

10 December 2017

## The actions of a believer (Pt.9) Live in the knowledge of the devil's device of discouragement.

This is our ninth study on this topic. We previously covered Satan's device of temptation, the believer's armour that protects against temptation, and the weapon he uses to attack. In this study we establish Satan's device of discouragement, our protective armour is the word of God, and our weapons include casting down imaginations, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

Scriptures upon which this teaching is founded.

### 1. Live in the knowledge of Satan's device of discouragement.

"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him" (Acts 10: 38)

Jesus cast out unclean spirits (Mk.5: 2 & 8) which are devils (verse 12) that would torment people (verse 7) to the point where they were "bound with fetters and chains", and they would cry and cut themselves "with stones" (verse 5). Hence the people that were "oppressed of the devil" would have been discouraged by reason of their torment. Once the devils were cast out those previously tormented were found "sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind" (verse 15).

### 2. Our armour against Satan's device of discouragement is the sword of the Spirit.

"Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Eph.6: 16 & 17).

When "the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits" (Acts 19: 13) the evil spirit replied "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?" (verse 15). Hence, before you take on the enemy – "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith" (2Cor/13: 5), and take the shield of faith. Then speak forth the words of God to the evil spirit (as Jesus did in our example in Mk.5: 8), which means spending time reading the word of God, memorising verses.

**Only then** we will be able to take up the sword of the Spirit as armour to protect ourselves against Satan's device of discouragement.

### 3. Our weapon against discouragement is casting down imaginations.

"Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2Cor.10: 5).

Applying the teaching to our life today.

"For when they went up unto the valley of Eshcol, and saw the land, they discouraged the heart of the children of Israel, that they should not go into the land" (Num.32: 9) c.f. Num.13: 17, 24, 28).

Question to think about.

Why did the children of Israel get discouraged when they heard the report of the spies – how the people of the land were "very great" (verse 28)?

My answer to our question from the scriptures.

Because they did not believe the words of God spoken by Moses, but rather believed the "evil report...saying, The land...eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature" (Num.13: 31 & 32). Therefore the hearts of the children of Israel were discouraged because they thought the people of the land would destroy them (Deut.1: 28), and they did **not** trust in the Lord. The devil places imaginations in our hearts, and thoughts in our minds to encourage us to **not** believe the words of God, just as he did Eve in Gen.3: 1.

Let us live in the knowledge of Satan's device of discouragement and use the armour and weapons that the scriptures provide to defend ourselves and attack our adversary, in doing so we will have "a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when our obedience is fulfilled" (2Cor.10: 5). Amen!