

I Corinthians First Things First VII notes

At the Cross, Jesus dealt a death blow to Satan—the enemy of our souls. He is a defeated foe.

--However, he will spend his last breaths in attempting to harm Christians and thwart the work of the church.

--Peter warns: **1 Peter 5:8**

--God has certainly disarmed Satan and his angels with regards to believers—he has no eternal power over us, but don't think that he cannot cause us temporary harm.

We ended last time looking at a semi-controversial verse in the book of Deuteronomy: **Deuteronomy 32:8**

This is a troublesome verse because scholars in the past have had a hard time making sense of it – in fact, it didn't make sense.

--The nations were divided at the tower of Babel in **Genesis 11**
several hundred years after the flood.

--The Bible describes **70-some-odd nations** that were created from this event in Chapter 10 (I misspoke last time and said chapter 12)

--If anything, we are certain that God didn't divide them according to the number of the “**sons of Israel**”-- Abraham wasn't even born for 260 years and Israel had only twelve sons, but there are far more nations listed in Genesis that were divided off.

We saw that much older manuscripts differed from this translation of **Deut. 32:8**

--The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Septuagint do not say “**according To the sons of Israel**” **but** “**according to the Sons of God**”.

--Several of our more modern translations follow this better rendering: ESV, RSV, NLT, Common English, New American Bible, MSG.

Deuteronomy 32:8-9

God takes Israel to be His and effectively gives the jurisdiction of the rest of the nations to the angels.

--Which angels? The bad ones, which can be demonstrated through a number of means:

One, why did God divide them? Because of sin and rebellion (was the consequence good or bad angels put in charge? What would you have done?)

Two, what has been the result of these angels overseeing these peoples and nations? Have they followed God? Have they been friends of or enemies of the chosen people of God?

--It's interesting that though many of the belief systems in the ancient world held to a creator God, they all believed that that Creator either no longer existed or was not uninterested in their welfare

--They mostly believed that they were ruled by lesser gods who they formed worship systems around.

Interesting that this was the belief of many native American cultures.

--Native Americans believed, in general, that the Creator was unavailable and that they had to appease these lesser gods through

service and sacrifice.

- Modern people look back and say, “how primitive and uninformed” but all our ancestors followed some form of this system in the past.
- The same ancestors that we consider dumb built the pyramids and all the marvelous ancient structures as well as written languages and mathematical systems that we follow to this day.
- These “ignorant people” are the patriarchs of how we live and think.
- These were very smart people and yet very oppressed by supernatural forces.
- This oppression was a judgment of God from the Tower of Babel.

Israel became a beacon of light and truth (supposed to be) and was set in the center of nations.

- Ezekiel 5:5; 38:12** – “Tabur” in the Hebrew that can be literally translated “belly button”
- All languages point to this as the middle or center: from Israel east, all languages are written from right to left. From Israel west, all languages are written from left to right—Israel is the middle of all of it.
- God sent Abraham out from his people and land to a place “that He would show him”
- Why Canaan? Have you ever been there? One of first things I thought when I went there was: “this place?” it’s totally unimpressive
- Why there? Because it was a geographic and cultural center of all these nations that were divided off after the Babel incident.
- It sits at the crossroads of Asia, Europe and Africa.
- Lying angels in Greece claimed the center was in Delphi where the Delphi oracle was—they wanted the world to come to them.
- Easter Island made this claim also as did Cusco, Peru (Incas) and Bodh Gaya, India where Buddha supposedly gained his enlightenment.
- By reading the Bible we can know that this was a pervading deception was a very real thing.
- They were lied to by fallen angels who were their overseers by God’s judgment.

Three: A third way we can know that these were fallen angels is by following our rules of interpretation. What was the belief of the Jews and the early church—how did they interpret this?

- Without exception the Jews and early church believed that God had given the world away to an array of dark lords underneath the sway of the ultimate dark lord himself, Satan.

Four: What is the witness of Scripture about these angels?

Luke 4:5-6 – Notice, Jesus doesn’t argue with the Devil over the issue of him having control of all the nations.

Daniel 10:12-13; 20-21--This is angelic warfare; these are spiritual principalities that are behind all the powerful kingdoms and world regimes.

Ephesians 6:10-12 – Paul was the apostle to the Gentiles—He was sent to go into these foreign territories and take on very old and very evil enemies.

- There is no reason for us to think that anything has changed regarding these spiritual rulers and forces of wickedness—they are still large and

in charge.

If we only think of the spiritual darkness and spiritual warfare in terms of comparatively low-life demons whose goal is to wreck individual lives and cause people to do crazy things, we are missing the biggest part of what spiritual darkness is up to.

--It is a slight of hand; they want you focus on these “scary” things so that you do not see what’s really going on.

--These “scary” demons are manifesting underneath some bridge through a homeless person, all the while, far more powerful fallen angels are in boardrooms controlling heads of state.

Worldview is extremely important. We have to learn to see our world the way the Bible sees it.

--According to the Bible, this is what we are up against: highly powerful and sophisticated spiritual rulers of wickedness who are influencing and controlling the masses.

--These entities have geographic principalities, territories and jurisdictions as well as armies both human and non-human.

--They are referred to this way on numerous occasions in the New Testament: **Romans 8:38; Ephesians 3:10; 1:21; Colossians 1:16; 2:15; 2:10; Titus 3:1; Ephesians 6:10-12**

--They are earthly rulers, but they aren’t physical.

Revelation 2:26-27 – Who’s ruling the nations now?

--**They are committed to stopping us.**

This is what Paul is underscoring for us: our problem isn’t flesh and blood.

--Remember, Paul lived in day when rulers were some of the worse that have ever lived and who commanded vast resources.

--But Paul said, “our problem isn’t them, it’s what’s behind them”

--This is why he says we have to put on spiritual armor because the real enemies are spiritual.

Israel failed to be the example and the light that God had called them to be, but the church has now been sent out from the same location (the belly button of the world) to call people to repentance and faith in the one true God.

--Our mission is simple, make disciples of all nations.

--Jesus promised us that the gates of Hades (place of the dead and the power of spiritual death) will not prevail against us.

--Satan and his angels still wield the power of death over the ones who haven’t believed but they are powerless to stop Jesus’ people.

--Our job is steal back from death itself those who have been owned by it.

--What we are learning is not to make you fearful but to make you fearless.