegee. Ons moet ophou om ons liggame, ons lede vir sonde aan te bied. Toe ons nog ongelowiges was, het ons presies dit vir 'n lang tyd gedoen. Ons moet egter stop en sê: "Dit is die einde hiervan!" Die oomblik toe ons ons wil aan God gegee het, hoef ons nie meer ons lede aan Satan te gee nie.

Want die sonde sal oor julle nie heers nie; want julle is nie onder die wet nie, maar onder die genade (Rom.6:14). Die implikasies van hierdie stelling is ingrypend. Paulus sê dat ons nie onder die wet is nie, maar onder genade. Dit is of die een of die ander – dit kan nie beide op dieselfde tyd wees nie. As ons onder die wet is, is ons nie onder genade nie. As ons onder genade is, is ons nie onder die wet nie.

(Vervolg op Bl. 3)

Verder sê Paulus dat sonde nie heerskappy oor ons sal hê nie, want ons is nie onder die wet nie. Die gevolgtrekking is dat as ons onder die wet is, sal *sonde* heerskappy oor ons hê. Dit is 'n skokkende stelling vir baie mense, maar dit is wat die Bybel konsekwent sê.

Ons word nie deur 'n stel reëls regeer nie. Ons het kinders van God geword en ons gehoorsaam Hom omdat ons Hom liefhet. Van nou af aan, liefde, nie vrees. is ons motivering vir gehoorsaamheid. God maak ons nie slawe nie; die wet doen dit. God maak ons seuns en dogters. Ons moet kies; die wet of God se genade.

Wie Sal Ons Dien?
Weet julle nie dat aan wie julle julself as diensknegte tot beskikking stel om hom gehoorsaam te wees, julle diensknegte is van hom aan wie julle gehoorsaam is nie — òf van die sonde tot die dood, òf van die gehoorsaamheid tot geregtigheid? (Rom. 6:16)

Paulus het gesê dat wanneer ons onsself aan iemand oorgee, ons slawe word van die een wat ons gehoorsaam. As ons toegee aan, sê maar, onsedelikheid, word ons slawe van onsedelikheid. Ons kan nie aan sonde toegee sonder om slawe daarvan te word nie. Daarom moet ons besluit aan wie of aan wat ons wil toegee. Sommige van ons hou nie daarvan om keuses te maak nie, maar in die geestelike lewe, kan ons dit nie vermy nie.

Aan die einde van sy loopbaan het Josua aan Israel 'n keuse gegee:
Vrees dan nou die Here en dien Hom in opregtheid en waarheid, en verwyder die gode wat julle vaders gedien het oorkant die Eufraat en in Egipte, en dien die Here. Maar as dit verkeerd is in julle oë om die Here te dien, kies dan vir julle vandag wie julle wil dien: òf die gode wat julle vaders daar oorkant die Eufraat gedien het, òf die gode van die Amoriete in wie se land julle woon; maar ek en my huis, ons sal die Here dien (Josua 24:14-15).

Josua het die Israeliete uitgedaag om 'n keuse te maak en die keuse het nooit verander nie. Dit is nie *of* ons wil dien nie, dit is *wie* ons wil dien. Dien sal ons. Voordat ons gered is het ons geen keuse gehad nie. Ons kon nie van sonde wegbly nie; daar was geen ander opsie nie as om slawe van sonde en diensknegte van Satan te wees nie. Nadat ons egter verlossing ondervind het deur geloof in Jesus Christus, het ons 'n ander opsie: ons kan kies om God te dien en om "slawe" van geregtigheid te wees.

Dankie Jesus vir U oorwinning aan die kruis. Ek gee my liggaam aan die Here, verklaar dat my lede, die dele van my liggaam instrumente van geregtigheid is, oorgegee aan God vir Sy diens en vir Sy heerlikheid. Amen.

SKATKIS

Toe gaan altwee se oë oop, en hulle word gewaar dat hulle naak is; en hulle het vyeblare aanmekaargewerk en vir hulle skorte gemaak (Gen.3:7).

En die Here God het vir die mens en sy vrou rokke van vel gemaak en hulle dit aangetrek (Gen. 3:21).

Adam en Eva kon skielik "sien", en as 'n resultaat besef dat dit nodig was om hulle skande te bedek. Hoe dikwels doen ons ook nie dieselfde nie. Ons sien ons swakheid, ons sonde en ons behoefte en in plaas van om na die enigste Een te gaan wat ons kan regmaak, probeer ons dit self doen. Ons kan nooit voor God op ons eie verdienste staan nie, maak nie saak hoe goed ons eie pogings is nie! Ons het Jesus se bedekking nodig, om Sy offer in geloof te aanvaar is die enigste aanvaarbare manier in Sy oë.

Vers 21 is die eerste sinspeling hierop. God self het hulle aangetrek. Iets het in hulle plek gesterf, sodat hulle velle kon hê om aan te trek! Hoe verstommend het Hy die draad van verlossing regdeur Sy Woord van Genesis tot Openbaring geweef.

Sy liefde reik af na ons regdeur tyd en nou nog steeds elke dag!

UIT ONS KANTOOR

Geliefdes in Jesus,

Die Here het die begin van hierdie jaar tot my hart gespreek, en gesê dat dit die tyd is dat ons geloof moet vermeerder! Dit moet in ons lewens plaasvind, nie net omdat Jesus in Luk. 18:8 gesê het: **Maar as die Seun van die mens kom, sal Hy wel die geloof op die aarde vind?** maar as gevolg van alles wat rondom ons gebeur! Ons lees in die Nuwe Testament in Heb.12:26-29; **Toe het sy stem die aarde geskud; maar nou het Hy belowe en gesê: Nog een maal laat Ek nie alleen die aarde nie, maar ook die hemel bewe. En hierdie woord: nog een maal, wys duidelik op die verandering van die wankelbare dinge as geskape dinge, sodat die onwankelbare kan bly. Daarom, omdat ons 'n onwankelbare koninkryk ontvang, laat ons dankbaar wees, en so God welbehaaglik dien met eerbied en vrees. Want onse God is 'n verterende vuur.**

Hierdie skudding wat besig is om plaas te vind voor die Here se wederkoms het `n tweevoudige doel. Die eerste doel, soos ek reeds gesê het, is dat God ons die geleentheid gee om ons geloof te vergroot en te beoefen in areas en situasies waarvoor ons vantevore glad nie geloof nodig gehad het nie! Nuwe situasies as te ware waarvoor ons moet glo dat die Here vir ons sal onderneem en Sy Woord uitvoer om ons ontwil! Ons word uit ons gemaksone geskud en ontmoet die uitdagende reuse, wat ons nog moet oorwin! En dit sal ons doen as ons ons vertroue in die Here stel, want wanneer ons Hom in hierdie nuwe situasies vertrou waarin ons ons bevind as gevolg van die skudding, is die geveg die Here s`n en daarom is ons oorwinning verseker. Geloof is om te glo dat God sal doen wat Hy in Sy Woord sê as ons doen wat Hy ons beveel om te doen.

Die tweede doel van die skudding is dat Sy kinders nader aan Hom sal beweeg omdat hulle Sy wysheid, leiding, beskerming en verlossing nodig het te midde van so `n verwarring! Dit is hartseer maar waar dat ons die Here meer intens soek in tye van onsekerheid en behoefte – en ons Hemelse Vader begeer dat ons Sy raad soek, sodat wanneer Hy ons veilig uit die storms gered het, Hy alleen die eer sal kry. Hy wil aan Sy kinders bewys dat Hy ons liefdevolle Hemelse Vader is wat by magte is om vir ons te onderneem, in enige en elke gegewe situasie!

Ons hoef nie te vrees nie, want te midde van hierdie skudding sal ons geloof uitgedaag word en sal sterker groei, ons sal `n groter intimiteit met ons Hemelse Vader ontwikkel, en ons sal sien hoe Hy die wonderbaarlike in ons midde doen!! Ek sê altyd dat almal `n wonderwerk wil ondervind, maar niemand wil in `n posisie wees waar hulle `n wonderwerk nodig het nie!! So laat ons na hierdie tyd kyk as `n tyd van ons voorbereiding vir die koms van die Here, sodat Hy in ons die soort geloof sal vind waarna Hy soek, want sonder geloof is dit onmoontlik om God te behaag.

Ons wil julle opreg bedank vir jul volgehoue gebede, liefde en ondersteuning, wat dit vir ons moontlik maak om na so baie uit te reik in ons land en oorkant ons grense, deur aan hulle die Woord van die waarheid en die verlossing van ons God deur Jesus Christus te bring en Sy voltooide werk op Golgota. Slegs die ewigheid sal die resultate van jul gebede en milde bydraes openbaar, soos julle jul skatte in die hemel versamel!

God moedig ons aan in Sy Woord, in
1 Kor. 15 vers 58: Daarom, my geliefde broeders, wees standvastig, onbeweeglik, altyd oorvloedig in die werk van die Here, omdat julle weet dat julle arbeid in die Here nie tevergeefs is nie.

Mag die Here julle ryklik seën

Baie liefde groete

Meg en die Gebedspan

KENNISGEWING

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INTRODUCTION TO THE KINGDOM OF DARKNESS

There is an ongoing battle between GOOD and EVIL taking place in the world. The forces of darkness verse the Kingdom of Light! Jesus said in John chapter 8 verse 12: **I am the light of the world; he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.**
The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the Good News of God's love for a lost and dark world in need of a Saviour. A Saviour Who would redeem man from the kingdom of darkness, headed up by Satan, and bring him into the Kingdom of God. A Saviour Who would reconcile man to his Maker. That is why God gave His Only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, to this world to die an horrific death on a cross. He died, was buried and rose from the dead after three days and He now LIVES, so that all who repent of their sin and believe in Him as their personal Saviour will LIVE with Him in Heaven for all eternity. **John 3:16: For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.** In addition to eternal life, the Bible tells us that Jesus came so that we might have abundant life here on earth! (John 10:10) Hallelujah! What a glorious message to give to men, women and children, and how wonderful to see them experience new hope and direction for their life.

When I received Jesus Christ as my Saviour and Lord, I became a child of God, according to John 1:12, which says : **But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.** Consequently, my whole perception and understanding of the spiritual realm was illuminated by the indwelling Holy Spirit and by God's Word. I experienced an overwhelming inner peace and joy. I simply knew without a shadow of a doubt that I had a personal relationship with a Living God,(now my Heavenly Father), which had been made possible by my faith in the redeeming work of Jesus on the cross. And even though I could not see Him, I KNEW that He is a reality and that He is alive, by the witness of the indwelling Holy Spirit.

However, I admit that it came as quite a shock to me to learn from God's Word that devil and demons are just as real, even though I could not see them with my physical eyes, and that I now had a personal enemy, named Satan! I was ready to dismiss this information as a fallacy or "fairy story"! However, the Bible soon convinced me that they do in fact exist, and that one of their most successful ways of operation, is by taking advantage of the fact that most people do simply deny their existence altogether! Because we are unable to perceive the spirit world, (the supernatural), with our physical eyes, does not do away with their reality or activity! In fact, that which we can see is temporary the Bible tells us, and that which is unseen is eternal. (2 Cor. 4:18). However, the church denomination I belonged to before I was saved, taught me that there were no longer demons today, so I need not worry!
Well, the Bible has a very different opinion on this subject, and, as it is the Inspired Word of God, (God breathed in fact), we can, with full confidence trust its contents completely and rely on its truths!

When Jesus walked on this earth, He cast out the tormenting demons which were affecting many sick people in His time. He called the sicknesses by their names and commanded the demons of blindness, deafness, infirmity etc. to "come out" of the ailing person. Now Jesus has given us, His believers, the authority to do the same in His Name! We read in Mark 16:15-20, that He instructed "those who believe" to cast out demons and lay hands on the sick in His Name, the name of Jesus, and that they would recover. In Matthew 28:18-19, Jesus tells His disciples to go and make other disciples and teach those new disciples to do all the things they had been taught by Him. Jesus said that this was to continue from generation to generation of new disciples (believers), until the end of the age. Well, Jesus' instructions have never been revoked, and the church age is still very much in existence, so the believers of this generation should still be actively involved in this aspect of ministry. He taught His disciples to cast out devils and they saw Him in action, and they saw the results! People were healed and delivered wherever He ministered, and the disciples learned by seeing Him set the captives free during His three and a half years of ministry here on earth. Jesus said that He had come to do the work of His Father, it is obvious therefore that His Father approved of what He was doing. (John 9:4).

When Dr James started taking the Word of God literally and personally, he was still a practicing medical doctor and attended to many sick people daily. One morning a blind man walked into Dr James surgery seeking a medi-

cal solution for his problem. The Lord prompted him to pray for him rather than send him to King Edward Hospital for a cataract operation. In obedience to Jesus' instructions in God's Word, he cast out the devil of blindness and commanded those eyes to "see!" in the name of Jesus. To his utter amazement, the man could see clearly. The demon of blindness had had to submit to that Name and depart from his eyes when commanded to do so, because of God's authority invested in that Name. The Bible tells us that the Name of Jesus is above ALL names, and in this case, even the name of "cataracts"! That man was not devil or demon possessed, however an evil spirit had affected his eyesight, producing cataracts. It is the nature of demonic powers to manifest themselves in the form of any and every known or unknown disease, sickness or disorder, as their objective is always the same, they are bent on the destruction of man because he was created in the image and likeness of God (Gen.1:27).

Medical Science may have a problem with these instructions of Jesus, but Medical Science has its limitations, despite the enormous strides that it has made over the past decades and even more so recently, especially considering all the new diseases that have manifested themselves in the last few years!

Take cancer, for example. Medical Science knows that some cancer results from cells "going insane" and multiplying, forming a mass. Its intention is to ultimately cause death! Scientifically speaking, there is yet no full understanding of the disease; however, it becomes obvious, according to the teaching of Jesus that this destructive infirmity is the result of demonic activity. When the demon of cancer is cast out in the Name of Jesus, it must depart from that body! And then, when it suddenly just disappears, members of the Medical Profession call it a "spontaneous remission"! However, it is a miracle healing of God that has taken place through Jesus Christ. I know that a believer has cast out the devil of cancer and prayed for healing, as Jesus commanded us to do in Mark 16:17-18. Jesus' whole purpose for coming to this earth was to destroy the works of the devil, according to1 John 3:8: **He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.**
Sickness is one of Satan's main works of destruction. **The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy** … *The thief is Satan!* {John 10:10).

Jesus Christ died on the cross at Calvary and His blood was shed to redeem man from the power of this Spirit Being called Satan, so we need have no fear as we expose him, his demons and his works of darkness. Always remember however that he is our enemy and we must always be alert according to God's Word in 1 Pet 5: 8 which says: **Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:** *He is a very sly and cunning enemy; even* though he knows that he has been defeated by Jesus on the cross. He operates through lies and deception and he relies on our ignorance of him and of his ways, in order to take advantage of us. Unaware of his evil, people often frivolously and jokingly call him all kinds of nicknames, and may even say things such as: "Today the devil was loose!" or "I am between the devil and the deep blue sea", or worse still, treating him as a mere myth! However, we are dealing with an enemy who has not left a stone unturned since the time of Adam and Eve right up to this day, in an effort to annihilate the crown of God's creation, the human race, because he is the enemy of God.
As believers in Jesus, we find ourselves automatically in a spiritual warfare whether we like it or not. We are called to fight the fight of faith and for this purpose we need to be spiritually equipped.
We know how important it is in any military confrontation to KNOW OUR ENEMY in order to succeed in battle, and as we are continuously locked in a spiritual battle with the enemy of our soul, we must firstly learn to KNOW his tactics, and secondly, we must KNOW what our spiritual weapons and armour are, in order to become skilled in the use and application of them.

SATAN AND THE EVIL POWERS IN THE AIR
Your first questions may be "Well, where did Satan and his demons come from in the first place, and why did a Holy Almighty God allow it to happen?"
In chapter 28 of the book of Ezekiel, the prophet Ezekiel relates how the word of the Lord came to him requesting him to proclaim to the Prince of Tyre, his pending fall, because he had become so high minded and arrogant, wanting to exalt himself to the place of ruling over everything and everybody! God used Ezekiel to warn the Prince of Tyre that he was in a similar position to that of Satan when he became filled with pride and rebellion and was thrown out of Heaven because of it. He thus reminds the Prince of Tyre of exactly how and why Satan fell, giving an account of it in this passage of scripture. So let us look at the following verses carefully. **Ezekiel 28:13 to 19.**

Then we read Isaiah's account of Satan's fall from Heaven in **Isaiah 14:12 to 17. How art thou fallen from heave, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How hart thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For**

thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; that mad the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners?

God gave His two prophets Ezekiel and Isaiah special revelations about this Being whom He created and who **was perfect in his ways from the day that he was created** (Ezek. 28:15) Yes, God created Satan "perfectly", just as He created ALL things perfect in the beginning! This beautiful Creation of God whom He called "Lucifer" and "son of the morning", desired even more might and power, and this dissatisfaction and pride caused him to rebel. He wanted to ascend into heaven, above the clouds, and be like the Most High God who had created him (Is. 14:12 and 14). We find the same, striving for power and authority in past and present world leaders of our day – think of Hitler and many present-day dictators in Africa, Asia and the Middle East, all of whom controlled by Satan's evil ambition at the cost of peoples' lives.

Satan was created perfect and so were his angels. But when this beautiful Archangel fell and was rejected by God because of his pride and arrogance, his followers fell with him. It is imperative that we understand at this point that God originally created Satan and his angels GOOD. Everything God creates is good, as we see in Genesis chapters 1 and 2, but after Satan and his followers had been cast out of heaven, they became evil. It is against this demonic army led by Satan that we have a continuous battle.

The Bible tells us that God made Adam a perfect Being after His own image and likeness to have a relationship with him and to be able to fellowship with him. Satan resented this and with this hatred towards God and His Creation in his heart, and bent on retaliation, Satan appeared in the form of a serpent to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. With great cunning and deception, he successfully tempted Adam and Eve to sin against God, and through their disobedience caused them to be expelled from the Garden of Eden. (Genesis 3 :24). You can imagine how delighted he was when they fell right into his trap! Satan has opposed all that God has created from the time of his fall to this very day. This spiritual war that is waging is actually for the precious souls of men and women. It is still to this day, Satan's prime aim to cause man to fall into sin but thank God for the VERY COSTLY PRICE that was paid at Calvary by Jesus Christ, His Son, so that we can have forgiveness of our sins and redemption from the Kingdom of darkness and be made heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. (Rom. 8:17).
God describes these rulers of darkness and this battle with our enemy which still exists today, in Paul's letter to the Ephesians, Chapter 6, verses 11 and 12: **Put on the whole armour of God that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.**

I want to once again however, emphasise the fact that God did not create Satan and his demons EVIL: they chose to become evil through rebellion to Him. God is a good and loving God and what He creates is always perfect. We read in Gen. 1:31: **And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good.**

However, that which God had created perfect became contaminated and perverted as a result of Adam's sin of disobedience, due to Satan's temptation, lies and deception. Sin and evil brought pollution and consequently mankind and this world came under God's judgement, according to Genesis chapter 3:8–20. Now it is only IN JESUS CHRIST that man can be reconciled to God through His Holy Blood which was shed at Calvary, and it is in His finished sacrificial work on the cross that we are made righteous because of His righteousness. It is ONLY by the power of God invested in the precious, Holy Blood of His Spotless Sacrificial Lamb, and in His Name-Jesus of Nazareth, that we can be freed from the wicked powers of Satan!

THE PRINCE OF DARKNESS

The Bible refers to Satan by many different names, and by their very meaning we have a clear understanding of his character and strategy. We read in God's Word that he is known as the dragon, serpent, devil, Lucifer, prince of the air, prince of this world, prince of darkness, Beelzebub, Belial, the adversary, the enemy, the tempter, the wicked one, the thief, a murderer, a roaring lion, a liar, an oppressor, a corrupter of minds. It is important for us to realise that Satan is a real Being. As we have already seen, titles and names have been given to him, and Jesus Himself addressed him as a living being when He was tempted by him in the wilderness, as we read in Luke 4:1-13.We know too that the Bible speaks of him as having power, lust, knowledge, pride and desires, and that he is able to speak, however he is not omnipresent and he does not know your thoughts until you verbalise them. He will tempt you to divulge what you are thinking by taunting you with his whispers and promptings of doubt, fear and unbelief or encouraging you to fall in his trap by committing a sin. As he slyly

feeds his lies into your ears, he can tell by your response if he has succeeded in getting you to believe them or not, your words and consequent actions will betray you. Deception is the name of his game and his success rate depends on whether you believe God's word in any given situation in your life, or his lies! Now if you do not know what God's Word says in your circumstances, you are easy prey for him. He masquerades as an angel of light, forever appealing to your reasoning and playing on your emotions! We read this in 2 Cor. 11:14, **And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.** It suits his aims and objects to appear as something which he is NOT and thereby taking full advantage of deception. He loves to work in the dark and "fear" gives him license to manifest his evil. God operates where there is faith, and Satan operates where there is fear.

Created by God as a beautiful, powerful angel with "a multitude of merchandise". (Ezekiel 28:1-16), he fell into the sin of pride and rebellion and wanted to take the place of God. (Isaiah 14:12-14), and because of this, he and a third of the angels who followed him, were cast out of Heaven. However, still to this day, he uses these attributes, viz. physical beauty, pride of possessions and material wealth, as temptations to lure man away from God. He knows exactly what bait to use as he fishes for the souls of men and women! We read what Jesus said in **Luke 10:18: And He said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.** Jesus was in heaven from the beginning with Father God, we know this from reading **John chapter 1 verses 1 and 14: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.**

Demons are fallen angels, they are personalities and they are numerous. They are spirit beings looking to make their abode where ever they find an opening, an obliging person. They require a human body in order to manifest their evil work. They are Satan's agents and are part of his kingdom and are submitted to his authority. Their aim is to destroy God's creation, especially the human race. Jesus cast them out and taught His disciples to do the same. He called them by name e.g. spirit of infirmity (Luke 13:11), unclean spirit (Luke 9:42), blind spirit (Matt. 12:22) deaf and dumb spirit (Mark 9:25) etc. I am convinced that behind every disease, is a demon spirit that manifests itself as the symptoms of that particular sickness, and needs to be cast out in the Mighty name of Jesus. The Bible not only speaks of their existence, but describes their activity, character, their abode and their fate! They have an appointed time when they will be judged and until then they strive to take up residence in human bodies. They do not live in hell as yet, according to Matt. 8: 29, and they are not the spirits of dead persons. They are not the progeny of angels and humans. They have a will, as we see in Matt. 12:44, and their strengths vary from demon to demon, as we are told in Mark 1 : 24 that some demons only come out by prayer and fasting. We read in Ephesians 6 verse 12 that demons have an order and are organized: **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.**

Although demons abide not in the truth and oppose God' creation, especially the believers in Jesus, we are assured that they are subject to Christ, and that being so, we need have no fear if we remain submitted to Him at all times.

It is obvious to all, believers as well as unbelievers, that in these days, crime, corruption, lack of morals, brutality, occult involvement and new life-threatening diseases are on the increase. These are the result of Satan and his demonic hordes in a battle to rule the world. Just as God uses people who are submitted to Him bring light and life on this earth, so Satan uses people who are submitted to him whether they are aware of it or not), to bring darkness and death!

Just before Jesus ascended to His Father in Heaven, we read the following in Matthew 28:18-20: And **Jesus came and spake unto them saying, All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.** Jesus told Hos disciples that He had been given ALL power and authority and that this authority He now entrusted to them in order that they were to go into His Name and continue the work that He had been doing during His earthly ministry. They understood that they were to make other disciples and in turn teach them to do the same, and this would continue to the end of the world. Jesus expected them to observe (practice) everything that He had shown them. What did Jesus say to His disciples when He sent them out? We read the answer in **Matthew 10:7-8: And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.**

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. (Luke 10:19)

The Bibles says ….. **"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you…. (James (4:7)** He has to flee because you are submitted to God and Jesus has given you His authority to use His Name!