

# Stand Firm - Living in the End Times

## I. A Biblical Parallel

Acts 16:16-30 (NIV®) (Philippi)

<sup>16</sup> Once when we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave **girl who had a spirit by which she predicted the future**. She earned a great deal of money for her owners by fortune-telling. <sup>17</sup> This girl followed Paul and the rest of us, shouting, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who are telling you the way to be saved."

<sup>18</sup> She kept this up for many days. Finally Paul became so troubled that **he turned around and said to the spirit**, "In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!" At that moment the spirit left her.

<sup>19</sup> When the owners of the slave girl realized that their hope of making money was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace to face the authorities.

<sup>20</sup> They brought them before the magistrates and said, "These men are Jews, and are throwing our city into an uproar <sup>21</sup> by advocating customs unlawful for us Romans to accept or practice."

<sup>22</sup> The crowd joined in the attack against Paul and Silas, and the magistrates ordered them to be stripped and beaten.

<sup>23</sup> After they had been severely flogged, they were thrown into prison, and the jailer was commanded to guard them carefully.

<sup>24</sup> Upon receiving such orders, he put them in the inner cell and fastened their feet in the stocks.

## II. Hierarchy of Satan's Kingdom

### A. Strong in the Lord

Ephesians 6:10-13 (NASB®)

<sup>10</sup> Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. <sup>11</sup> Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. <sup>12</sup> For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, **against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places**. <sup>13</sup> Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.

### B. Jesus Referred to Satan as the Ruler of This World

John 12:31 (HCSB®)

Now is the judgment of this world. Now the ruler of this world will be cast out.

### C. Satan is the Ruler of a Kingdom

Ephesians 2:2 (NIV®)

. . . you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.

### D. These "Forces of Darkness" Have a Structure

### E. Demons — Personal "Torment", Demons are "Tormentors"

Matthew 9:32-34 (NIV®)

<sup>32</sup> While they were going out, a man who was demon-possessed and could not talk was brought to Jesus. <sup>33</sup> And when the demon was driven out, the man who had been mute spoke. The crowd was amazed and said, "Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel." <sup>34</sup> But the Pharisees said, "It is by the prince of demons that he drives out demons."

## F. Regional Spiritual Authority

Daniel 10:12-14 (NIV®) [Daniel's vision of an angel]

<sup>12</sup> Then he continued, "Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them. <sup>13</sup> But **the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days**. Then Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, because I was detained there with the king of Persia. <sup>14</sup> Now I have come to explain to you what will happen to your people in the future, for the vision concerns a time yet to come."

## STANDING FIRM is our posture of victory

### III. Kneeling, An Expression of Yielding, A Form of Worship

Psalm 95:6 (NIV®)

Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the LORD our Maker;

#### A. Jesus' Exalted & To Be Honored

Philippians 2:9-11 (NIV®)

<sup>9</sup> Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, <sup>10</sup> that **at the name of Jesus every knee should bow**, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

#### B. NO OTHER GODS BEFORE ME, 1<sup>st</sup> Commandment Issue

Isaiah 45:23-24 (NIV®)

<sup>23</sup> By myself I have sworn, my mouth has uttered in all integrity a word that will not be revoked: **Before me every knee will bow**; by me every tongue will swear. <sup>24</sup> They will say of me, 'In the LORD alone are righteousness and strength.'" All who have raged against him will come to him and be put to shame.

Romans 14:11-12 (NIV®)

<sup>11</sup> It is written: "'As surely as I live,' says the Lord, '**every knee will bow before me; every tongue will confess to God.**'" <sup>12</sup> So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God.

#### C. Satan Rebelled Seeking to Usurp God's Place, He Wants the Worship Rightly Due to Jesus

Matthew 4:8-10 (NIV®)

<sup>8</sup> Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. <sup>9</sup> "**All this I will give you, he said, if you will bow down and worship me.**" <sup>10</sup> Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'"

#### D. Revelation is the Account of God's Judgment at the End of This Age; Evil Destroyed & Righteousness Rewarded

Revelation 13:11-12 (NIV®)

<sup>11</sup> Then I saw another beast, coming out of the earth. He had two horns like a lamb, but he spoke like a dragon. <sup>12</sup> He exercised all the authority of the first beast on his behalf, and made the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose fatal wound had been healed.

Revelation 13:15-17 (NIV®)

<sup>15</sup> He was given power to give breath to the image of the first beast, so that it could speak and cause **all who refused to worship the image to be killed**. <sup>16</sup> He also forced everyone, small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on his right hand or on his forehead, <sup>17</sup> so that no one could buy or sell unless he had the mark, which is the name of the beast or the number of his name.

Revelation 14:9-10 (NIV®)

**"If anyone worships the beast and his image** and receives his mark on the forehead or on the hand, <sup>10</sup> he, too, will drink of the wine of God's fury, which has been poured full strength into the cup of his wrath. He will be tormented with burning sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb.

**Prayer** — adopted from Ephesians 3:14-21 (NIV®)

For this reason we kneel before the Father, from whom his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name. We pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen us with power through his Spirit in our inner being, so that Christ may dwell in our hearts through faith. And we pray that, being rooted and established in love, we may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge--that we may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

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