



TREE OF LIFE
T A B E R N A C L E

PROVERBS 3:18

Relational Authority

Part 6

Guarding the Covenant
Borders

Part Five Highlights — Attacking Strongholds

- Strongholds form when ungodly thoughts go uncontested long enough to become identity, behavior and repeated patterns of defeat. What we repeatedly agree with eventually governs us.
- Yeshua never allowed thoughts, contradictions or imaginations to mature into agreement; truth of Gods spoken Word interrupted the process immediately. **Matthew 4:1-11**
- Believers must stop excusing spiritual bondage as merely “weakness” and identify strongholds honestly through the truth of God’s Word. **Romans 12:3, Deuteronomy 29:19**
- Temptation itself is not defeat; victory begins by resisting immediately, speaking truth and bringing thoughts captive through the spoken Word of God. **James 4:7, Ephesians 6:17**
- Idolatry is never spiritually neutral, behind false worship are demonic powers seeking agreement, influence and bondage. **Deuteronomy 32:16-17, Revelation 9:20**
- We are the temple of God and must remove all idols from the heart and life. **Ezekiel 14:3-5**
- Gideon tearing down Baal’s altar = shalom comes after idols and strongholds are removed. **Jdg 6:23-27**
- Everything allowed into our lives should endure both the washing of water (repentance) and the testing fire of God (Holy Spirit). **Numbers 31:21-23, Mark 1:4, Matthew 3:11, Malachi 3:2-3**
- Believers must remove what causes stumbling, pray for strength against temptation, tear down idols, Shema with every part of their being and stand firm against the devil with the Word of God. **Matthew 5:29, 1Corinthians 10:13, Deuteronomy 6:4-5, James 4:7**
- After strongholds are removed, believers must refill the empty space with God’s Word and Spirit or vulnerability returns. **Matthew 12:43-45, Colossians 3:16, Romans 12:2**

When the enemy crosses borders:

- We'll start by looking at what happens when darkness intrudes into the covenant, commandments and Gospel work. God backs his servants when they are operating under His authority.

Acts 13:4-12 So, sent out by the Ruach ha-Kodesh, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus. When they arrived at Salamis, they began to proclaim the word of God in the Jewish synagogues. They also had John as a helper. When they had gone throughout the whole island as far as Paphos, they found a man who was a magician—a Jewish false prophet, whose name was Bar-Yeshua. He was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, an intelligent man. This man summoned Barnabas and Saul and sought to hear the word of God. But Elymas the magician (for so his name is translated) was opposing them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith. But Saul, who is also Paul, filled with the Ruach ha-Kodesh, fixed his gaze on him and said, “O you, full of all deceit and trickery, son of the devil, enemy of all righteousness—will you not stop making crooked the straight paths of the Lord? Now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you shall be blind and not see the sun for awhile.” Immediately, cloudiness and darkness fell upon him, and he went about seeking people to lead him by the hand. When he saw what had happened, the proconsul believed, because he was astonished at the teaching about the Lord.

When the enemy crosses borders:

- Notice that they were sent by the Holy Spirit and backed by the Holy Spirit – Powerful! **Isaiah 58:11** Guidance = Provision
- Authority and Jurisdiction: Paul and Barnabas didn't force an audience; they were invited to speak, and the sorcerer openly resisted both the message and the proconsul who requested it.
- Since they were invited, and the Holy Spirit had guided...
- The Holy Spirit empowered Paul to confront Elymas directly, resulting in temporary blindness that protected the meeting and opened the door for Sergius Paulus to believe.
- Notice that Paul doesn't make the first move, the enemy does through a false prophet. Setting Paul on the higher legal ground since the enemy is now interfering with both a mission from God and an invitation from the authority (proconsul, Sergius Paulus).

When the enemy crosses borders:

Acts 12:1-4 Now at that time Herod the king seized some from Messiah's community to do them harm. He had Jacob, John's brother, put to death with the sword. Seeing it pleased the Judean leaders, he proceeded to capture Peter as well. This was during the Days of Matzah. After seizing him, he put him in prison, handing him over to four squads with four soldiers each to guard him. He was intending to bring him before the people after Passover.

- Herod (an Edomite) would have known about the Torah, no excuses for him!
- He killed James/Jacob and imprisoned Peter without cause.
- Herod is acting under demonic influences to run interference and stop the Gospel from spreading.
- The sorcerer was evil, but he didn't murder anyone. He was only blinded.
- ***“To whom much is given, much is required” ~ Luke 12:48b***

When the enemy crosses borders:

Acts 12:21-24 On an appointed day, Herod (Agrippa I) donned his royal robes and, taking his seat upon the throne, began to make a speech to them. The people were shouting, “The voice of a god and not a human!” Immediately, an angel of the Lord struck him down—because he did not give God the glory. And he was eaten by worms and died. But the word of God kept on growing and multiplying.

- Scholars say Herod didn't die immediately but died a slow excruciating death over a length of time.
- The 2nd Herod (The Great, from the book of **Matthew**) to die a similar death. Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews 17.6.5: describes putrefaction, worms, unbearable internal suffering.

Isaiah 14:11 Your pomp is brought down to Sheol with the music of your harps. Maggots are spread out under you, and worms cover you.”

When Satan's agents intrude into places they have no authority...

- **Even though Herod was a King, he had no legal right to kill James/Jacob. He had no right to imprison Peter.**
- **Then, God moved against Herod.**
- **Elymus (Bar-Yeshua) had no right to interfere with the Gospel, Paul was guided by the Spirit and was invited to speak about the good news.**
- **God moved against Elymas.**
- **God's judgement fits the crime:**
 - **Herod killed, God killed him.**
 - **Elymas interfered, God made him an example for the Gospel.**
- **When demonic presence tries to interfere with God's will – Look out!**
- **God will not leave you helpless on His missions. He will respond.**

When Satan's agents intrude into places they have no authority...

- There are certain things that the enemy does in crossing lines, that end up sealing his own fate!
- Paul, no doubt knew of Pharaoh and his false magicians from the Torah and applied this logic to Elymas.

Exodus 7:8 Adonai told Moses and Aaron, “When Pharaoh speaks to you saying, ‘Prove yourselves with a miracle,’ then you are to say to Aaron, ‘Take your staff and cast it down before Pharaoh, so that it may become a serpent.’” So Moses and Aaron went in to Pharaoh and did as Adonai had commanded. Aaron threw down his staff before Pharaoh and before his servants, and it became a serpent. Then Pharaoh called for the wise men and the sorcerers, and they too, the magicians of Egypt, did the same with their secret arts. For each man threw down his staff, and they became serpents. But Aaron’s staff swallowed up their staffs. Yet Pharaoh’s heart was hardened. So he did not listen to them—just as Adonai had said.

- **The Game is on! A direct demonic challenge to a move of God. Satan is pressing the issue giving God an opportunity to amplify His power!**

When Satan's agents intrude into places they have no authority...

- **Moses wins through God, because Satan overplayed his hand!**
- **This is a great sign to Pharoah to not listen to the magicians.**
- **Great authority is displayed through Moses, because Satan overplays his hand.**
- **Gods power displayed is intended to complete what God intended, His mission...**

Act 13:12 When he saw what had happened, the proconsul believed, because he was astonished at the teaching about the Lord.

The greater the demonic interference, the greater the miracles:

Deut 26:8 Then Adonai brought us out from Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with great terror, and with signs and wonders.

Because God is Greater than Satan!

1John 4:4-6 You are from God, children, and you have overcome them, because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world. They are from the world, so they speak from the world and the world listens to them. We are from God; whoever knows God listens to us, but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

- When we are walking in Gods Calling/Authority you never know when there is going to be a demonic manifestation that will force you into conflict, but if your going about the work of God, not intruding uninvited where we don't belong, you have every reasonable expectation to see God supernaturally move by standing behind you!

When Satan's agents intrude

Acts 16:16-24 It so happened that as we were going to prayer, we met a slave girl who had a spirit of divination, who was bringing her masters much profit from her fortune-telling. Following after Paul and us, she kept shouting, saying, “These men are servants of El Elyon, who are proclaiming to you the way of salvation.” She kept doing this for many days. But Paul was irritated and turned and said to the spirit, “I command you in the name of Messiah Yeshua to come out of her!” And it came out of her that very moment. But when her masters saw that the hope of profit was gone, they grabbed Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the authorities. And when they brought them to the chief authorities, they said, “These men are throwing our city into an uproar! Being Jewish, they advocate customs which are not permitted for us to accept or practice, being Romans.” Then the crowd joined in the attack on them. So the chief authorities ripped their clothes off them and commanded them to be beaten with rods. After inflicting many blows on them, they threw them into prison, ordering the jailer to guard them securely. Having received this charge, he threw them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.

- God specifically directed Paul to Macedonia after the Ruach blocked multiple other destinations and gave a vision calling them westward into Macedonia. **Acts 16:6-10**
- This was a strategic movement of the Gospel into Europe and a major expansion of Kingdom influence. (Some of the greatest long-term fruit: churches, missionaries, Gov)
- The mission began peacefully through Lydia and her household on Shabbat. **Acts 16:11-15**
- As often happens when God's Kingdom advances, demonic opposition emerged quickly through a spirit of divination. **Acts 16:16-18**
- The spirit publicly identified Paul and his company: "***These men are servants of the Most High God...***" The danger was not false words, but false association, attempting to attach demonic endorsement and confusion to the Gospel witness.
- Notice Paul does not react immediately: "***She kept doing this for many days...***"
- Paul discerns, weighs and responds carefully according to the Spirit's timing and protocol.
- This differs from Cyprus (**Acts 13**), where Paul and Barnabas were directly invited before the proconsul and confronted Elymas in an official setting.
- Paul was not roaming around looking for spiritual fights; he dealt with darkness when it interfered with God's mission and covenant assignment.
- Deliverance led immediately to persecution, false accusation, imprisonment and spiritual pressure, showing how darkness resists Kingdom advancement. **Acts 16:19-24**

Don't pick the fights, let God finish them

- The apostles did not go hunting darkness, they confronted it when it attempted to interfere with God's covenant purposes.
 - Elymas interfered
 - The Sorceress impeded
- When we pick a fight, we're not following protocol or all the scriptural examples of these types of confrontations.
- When Satan interferes with God's plan, we're on the 'high ground' and God will move through us powerfully.

Ephesians 5:11 Take no part in the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them—



**Spiritual authority cannot be imitated
mechanically or used apart from relationship
with God.**

Acts 8:18-24

Walk in the power of the Covenant!

Most High God – El Elyon

Mark 5:7-8 Crying out with a loud voice, he said, “What’s between You and me, Yeshua, Ben El Elyon? I’m warning you, in the name of God, do not torment me!” For Yeshua had said to him, “Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!”

▪ That’s exactly what the angel Gabriel told Mary:

Luke 1:32a He will be great and will be called Ben-Elyon.

▪ Often in scripture Demons referred to Yeshua as “Most High” or “Son of God” – Putting themselves on Par with God’s authority.

Luke 4:41, Mark 3:11-12, Mark 5:6-7, Luke 8:28...

▪ Just as Yeshua refused demonic testimony concerning His identity, Paul rejected demonic endorsement of the Gospel mission in Philippi.

Biblical Wisdom

- These Biblical examples establish a protocol in dealing with the Devil!
- The greatest vindication will come not when we're looking to battle, it's when the battle came to us. (To our 'Turf').
- Stirring up devils everywhere you go is not a mark of great faith, it's a mark of foolishness.

Psalm 27:1-3 Of David. Adonai is my light and my salvation: whom should I fear? Adonai is the stronghold of my life: whom should I dread? When evildoers approached me to devour my flesh—my adversaries and my foes—they stumbled and fell. Though an army camp besieges me, my heart will not fear. Though war breaks out against me, even then will I be confident.

Psalm 27:11-14 Teach me Your way, Adonai, and lead me on a level path—because of my enemies. Do not turn me over to the desire of my foes. For false witnesses rise up against me, breathing out violence. Surely I trust that I will see the goodness of Adonai in the land of the living. Wait for Adonai. Be strong, let Your heart take courage, and wait for Adonai.

God flipped the script on the enemy!

- Oh yeah, after the sorceress confronts Paul, the demon is removed!
- Then Paul and company are flogged and imprisoned.
- But that's not the end of the story:

Acts 16:25-32 But about midnight, Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was such a great earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. Immediately all the doors were unlocked, and everyone's chains came loose. When the jailer woke up and saw the prison doors opened, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing the prisoners had escaped. But Paul cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Don't harm yourself! We're all here!" The jailer called for lights and rushed in; and trembling with fear, he fell down before Paul and Silas. After he brought them out, he said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" They said, "Put your trust in the Lord Yeshua and you will be saved—you and your household!" Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him, along with everyone in his household.

Protocol for Confronting Darkness

- We are submitted to God and walking within covenant obedience.
James 4:7, Ephesians 4:27
- We have clear direction, assignment or leading from God.
Acts 16:6-10, Matthew 28:18-20
- We remain within the boundaries and authority God has given us.
Luke 10:19, Romans 13:1, Mark 5:35-43 (Don't test God)
- We do not go looking for spiritual fights or act presumptuously.
Matthew 4:5-7, Jude 1:8-10 (Don't test God)
- We discern the source, timing and protocol before responding.
Acts 16:16-18, Proverbs 3:21

Protocol for Confronting Darkness

- If darkness interferes with God's mission, covenant or assignment, we confront it through the authority of Messiah.
Luke 10:17-19, Acts 13:8-11
- We respond with truth, obedience and the spoken Word of God.
Ephesians 6:17, Matthew 4:1-11
- We resist the devil while remaining submitted to God.
James 4:7, 1Peter 5:8-9
- We seek restoration, freedom and peace, not spectacle or spiritual pride.
Judges 6:23-27, 2Timothy 2:24-26

Most important:

- Stay under authority yourself!
- It's important that we remain under God-ordained authority and within covenant alignment.

James 4:7 Therefore submit to God. But resist the devil and he will flee from you.

Hebrews 13:17 Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as ones who must give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no benefit to you.

Encouragement and Questions:

Encouragement:

- **Wow, I'm in the same situation the apostles were in, and God did that for them while serving, God can do that for me while I'm serving!**
- **Notice how we will face demonic opposition especially when we are obedient to God?**

Questions:

- **What does this teach us about when confrontation is appropriate versus when it's presumption?**
- **What might "overplaying the hand" look like today, especially in moments where the gospel is being advanced?**



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Part Six

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Questions & Comments!**