

EVEN THE DEMONS

JAMES 2:19

Week of January 30 – Prayers that Make the Demons Quake¹

Overview:

We live in a profoundly spiritual world that undergirds all that we do, feel, and act. While invisible, this world is more real than we know. But into this spiritual darkness, Jesus' light has crashed in to replace lies with truth and destruction with power. Jesus also gives believers that same authority over darkness. **"Even the Demons"** believe this and shudder, knowing they are already defeated!

This final lesson in the series will give us hope as we adapt Scripture language to become prayers that give us the Holy Spirit's power in our struggle against darkness. We hope you will engage each week and recognize that ultimately, **Jesus has all power and authority over all things and empowers believers with that same authority to bring God's kingdom here on earth.**

Group Objectives:

- Reflect on this past Sunday's message and other devotional reading.
- Pray together and provide encouragement for other group members.
- Have each person consider how they encounter Jesus daily.

DNA statement(s) tie-in:

- *We are all for Jesus.* We know God best through Jesus, our Savior, Sanctifier, Healer, and Coming King. Jesus has power and authority over all things.
- *We are empowered by the Holy Spirit.* God the Father speaks to us through the Bible, and we commune with him through prayer.

Conversation Starters:

- Share a time when you experienced fear during the last couple of years.
- Have there been times in your life when you wondered if the struggles you were facing came from the activity of the enemy? If so, share more.

Read and Reflect: Inductive Bible Study Discussion

This week's text is Psalm 91. Read the text aloud as a group.

Introduction

*The "tone" of Psalm 91 includes warfare, battle, conflict, and fighting. It conveys an atmosphere of daily, oppressive enemy attack. With this in mind, we need to discern, "Who is the enemy?" Descriptors like "fowler's snare" in verse 3, "terror of night" and "pestilence that stalks in the darkness" in verses 5 and 6 suggest "the Devil and his demons" according to Dr. Chuck Swindoll. Dr. Swindoll also states that this "battle is in the unseen spiritual realm. This explains our need for angelic and divine intervention. Because our enemy, in this case, is supernatural in strength, we need supernatural help."*²

Another translator interprets verses 4-5 "You will never worry about an attack of demonic forces at night nor have to fear a spirit of darkness coming against you. Don't fear a thing! Whether by night or by day, demonic danger will not trouble you, nor will the powers of evil launch against you."³ He goes on to note that images in verse 13, "the lion and the cobra; the great lion and the serpent," are descriptors of satanic power in Hebrew literature.⁴

¹ This week's lesson was written by Wendell Nelson and edited by Dawn Gentry

² Swindoll, *Living Beyond the Daily Grind*, 262.

³ The Passion Translation, Psalm 91.

⁴ Ibid, footnotes for verse 13.

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As believers, we are not immune from the presence of wickedness, evil, demonic influence, or a hostile world system (John 17:15), but God has a strategy for our protection as we join in his redemptive mission in our broken world. There are many ways in which the enemy fights with God's people to get them off course or off mission. He employs everything from fear to nightmares, strange accidents, clouds of depression, tension in relationships, or self-deprecating thoughts, etc.

Observation on the Text

- This Psalm is filled with images, word pictures, and names for God. Which ones stand out to you? What do they teach us about God?
- What are some of the blessings for those who “rest under the shadow of the Almighty?” (Vs 1-8)
- What are some of the blessings for those who “make the Most High your dwelling?” (Vs 9-13)
- What are some promises for lovers of God? (Vs 14-16)

Interpretation & Application of the Text

- What do you think the Psalmist was thinking when he wrote “dwelling in the Shelter of the Most High” or “to rest in the Shadow of the Almighty?”
- How would you describe the author's intent in writing this Psalm?
- How might the original audience have understood this Psalm?
- What might it look like for you to “rest under the shadow of the Almighty?”

Summarize and Respond

- What would you say are some of the traits, values, and priorities of a “lover of God?” (Vs 14)

Dr. Simmons translates verses 14 -15, “Because you have delighted in me as my great lover, I will greatly protect you. I will set you in a high place, safe and secure before my face. I will answer your cry for help every time you pray, and you will find and feel my presence even in your time of pressure and trouble.”⁵

- Where do you need God's protection and help amid the pressures and challenges of life in our broken world these days as you engage in the mission God has called you to?

Prayer Prompts:

- As we engage in this battle of the ages with Jesus, note his prayer for his followers:

“I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one. My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world.” (John 17:11,15-18)

- Consider rewording this prayer in first person (pray these things for yourself).
- Invite members of the group to share personal prayer requests.

To Learn More:

- **Plan to attend the Soul Care conference with Rob Reimer, Thursday, February 3 – Saturday February 5.** This event will explore 7 principles that can lead to lasting transformation, freedom, and a healthy soul. Reimer is an ordained minister, author, and equipper whose passion is to see the kingdom of God advance through spiritual renewal. **Register at <https://cccomaha.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/947190>**

⁵ The Passion Translation, Psalm 91.