

MILITANT PEACE

And the God of peace will crush satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen. (Romans 16:40). To help us understand this verse, let's look for a "who," "what," "where," "when," and "why."

(1) **Who** does this great work in verse 20? The answer is of course God, but the answer is more full than that. The God of Peace will crush Satan under your feet. This verse describes the God of peace as the victorious warrior who will crush Satan under our feet. Our peace is guaranteed because God is at hand or God is with us. He will show Himself as a mighty man of war (future tense). But the God of Peace has already crushed the head of Satan. This takes us back to a promise from long ago and leads us to our "what" question?

(2) **What** Promise? The promise of Genesis 3:15. Even after Adam sinned, God made a grace filled promise when addressing the devil, "***I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring*** (Jesus); ***He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.***" This promise of God is called the "the first gospel". Even after man's original and greatest rebellion, the Lord graciously promised to overcome the sentence of death by allowing for men and women to procreate. And from that procreation, a Saviour would come who would ultimately defeat man's enemy - satan. The moment man chose to walk away from his gracious creator, choosing death over life, God promises to defeat the very evil he had invited in.

The whole satan thing is very interesting. There are two extremes here. Some people attribute everything to satan. But I think the more dangerous extreme is that many people don't even mention him because it seems illogical, superstitious, or ignorant to believe that some evil force, who hates God and seeks to destroy His children, actually exists! The greatest trick the devil ever pulled was convincing the world he doesn't exist. Scripture, however, makes it clear that satan is a very evil enemy of those who believe in Jesus Christ. With the reality that satan is a "personal enemy" of God's people, the promise that God will ultimately defeat him is reassuring. To ignore the fact that satan is your enemy is incredibly unwise and unsafe. Even though God promises to defeat this enemy.

(3) So if satan is going to be crushed, **where** does that happen? Now before I answer that let me make a few clarifications here. God and satan are not in some epic battle that rages back and forth. This is not a battle between two super-powers! God in His sovereignty permits satan to operate as he does. Satan cannot do a single thing without the permission of God. Otherwise, God would be subject to satan. We see this in the book of Job where the extent of satan's reach is only that which God allows, and if you read the text clearly, it is God who picked that fight, not satan. However, satan legally acquired a term of dominion on the earth through the fall of Adam, so God devised a plan to redeem His people through the second Adam - Jesus Christ. Since Jesus took on human flesh (Hebrews 2:14-18) even as we have, yet remained sinless (as we did not), being God, His death and subsequent resurrection have the power to overcome the penalty of death for all of those who have faith in Him. In living and dying and being raised to new life righteously, Jesus disarms the power of death held by satan in the lives of believers.

He did this by offering a sacrifice that appeases the wrath of God so that the power of death is broken, and if the power of death is broken in the believer's life, then satan does not have any power over you. Remember, "death" isn't only physical death, it is anything that the devil has control over in your life. James says that when sin is fully grown it brings forth death (James 1:15). Certainly, satan wants to hinder, diminish and impede any work you might do to advance the Kingdom of God. But his power of death over your life has been broken through Christ.

(4) Now this is encouraging, but **when** does it all happen for you personally? Look at Paul's language. The God of Peace is going to crush satan under your feet. Being united with Christ by faith, His defeat of satan is your defeat of satan. Through Christ, you personally have defeated your enemy. So you might ask yourself, "When will satan be crushed under my feet?" Right now! Through Christ, you have defeated the work of your enemy. The answer is found in Colossians 2:13-15, ***"And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it."***

Jesus personally triumphed over the devil. So, when God gifts you with faith, when He transforms you from 'dead in your sins' to 'alive in Christ Jesus', He makes you personally triumphant over all the forces of darkness. Your enemy satan, and his evil accomplices, are put to shame. According to Colossians 2, you were dead in sin, and therefore, were held captive to his powers. You were separated from God.

But God has redeemed you and He has given you the same power over the devil as Jesus has. He totally and effectively disarmed satan and the powers and rulers of darkness. In fact, Jesus openly puts the devil to shame and triumphs over him. The word triumph there is the same word used for a Roman victory parade. The Lord leads a triumphant parade on your behalf because He has defeated your enemy and you are now more than a conqueror.

(5) **Why** did God do this? The answer is; so that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ might be with you. Everything that God does is to bring Himself glory. Practically, in the life of the child of God, bringing God glory means that Jesus defeated satan so that you might walk in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Paul celebrates this in his wonderful blessing by saying, ***“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.”***

Now, back to the opening statement... ***“And the God of peace will crush satan under your feet shortly.”*** Notice that the God of peace is not passive, but has a militant “warring” spirit. The mere presence of the God of peace brings about the crushing defeat of your enemy the devil. In Samuel 5:1-5 God humiliates the idol Dagon. ***“Then the Philistines took the ark of God they brought it into the temple of Dagon and set it by Dagon. And when the people of Ashdod arose early in the morning, there was Dagon, fallen on its face to the earth before the ark of the Lord. So they took Dagon and set it in its place again. And when they arose early the next morning, there was Dagon, fallen on its face to the ground before the ark of the Lord. The head of Dagon and both the palms of its hands were broken off on the threshold; only Dagon’s torso was left of it. Therefore neither the priests of Dagon nor any who come into Dagon’s house tread on the threshold of Dagon in Ashdod to this day.”***

Rick Heeren brought out another aspect of this powerful spiritual principle. He mentioned Matthew 10:13, ***“If the household is worthy, let your peace come upon it. But if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you.”*** Implying that we have the power to release the God of peace into any situation. In Luke 10:5-6 when Jesus send out the seventy He reconfirms this, ***“But whatever house you enter, first say, ‘Peace to this house.’ And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest on it; if not, it will return to you.”*** Remember this, when the God of peace is present all the works of the devil are destroyed. Satan is crushed under your feet.