

*“Teach that
troubled, tempted
one how to
handle the shield
of faith.”*

“SAY TO THEM THAT
ARE OF A HASTY HEART,
BE STRONG, FEAR NOT!”
ISA. 35:4



Be still.

Satan under your feet.



shut them up in a cave. But the victory was not complete.

Joshua ordered the five kings to be brought out of the cave; and he said to his captains, “Come near, put your feet upon the necks of these kings.” And they came near and put their feet upon the necks of them. And Joshua said unto them. “Fear not, nor be dismayed; be strong and of good courage, for thus shall the Lord do to *all* your enemies against whom we fight.”

And afterward, Joshua smote them and slew them.

Our “Joshua,” Jesus, has conquered Satan and all his hosts, but it is necessary that they should be brought out and that we put our feet upon their necks in order that we may enter into and experience the absolute victory which He has wrought for us.

O Christian, it is *your* feet that God wants in order to tread upon Satan. In other words, it is *you* who are to do the treading; and it is God who communicated the power to enable you to do it.

When the believer fights with the armour of God, the conflict is never long (Eph. 6). It is through experience that the Christian learns to apply these truths in order that they may be wrought in his life. Every difficulty, every attack upon his circumstances, will be a call to overcome in the victory of his glorious Lord.

THE SECRET OF POWER

“Why could not we cast him out?” (Matt. 17: 19-21).

Conflict with the powers of darkness is a great test of our faith.

The disciples had been sent forth fully equipped with authority to deal with the power of the enemy. They had heard Christ say, “Behold, I give unto you power [Greek: *exousia*—authority] to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy.”

See also Luke 9:1, “He called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases.”

And yet when it came to a difficult case of possession, they were defeated.

Excerpts from

SATAN - A DEFEATED FOE

by Charles H. Usher

“The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly” (Rom. 16:20).

Note in this scripture that Paul did not say under Christ’s feet but under *your* feet. This experience is based upon Christ’s victory at Calvary.

In the third chapter of Genesis we read that the Lord God said to the serpent, “I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; IT *shall* BRUISE *thy* head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.” This has reference to Christ bruising Satan at Calvary’s cross. Here we see Christ’s foot on Satan’s head.

And in Luke 10:19 we read, “Behold, I give unto you power to *tread* on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy.”

Note the three references to treading on Satan:

First, Christ’s foot on Satan’s head, bruising

him. Second, the right given to the believer to tread on Satan’s head and bruise him. Third, the promise of God, giving the victory of Christ, in power to appropriate by faith the victory of Christ in order that Satan may be under our feet.

In Romans 16:20, we see God using a human instrument to crush Satan, and that human instrument is the body of Christ.

Many souls lack confidence to put their feet upon Satan’s neck. They are satisfied that Christ did it, and they leave it at that. But the victory that Christ obtained over Satan must be appropriated by His Church. **All that Christ has done, the Church must enter into, especially His victory over Satan.** Many souls who have entered into other aspects of the Cross utterly fail when they come to face this. The link between Christ’s position with His foot on Satan’s neck, and the Church, is an act of faith in which the believer puts *his* foot where Christ’s is.

O child of God, put your foot down where Christ has put His.

This is very clearly illustrated in Joshua 10:24 and the context. Joshua had defeated the five kings, stripped them of all their power, and

The forces against which they were contending proved too much for them.

Look for a moment at the scene: A demon-possessed boy, and the spirit in possession very stubborn; the whole atmosphere surcharged with evil spirit power; the unbelieving Pharisees; the critical crowd, full of excitement; the brokenhearted but doubting father; and the boy, the centre of the crowd, under the control of this malignant spirit. What an appalling atmosphere in which to realise the power of God!

How many of God's children have been placed in similar circumstances, not literally a repetition of this scene but like it in many ways. The church of God, generally speaking, has been very reluctant to acknowledge demon possession. But facts are stubborn things, and many who in the past have fought against the whole subject have been forced to face it by being brought into contact with cases of clear demon possession.

The presence of satanic power has a paralysing effect upon the spirit and heart, as these disciples proved. They found themselves powerless and baffled.

Brother, are *you* up against a baffling situation? the foe in full possession? critical onlookers watching your every action and talking over all you do, and you feeling ready to run away from the whole thing? And yet you dare not quit because you know that the name of Christ is at stake, to say nothing of the poor sufferer who would be left to continue in his torture.

Let us look at the cause of failure in the case before us, and we may find therein the reason why *we* are not casting the foe out of his stronghold in *our* particular conflict.

"Why could we not cast him out?" asked the disciples. "*Because of your unbelief,*" answered Jesus. They must have had some idea of their own as to the cause of their failure; but not being certain, they asked the Lord. Did it surprise them when they got the answer? The devil had assailed their hearts with unbelief, but he had also cunningly hidden the fact from them, so that they did not recognise it.

We must not forget that the disciples had received power to cast out demons. Had that power failed them? Had it proved inadequate to meet the need?

What had become of the endowment which had been bestowed upon them, resulting in some degree of success, so much so indeed that on one occasion they had returned to Christ rejoicing that the demons had been subject unto them? Had He who had given the power withdrawn it? Who was to blame for the failure?

Has Christ withdrawn His power, or is it dammed up by our unbelief? Are tortured souls to languish in the hell of suffering while we look on, helpless to aid their deliverance? Bound souls all around us are crying out for liberation from the grip of the enemy who is holding them in bondage. **What answer are we giving?** The disciples tried though they failed. There are few who are even doing that today. Unbelief is clever at self-justification.

THE POWER HAS NOT BEEN WITHDRAWN

Christ has not withdrawn His power, but *faith* is the condition for its manifestation. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever. At Pentecost He gave the Church an endowment of power which has never been withdrawn. It is true, however, that that power must be adjusted to present-day conditions.

Faith is the capacity for receiving spiritual power. Alexander Maclaren says in his book entitled *The Secret of Power*: "We receive all spiritual gifts in proportion to our capacity, and the chief factor in settling the measure of our capacity is our faith. Here on the one hand is the boundless ocean of the divine strength, unfathomable in its depth...; and on the other hand is the enemy aridity of our poor weak natures. Faith opens these to the influx of that great sea, and according to our faith, in the exact measure of our receptivity, does it enter our hearts."

Jesus Christ laid the responsibility upon the disciples themselves for their failure to cast out this demon.

"I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him," was the cry of the disappointed father. And Jesus said, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me" (Matt. 17:17). Because of unbelief they were powerless to use the gift of power and authority which they possessed.

There is a close relationship between spirit and heart. The Holy spirit dwells in our spirit as His centre of operation, but if the heart is assailed by unbelief, *that* effectively hinders the Holy Spirit from using the human spirit as an instrument for the manifestation of His power.

In Mark 11:22, 23, Jesus Christ, in these words, warned the disciples of this danger of unbelief hindering God: "Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, that whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed... [an expression of spirit] and shall not doubt in his heart, *but shall believe that these things which he saith shall come to pass*; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, *believe that ye receive them*, and ye shall have them."

One little doubt, if allowed to remain, hinders the Holy Spirit. Get rid of the doubt, and the power will come. How are you treating that sense of weakness which you experience in facing satanic power? Call it unbelief of heart and refuse it, claiming Calvary's victory over it. That sense of fear which comes to you, are you yielding to it, calling it natural, dispositional?

Call it unbelief. "Perfect love casts out fear." If the devil can fill you full of fear, he knows you will be powerless to hurt his kingdom.

It is the heart full of faith that draws near to God with boldness. "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith" (Heb. 10:22). When unbelief is in the heart, all boldness Godward goes, and we are powerless in the face of the foe. For just to the degree that we have power with God in prayer, to that degree

shall we have strength given us to resist and overcome the enemy.

"Having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience." We may have power in our spirit and yet God may not be able to use us in the higher work of dealing with evil power because of a bad conscience. We may be weak on points of righteousness. Our conscience may not be very highly attuned regarding the finer points of right and wrong, and we may not know that *that* is the cause of our powerlessness in face of the devil's onslaughts. Satan may be entrenched in the affairs of our lives, continually harassing us, snatching away the weak ones, making inroads into our circumstances, and we unable to stop him. **If our conscience is not attuned, our spirit is dulled to discern the foe and powerless to resist him.**

HOW CAN WE HAVE A HEART FULL OF FAITH SO THAT WE MAY EVER BE AT GOD'S DISPOSAL FOR THE MANIFESTATION OF HIS POWER?

"Then came the disciples to Jesus apart [Let us get alone with Jesus!] and said, Why could not we cast him out?" (Matt. 17:19). Let us own up that there is a cause in us for the failure. Let us not think that our past success is a guarantee of present victory.

Jesus said, "Because of your unbelief." Are we prepared to face plain facts? If not, let us not seek an audience with the Master. "And Jesus said unto them... If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you." The effect of an audience with Jesus Christ will be that we shall have our mind adjusted to the actual cause of the failure and to the secret of success.

The disciples had lost the true perspective. They had been so occupied with the foe and the need that they had lost sight of Christ's way of looking at things; hence their impotence.

By prayer and fasting, the heart and spirit are equipped for the conflict with satanic power.

PRAYER

Prayer keeps the heart and spirit attuned to God and full of faith. Prayer is spiritual exercise. **The spirit grows strong through use.** If *prayer* is neglected, the spirit flags. Nothing can take its place; service can never be substituted for it. Some are too busy in Christian work to give much time to prayer, and so the demons are not cast out.

What would you think of the woodsman who declared that he was too busy felling trees to sharpen the axe? or the soldier who was too actively engaged fighting the enemy to sharpen his sword? It is in prayer that the inner victory is gained over the enemy before he is faced in the open. He who grapples with the foe on his knees before he stands up to face him finds him already beaten and the victory won.

FASTING

If we are to keep a keen, alert, strong spirit, there are some things that must be denied—things that are right in themselves but have a

dulling, deadening influence upon the spirit. It is here that the heart must be disciplined. There are longings in the heart for legitimate things, which if yielded to will take the keen edge off the spirit life and unfit us for the higher spiritual ministry.

The importance of fasting in order to overcome satanic power is clearly seen in Revelation 12:11. "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death."

It is the love of our lives that weakens our spirits and makes us unfit for the fight.

No great achievement is obtained without sacrifice. When one thinks of the discipline and training necessary for those climbers who attempt Mount Everest in order to fit them to endure the hardships involved in their effort to overcome that great mountain, one gets some idea of the thought expressed here of loving not our lives even unto death. In the case of the mountaineers the slightest self-indulgence would lessen their chances of success.

Even so, our fight with supernatural powers for the mastery calls for the greatest possible endurance. It puts the greatest possible demands upon our spiritual strength, and any unfitness lessens our chances of final victory.

So few of us know what spiritual discipline means. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God," i.e., full-grown sons. To be "led by the Spirit" means much more than is often understood by that phrase. It means obedience—the sacrificing of the soul life for the spirit. The soul is the seat of our natural life, with all its emotions, feelings, desires, and its yearnings for self-gratification and love.

This natural life must be denied if the Spirit is to be obeyed and union with Christ is to be maintained. It is this self-denial which constitutes true fasting and gives the spiritual strength and endurance which can "withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand" until the enemy is forced to yield.

BECAUSE OF THEIR UNBELIEF

"And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief" (Matt 13:58).

Unbelief weakens the arm of omnipotence. It bound the hands of the Almighty Christ when on earth. Unbelief cripples deity. It lies at the root of all other evils. It was first planted in the heart of Eve; and it was through unbelief that Satan established his power in the world.

Unbelief turns our Edens into wildernesses—our days into nights. We often wonder why there is an absence of God's power in our lives, why we see so little of His hand working for us. If we track out the cause, we shall discover it to be *unbelief*.

The writer to the Hebrews gives us warning in the third chapter and twelfth verse: "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God."

Unbelief in the heart causes a lack of power more than the reasoning faculties. It is the *heart* that is wrong. Sin is the cause. Call unbelief sin

and refuse it, claiming the cleansing blood to remove it from the heart, and faith will spring up in its place. Unbelief in the heart causes a lack of heart action. There is no spring of faith toward God. There is a deadness which produces prayerlessness, joylessness and an inability to trust.

The unbelieving heart questions everybody and everything; it is suspicious of others' motives, even of God's. It sees wrong where none exists and has no eyes to see it where it does. It puts wrong construction on the actions of others, thus binding them up and making it difficult for them to act. It creates an atmosphere of suspicion which stifles the liberty of the Spirit.

Doubt hinders God from removing the mountains of difficulties which are in our lives.

Christ said to His followers. "Have the faith of God [margin]. For verily I say unto you, that whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed and cast into the sea;... he shall have whatsoever he saith." But He warned them *not to allow doubt to enter their hearts*.

The reason why our "mountains" are not removed is unbelief. We pray over them, but often our very prayers spring from a spirit of fear

A HEART FILLED WITH FAITH REMOVES ALL LIMITATIONS FROM GOD.

born of unbelief. Faith is not at the source of our petition.

Oh! watch the heart that it does not let in doubt. Withstand the assaults of unbelief and learn to use the shield of faith which alone can quench the fiery darts that Satan and his evil spirits are ever ready to fling at the Christian warrior.

WHEREFORE DIDST THOU DOUBT?

"And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?"

Little faith is inclined to be very showy, and it often finds itself in circumstances which expose it to the fiery darts of doubt.

Peter learned that to walk on the water needed more faith than he possessed. His return journey to the boat, upheld by the omnipotent hand of Christ, was a walk which he never forgot.

Child of God, have the stormy billows of adverse circumstances dampened *your* faith, causing *you* to doubt? Maybe *you* thought you could walk to Jesus on the waves of your life's environment, but they have proved too tempestuous for you. He has stood by and allowed you to get a wetting **in order that you might learn what is in your heart, and being brought to an end of yourself might trust alone in Him.**

Has your venture of faith failed? Have you said to yourself, "Never again! I will stay in the boat henceforth and be an ordinary Christian. I ought never to have taken that step?"

Christ did not rebuke Peter for making the

venture. he even encouraged him, saying, "Come." But He reproved him for *doubting* after he had made it. He said to him, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou *doubt*?"—not "wherefore didst thou *come*?"

Have you thought of this? It may be quite as much a mark of unbelief to say "never again" as it was to doubt after venturing on that walk on the water!

Faith may lead you through strange paths, unfrequented by the rank and file of believers, but it will bring you through safely. It is not the correctness of the walk that ensures the aid of God but the state of the heart that prompts it. One who is full of faith may often make mistakes—may be lacking in judgment, and hence come in for severe criticism from the wise—but God sees the *heart* and turns the very mistakes into blessings.

Those who stay in the boat will never realise the supporting arm of Christ leading them, as He led the drenched disciple, back to safety...

HAVE PITY ON MY SON...

All the pleadings of that distressed father could not rouse sufficient faith in the disciples to cast out the malignant spirit that raged in the poor lad.

The crowd looking on saw absolute failure, which brought discredit to the name of Jesus Christ. How powerless is the Church of God today to deal with such cases!

"Why could we not cast him out?"

The answer was—and still is—"because of your unbelief... this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting."

Unbelief robs us of prayer; it blinds us to the true cause of the trouble; it hinders us seeing in Jesus Christ the cure for our ills; it turns us to men, to put our trust in their skill instead of in God's.

"O faithless... generation... how long shall I suffer you? Bring him to me."

Pour your heart to Him as this distressed father did; listen to him! "If thou canst do anything, have compassion on us and help us"—note the *if*. But Jesus in words full of compassion and sympathy said, "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." And there was something in the words of Christ—in the tone of His voice, in the very presence of the Redeemer—that created in the poor burdened heart the cry, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief"; or, in other words, "I believe; help me to get rid of my unbelief."

Herein lies the cure for *our* unbelief—the presence of Christ, the words of encouragement which spring from His lips, the trust in Him to help us to get rid of it.

How many are struggling alone with their doubt and despair? Bring your case to Christ; bring your unbelieving heart to Him; let Him take charge of you and your burden, and deliverance will come.

Have you told the Lord about your unbelief? Have you asked Him to help you get rid of it? If not, try it. You will soon find that it will pass away and your prayers will be answered.

A heart filled with faith removes all limitations from God. ♦

After the devil, the angels.

ONLY LET US BE STEADFAST,
AND, LIKE OUR LORD, WE SHALL
RECEIVE CELESTIAL
CONSOLATION. — SPURGEON

The Spirit within Him drove Him out into the wasteland, past all villages, all nomads, all water, out to where blazing sun and burning sand drained away His strength.

"It is here she was tempted," He whispered as He cast His eyes across the endless dunes of sand. "She lived with Me here. I provided her every need, yet she would have forsaken Me for bread. She tried Me...once and again she tempted Me, even dared Me. She preferred to worship a golden calf than to deal with the greater task of worshipping a God she could not see."

He would have raised Himself to a higher vantage point, but forty days without nourishment had taken a dreadful toll upon His body. The young Carpenter collapsed and fell into the searing sand. A few minutes later He woke with a start and struggled to His feet.

"There is someone here! Nearby! How could anyone find this forsaken place?"

In the distance He saw a beautiful, shimmering light—a light very definitely moving toward Him, gliding smoothly over boulder and sand... as a serpent might glide across the earth.

"Tis he!" cried the Carpenter as He balanced Himself and then ran, unhesitatingly, toward the glowing figure. The distance separating them swiftly grew small as they approached one another. Suddenly, both paused. Like two gladiators they circled, each eyeing the other in wonder.

"So this is the one who came to my ancestor, Adam!" thought the Carpenter as He searched out every feature of the beautiful creature before Him.

"So this is God...in human form!" cried the other to himself, hardly able to hide his bitter joy! "God! Visible! God! Locatable! God, here, in dimension, time and space! God, on my planet! God, incarnate, inside the flimsy protection of blood, bone and skin! God! Vulnerable! God! Killable!" he almost cried aloud. Never had the Adversary dared dream of such a dark and wondrous opportunity!

The archangel at last broke the silence. His voice was enchanted, containing, it seemed, all the loveliness of the spheres.

"Sooo," he sang, "So, the one claiming to be the Son of God."

"I am Jesus of Nazareth. A carpenter by trade.

Born of woman."

"Are You not the Son of God?" demanded the shimmering creature. With those words—and that challenge—the angel of light reached down and cradled a large, smooth stone in his hand.

"You are hungry! Weak unto death," he continued, biting out the last word. "If You be the Son of God, here! Turn this stone to bread and eat!"

The young Carpenter stared long at the stone.

"So this is how it feels to be a man tempted—face to face—by the Tempter. So this is how My creation, Adam, felt that day in the Garden.

"Ah, and here I am now, receiving the same temptation Israel did when she was in this selfsame desert...lo, even in this very place!"

As the young man stared at the stone, He felt the ache in His belly, the renewed spasms in His legs. Then, lifting His head and looking full face into the eyes of the waiting angel, He wavered. He was feeling temptation now, and He knew it. Then, from deep within His bosom He began to recall the ancient times, and heard His own words! Strength surged out of His Spirit into His body!

"Lucifer! Have you forgotten? It is I who recorded it!

"Man shall not live by bread alone!"

"Man shall live! He shall live..." The Carpenter moved His hand toward His own bosom. "Man shall live by every word that is spoken from the mouth of God!"

A moment of rage flickered across the face of the angel, then, smiling gently, he raised his hand. Instantly, the scene changed and the two were standing atop the highest pinnacle of the Temple. The Carpenter was poised precariously at its edge.

"If You are the Son of God, jump...from here! You know, full well, it is written that He will command His angels to guard You. They will not allow You to strike the stones below," he continued sweetly. "They will bear You up."

The Carpenter eyed the dazzling heights. His weakened frame began to collapse under Him. But in the same instant the unseen realm opened before Him. It was true; He could see them; a legion of angels were poised to lunge forth at His slightest word. Again His mind raced back to Israel. So often she had dared question His care for her. Again, His own words welled up from within His inmost being. His knees braced. Boldly, even serenely, He turned.

"Lucifer, have you forgotten? I have recorded it:

"You shall not tempt the Lord, your God."

The archangel, caught off guard by so sure a response, was dazed by the Carpenter's words. For an instant his own knees, which in some bygone age had so often bent to his God, momentarily buckled. Quickly he jerked himself free of this brief sanity and raised his hand again.

Once more the scene changed. They were now on some incredibly high mountain overlooking the whole world. Below them, glistening in garland beauty, were all the great kingdoms of the past; beside them the kingdoms of the present. Beyond them, plainly visible out there

in the future, were kingdoms yet unknown. Some were glorious, some powerful, others luxurious, still others sparkling in splendour.

"You have come, I know why," hissed the angel. "You have come to rule! To rule this earth. Then, let us make short work of Your task. You know that all kingdoms upon earth—past, present and future—are mine! The angel paused, giving full opportunity for a rejoinder.

The Carpenter chose not to challenge a statement which both knew to be true. The angel moved very close, his words sounding like the chimes of heaven.

"I will give to You these kingdoms, all of them! You may rule them all—and this whole planet with them! They are not only mine, but it has been delivered to me that I may give them...to whomever I please."

Again the Carpenter disputed not the angel's words.

"I will give them all... to You. You need do but one thing, and one thing only: Fall down here... now...and worship me!"

The young man looked again at the Kingdoms. Every fibre in His being ached. He was weary beyond words. Tired, terribly tired. The task before Him seemed so wearisome, so unutterably difficult, with a price which must be paid that seemed, for a moment, far too great.

But once more the young man bolted upright. Something He had said to Israel was singing within His depths.

Be gone, Satan!

It has been recorded,

You shall worship the Lord, your God!

You will serve Him... Him, alone!

The angel quaked in astonishment at so strong a rejoinder; for an instant his body spasmed, his face contracted, the light of his being dimmed. Slowly he willed back his strength, the glow of his light brightening once more.

"I shall leave You, for the moment."

At the very instant the fallen archangel vanished a company of elect angels appeared, even as their Lord crumpled on the rocks. After a few moments of angelic care, the perilously weak young man opened His eyes; a smile broke across His blistered face; words formed upon His cracked lips.

"Did you see? I ask, did you see?"

The angels nodded an embarrassed assent.

"Did you see?" He cried again, struggling to His feet. "I beat him! Neither was the Garden scene nor Israel's fate repeated here, this day. This time he lost. And he lost to a man! He lost to Me, not as God. He lost to Me...as Man! As surely as he once beguiled man, today he lost...to...a...man!"

Excerpt from

THE DIVINE ROMANCE by Gene Edwards

*By thy conquering Spirit led,
We shall put the fiend to flight;
Bruise again the serpent's head,
Triumph in Messiah's might.*