

“Deliver us from the evil one” – Part One

Yesterday marked the 20th anniversary of the heinous terrorist attacks on this country that took nearly 3,000 lives. We remember and give thanks for those who worked so hard to give comfort and hope in the immediate aftermath and those who continue to do so. As the recent programs on the twenty-year follow up showed us, there is ongoing suffering and many died from illnesses and diseases acquired as a result of those attacks. We mourn the loss of all and pray for those who survive though infirmed.

I had much to say about the terrorists who pulled off the most amazing terrorist attack in world history and how they did it, but I set that aside to focus on the warning words of Christ and how we can help others—offer them comfort and hope. I will note one thing that should be remembered about these murderers.

They were driven by what they called jihad, referred to in the West as holy war. They believed their God Allah told them to do this and was most highly honored by their deaths. I heard a replay of some of the last words in Arabic from the cockpit recorder on Flight 93 as it spiraled toward the ground. “Allan akbar” Allah is the greatest, said seven times.

“Deliver us from the evil one.” Matthew 6: 13

There was a reason Jesus told His disciples to include this line in the way they prayed. Satan, the fallen archangel who brought evil into the world and sin thru Adam and Eve. He is no mythic cartoon character nor are the angels that fell with him – demons who roam the earth wreaking havoc and destruction while they still have time.

I am preparing a series on all of that, but for now and the sake of time this evening, let me give you just a few of the words Jesus warned about this real, powerful, serious enemy. The late great evangelist, Billy Graham said this:

“Don’t think of Satan as a harmless cartoon character with a red suit and a pitchfork. He is very clever and powerful, and his unchanging purpose is to defeat God’s plans at every turn – including His plans for your life.”

Three times Jesus used the following words to define the role of Satan in this broken world:

*Jesus responded and said, “This voice has not come for My sake, but for yours. Now judgment is upon this world; now **the ruler of this world** will be cast out. John 12: 31*

*I will no longer talk much with you, for **the ruler of this world** is coming. He has no claim on me, John 14: 30*

*Concerning judgment, because the **ruler of this world** is judged. John 16: 11*

*Jesus went on to call satan “a **murderer** from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him...**for he is a liar and the father of lies.** John 8: 43-44*

The Apostle Paul wrote,

*And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case **the god of this world** has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. 2 Corinthians 4: 3-4*

One last word from the Apostle Peter,

*“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like **a roaring lion, seeking whom he may***

devour." 1 Peter 5:8

It is natural to ask after reading all of these foreboding verses about the power of satan, why don't events like this happen all the time? The answer, though it may cause some to ask even more questions about God, is that God has ultimate power and authority and that of satan is restrained under the sovereignty of God. satan may have rule or power of this world, but he is limited in the hell or havoc he and the demons can cause. I refer you to the story of Job to help answer and give understanding to this. We do not have time to dive into that here tonight.

Perhaps the first New Testament 9/11 type event was the **Massacre of the Innocents**. satan used evil King Herod to destroy all Jewish babies two y.o and under to make sure this new King of Whom the wise men spoke would never survive to reign. The first appearance of satan in the NT was the **temptation of Christ**.

Before we move on, I hope this has your full attention and a new understanding of the reality and ferocity of these enemies who began working not long after Creation—knowing their time is short-lived with the imminent return of Christ. We know demons even spoke with Jesus.

"What do you want with us, Son of God?" they shouted. "Have you come here to torture us before the appointed time?"
Matthew 8: 28-29

I hope this brief overview and factual rendering scares the hell out of you literally!

We will finish this message next time.

For Christ's sake,

Walter