

**Rejected By Israel
Taking On the Enemy And Reclaiming The Nations**

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As we clearly saw last time we were together, Jesus conducted offensive warfare operations against the enemy and did so consistently.

Luke 19:10

“For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.” (NASB 2020)

God declared war against the enemy in Genesis 3, and He meant it. Jesus went to specific locations, enemy strongholds, in order to demonstrate His mastery over the enemy. He did it, time and again, on the enemy's own turf.

“...the ultimate reason why Jesus became a man, carried out his ministry, died a God-forsaken death on the cross, and rose again from the dead was to destroy the devil and place under his foot all his cosmic enemies (e.g., 1 Jn 3: 8; Heb 2: 14). The incarnation, then, was an ultimate act of war, as the early church saw consistently.” (Boyd 1997, 201)

Jesus empowered His followers, first the disciples and then the 70 to go out and announce the coming kingdom with power. The same power He was exercising.

With so many of his followers being cast out of nice warm hosts, Satan needed to come up with another plan as he was rapidly losing the war. Hint, what Jesus did on the cross was a victorious achievement of Jesus Christ over all.

The reversal is already but not yet.

Satan though turned to the religious leaders, who were already in his hip pocket. We saw where they attributed what Jesus was doing to the actions of Satan.

Matthew 12:22–32

Then a demon-oppressed man who was blind and mute was brought to him, and he healed him, so that the man spoke and saw. And all the people were amazed, and said, “Can this be the Son of David?” But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, “It is only by Beelzebul, the prince of demons, that this man casts out demons.” Knowing their thoughts, he said to them, “Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and no city or house divided against itself will stand. And if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? And if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges. But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. Or how can someone enter a strong man’s house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? Then indeed he may plunder his house. Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters. Therefore I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven people, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. And whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.” (ESV)

Three basic affirmations emerge: (1) God was at work as Jesus cast out demons; (2) the Gospel writers specifically attribute God’s work in Jesus to the Spirit (or “finger”) of God; and (3) God’s work in Jesus is associated with the arrival of the kingdom of God. (Longman III and Reid 2010, Kindle Locations 1209-1211)

Jesus solemnly warned the religious leaders against rejecting Him. Their rejection of Jesus—especially considered what they had seen of Jesus and His work—showed that they were completely rejecting the Holy Spirit’s ministry. That ministry is to testify to Jesus, hence the warning of committing the unforgivable sin. (Guzik 2013, Mt 12:30-32)

Do we think that as believers in the 21st century we have it any better? As we saw last week, the effort to marginalize us is in full operation.

Are religious leaders rejecting Jesus today?

John 15:18–22

“If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A slave is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will persecute you as well; if they followed My word, they will follow yours also. But all these things they will do to you on account of My name, because they do not know the One who sent Me. If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin.” (NASB 2020)

Revelation 3:14–22

“To the angel of the church in Laodicea write the following: “This is the solemn pronouncement of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the originator of God’s creation: ‘I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either cold or hot! So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I am going to vomit you out of my mouth! Because you say, “I am rich and have acquired great wealth, and need nothing,” but do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind, and naked, take my advice and buy gold from me refined by fire so you can become rich! Buy from me white clothing so

you can be clothed and your shameful nakedness will not be exposed, and buy eye salve to put on your eyes so you can see! All those I love, I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest and repent! Listen! I am standing at the door and knocking! If anyone hears my voice and opens the door I will come into his home and share a meal with him, and he with me. I will grant the one who conquers permission to sit with me on my throne, just as I too conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne. The one who has an ear had better hear what the Spirit says to the churches.’”(NET)

2 Timothy 4:1–4

“I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.” (ESV)

Paul has nailed it, he has provided an accurate view of the United States in 2018.

A fundamental principle of human behavior is that you do what you believe. The country’s present situation suggests that Americans are on a course to engage in an increasing body of unbiblical behaviors without guilt or restraint. Almighty God can cause us to repent instantly should He so desire, but His preference is to give us the consequences of the exercise of our free will. (Barna 2016, Kindle Locations 359-362)

That fewer and fewer Americans possess a worldview predominantly shaped by the Bible is a testament to the “relevant” preaching offered in growing numbers of churches, as well as to the absence of biblical teaching and discussion in homes and schools. Because our studies have convincingly shown that a person’s Bible knowledge is largely developed during their formative years, the absence of Bible training during the childhood and adolescent years of most young Americans argues against the likelihood of the United States becoming a biblically literate country in the foreseeable future. The Bible’s role in our society will continue to diminish without an intentional and concerted effort on the part of those who appreciate it. (Barna 2016, Kindle Locations 730-734)

The ultimate end of a heightened investment in practical biblical instruction must be clearly understood. It would be the widespread embrace of a biblical worldview, wherein Christians possess sufficient scriptural knowledge and comprehension to make intelligent and biblically sound choices. With less than 10 percent of the adult born-again population currently possessing a biblical worldview, there is plenty of room for growth! (Barna 2016, Kindle Locations 641-644)

We have arrived at the place where many have itchy ears, no one wants sound doctrine anymore. There is a complete lack of belief in the existence of the supernatural and the things of God. “A third of America’s adult population - about eighty-one million people- believe ET has been phoning home from a domestic area code, and only 10 percent of us-about twenty-four million-believe in God as He is described in His book. In other words, doctrinally sound, Bible-believing Christians are outnumbered in America by ET believers three to one. (Peck and Gilbert 2017, 2)

As we described last week, the days of being able to do what we enjoy doing, teaching through God’s word, may be numbered.

People no longer feel a need to read the scriptures must less study it.

The need for revival could not be more apparent, the need for the church to repent and return to our first love is not just needed, it is required.

Jesus’ first coming was in a similar environment, and He was rejected by the religious establishment, much like today.

Jesus began teaching in parables after the events of Matthew 12. And we see Him beginning to move His ministry more towards the gentiles.

After crossing swords again with the religious establishment Jesus moved north, into Tyre and Sidon.

After being rejected by the religious establishment, Jesus goes north. Remember what the north means to the Jew. Nothing good has ever come out of the north for them.



(Bolen 2012, Used with permission)

Deuteronomy 3:8–11

““So at that time we took the land from the hand of the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, from the Valley of Arnon to Mount Hermon (Sidonians call Hermon Sirion, and the Amorites call it Senir): all the cities of the plateau, all Gilead, and all Bashan, as far as Salecah and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan. (For only Og king of Bashan was left of the remnant of the Rephaim. Behold, his bed was a bed of iron; it is in Rabbah of the sons of Ammon. Its length was nine cubits, and its width four cubits by the usual cubit.)” (NASB 2020)

There are cows of Bashan and then there are cows, the Golden Calves representing false gods also referred to as the Bulls or Cows of Bashan. The comment is normally not one of livestock, but a reference going all the way back to the original intrusion of the fallen angels. These calves were adopted by Jeroboam when he split away from Israel and he led the northern kingdom into idolatry, soon followed by Judah.

1 Kings 12:26–31

“And Jeroboam said in his heart, “Now the kingdom may return to the house of David: If these people go up to offer sacrifices in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, then the heart of this people will turn back to their lord, Rehoboam king of Judah, and they will kill me and go back to Rehoboam king of Judah.” Therefore the king asked advice, made two calves of gold, and said to the people, “It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Here are your gods, O Israel, which brought you up from the land of Egypt!” And he set up one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan. Now this thing became a sin, for the people went to worship before the one as far as Dan. He made shrines on the high places, and made priests from every class of people, who were not of the sons of Levi.” (NKJV)



(Bolen, Dan aerial from east 2012, Used with Permission)

Further north from there was another perceived dark spiritual stronghold at Mount Zaphon. 40 km to the north of Ugarit, Jebel al-Aqra' rises to the height of about 1770 meters. The identification of Jebel al-Aqra' with mount Zaphon in the Ugaritic texts, first proposed by EISSFELDT (1932), is unanimously accepted. Its peak being often shrouded with clouds, Mount Zaphon was regarded as a holy mountain in the mythological and ritual texts of Ugarit. (Niehr 1999, 927)

In the Ugaritic mythological tradition, Mount Zaphon receives its holiness from Baal's palace built on its peak (KTU 1.3–4). Nearly always in the mythological texts Mount Zaphon is mentioned together with Baal because mount Zaphon is his divine abode. (Niehr 1999, 928)

Each time Israel has been invaded, with the distinct exception of Egypt, it has come from the north.

The part of Israel that split off, the northern kingdom, were idol worshipers and they went north.

When the people first took the land, they defeated a leader named Og, a giant, in Bashan in the north.

In Genesis 6 we see the story of a group of fallen angels who arrived on earth and polluted it with their sin and their offspring – Nephilim.

The Book of Enoch provides a location as to exactly where this all took place.

Enoch 6:1–8

“And it happened that when the sons of humans multiplied in those days, they fathered good and beautiful daughters. And the angels, the sons of heaven, saw them and desired them and said to one another, “Come let us choose for ourselves women from among the humans and bring forth children for ourselves.” And Semiaza, who was their ruler, said to them, “I fear you may not wish to do this deed and I alone will be responsible for a great sin.” Therefore they all answered him, “Let us all swear by an oath, and devote one another to mutual destruction, not to turn back from this decision until we complete it and do this deed.” Then they all made a vow together and put each other under a curse in regard to this. These are the names of their rulers: Semiaza (this was their ruler of all the angels), Arathak, Kimbra, Sammane, Daniel, Arearos, Semiel, Iomiel, Chochariel, Ezekiel, Batriel, Sathiel, Atriel, Tamiel, Barakiel, Ananthna, Thoniel, Rhamiel, Aseal, Rhakiel, Touriel. These are the chiefs of tens among them.” (Lexham Press 2020)

Dan had a checkered history. The tribe forsook its allotted inheritance in the south of Canaan and migrated north, appropriating the priest of Micah the Levite, who kept household gods and an idol in his house (Joshua 19:40–48; Judges 18). The Danites eventually conquered the city of Laish and renamed it

Dan (Judges 18:27, 29). This city became a cult center to Baal in later Israelite history. Earlier in Israel's history, instead of receiving a blessing from the dying Jacob like his brothers, the patriarch pronounced, "Dan shall be a serpent in the way, a viper by the path, that bites the horse's heels so that his rider falls backward" (Genesis 49:17). Deuteronomy 33:22 contains the cryptic note that "Dan is a lion's cub that leaps from Bashan." (Heiser 2017, 168)

Jesus traveled north and ministered through Gentile Territory.

Matthew 15:21–28

"Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon." But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, "Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us." He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." But she came and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, help me." He answered, "It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." Then Jesus answered her, "Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish." And her daughter was healed instantly." (NRSV)

Traveling to Tyre would bring many thoughts to a Jew of the age. They would remember the relationship that Solomon had with the King of Tyre, and some would also remember that Jezebel came from there as well.

Not all of recent memories about Tyre would be fond ones, they had a reputation and historically, when the revolt of 70 AD took place, Tyre would execute and imprison Jews in the city.

A number of sources suggest tension between the Phoenician coast and Galilee during the period prior to the New Testament. The prophet Joel condemns Tyre and Sidon for selling the people of Judah and Jerusalem to the Greeks (HB *livne hayyewanim*; LXX *tois huiōis tōn Hellēnōn*, Joel 4:4–6 [Engl. Joel 3:4–6]). The notion that Phoenicians played a role in the buying and selling of Jewish slaves is supported by 2 Macc 8:11, which indicates that the Phoenicians played a role as intermediaries in the slave trade during the Hellenistic period. Furthermore, during the Ptolemaic period, slaves bought in Palestine were sold in Tyre in what Martin Hengel suggests was a highly profitable business. (Thomassen 2016, Mt 15:21-Mk 7:31)

We see Jesus going to Tyre, for one person, again warfare, again a release for a victim. Later we see, in Acts 21, that there is a large Christian community in Tyre.

Mark provides a bit more information and also provides the insight that Jesus and the disciples went further north as well. In Sidon, He again performs a miracle and we are only told of one instance.

Mark 7:24–37

"From there he set out and went away to the region of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know he was there. Yet he could not escape notice, but a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately heard about him, and she came and bowed down at his feet. Now the woman was a Gentile, of Syrophenician origin. She begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. He said to her, "Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." But she answered him, "Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs." Then he said to her, "For saying that, you may go—the demon has left your daughter." So she went home, found the child lying on the bed, and the demon gone. Then he returned from the region of Tyre, and went by way of Sidon towards the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. They brought to him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they begged him to lay his hand on him. He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat and touched his tongue. Then looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, "Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened." And immediately his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. Then Jesus ordered them to tell no one; but the more he ordered them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. They were astounded beyond

measure, saying, “He has done everything well; he even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.”” (NRSV)

The implication is there were more miracles done than just the one, but here is the real point, in the north, in the shadow of Mount Zaphon, Jesus conducted spiritual warfare again against the enemy and freed yet more, and this time gentiles, who had been subjugated by the enemy. Jesus then travels south towards Decapolis.

Remember, at this time travel is by foot. The text in Matthew and Mark seems to indicate all of this happens rather quickly, but the reality of it is there is some rather significant travel taking place. His ministry takes Him through Judea and Samaria as well, but He has been rejected by the nation, He is reflecting now what He will reiterate to the disciples in Acts 1:8

Acts 1:8

“but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and Samaria, and as far as the remotest part of the earth.”” (NASB 2020)

When Jesus returns to Decapolis, we remember what He did the last time He was there, He cast out legion and essentially destroyed the false god centric economy. They asked Him to leave and He left one man there who would just simply tell his story. The results...

Matthew 15:29–39

“When he left there, Jesus went along the Sea of Galilee. Then he went up a mountain, where he sat down. Then large crowds came to him bringing with them the lame, blind, crippled, mute, and many others. They laid them at his feet, and he healed them. As a result, the crowd was amazed when they saw the mute speaking, the crippled healthy, the lame walking, and the blind seeing, and they praised the God of Israel. Then Jesus called the disciples and said, “I have compassion on the crowd, because they have already been here with me three days and they have nothing to eat. I don’t want to send them away hungry since they may faint on the way.” The disciples said to him, “Where can we get enough bread in this desolate place to satisfy so great a crowd?” Jesus said to them, “How many loaves do you have?” They replied, “Seven—and a few small fish.” After instructing the crowd to sit down on the ground, he took the seven loaves and the fish, and after giving thanks, he broke them and began giving them to the disciples, who then gave them to the crowds. They all ate and were satisfied, and they picked up the broken pieces left over, seven baskets full. Not counting children and women, there were four thousand men who ate. After sending away the crowd, he got into the boat and went to the region of Magadan.” (NET)

Notice the reception this time. The story has gotten out and Jesus teaches the gentiles of Decapolis. Again, on the east side of the Sea of Galilee, in the area that was once home to Og, and the vast demon armies of Satan. The same armies who just a few months back, were soundly defeated by Jesus.

The spiritual skirmishes against the powers of darkness are evident throughout Jesus’ ministry. One of the more dramatic is described in Matthew 16:13–20. (Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible* 2015, 281)

This is another trip from Jesus’ base of operations in Capernaum to the north, a trip filled with aspects of spiritual warfare.

Matthew 16:13–23

Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. I will

give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” Then he strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that he was the Christ. From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, “Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you.” But he turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.” (ESV)

The site was famous in the ancient world as a center of the worship of Pan and for a temple to the high god Zeus, considered in Jesus’ day to be incarnate in Augustus Caesar. (Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible* 2015, 284)

Caesarea Philippi teemed with Roman idolatry: Herod the Great had built an imposing marble temple in honor of Caesar Augustus, and a Roman temple dedicated to the idol Pan lay at the base of the rocky escarpment overlooking the city. In addition, the Romans believed the large cave where sacrifices to demons were made, which was adjacent to the temple to Pan, was the gateway into Hades. (Martin, Beck and Hansen 2010, 100-101)

Jesus has brought His disciples to Bashan, right in the shadow of Mount Hermon, the same mountain that the fallen watchers descended onto and with His comment about the rock, He ties the events about to happen to Deuteronomy 32 and the world view of the Jews.

Deuteronomy 32:1–18

“Give ear, O heavens, and I will speak, and let the earth hear the words of my mouth. May my teaching drop as the rain, my speech distill as the dew, like gentle rain upon the tender grass, and like showers upon the herb. For I will proclaim the name of the LORD; ascribe greatness to our God! The Rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and upright is he. They have dealt corruptly with him; they are no longer his children because they are blemished; they are a crooked and twisted generation. Do you thus repay the LORD, you foolish and senseless people? Is not he your father, who created you, who made you and established you? Remember the days of old; consider the years of many generations; ask your father, and he will show you, your elders, and they will tell you. When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when he divided mankind, he fixed the borders of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God. But the LORD’s portion is his people, Jacob his allotted heritage. He found him in a desert land, and in the howling waste of the wilderness; he encircled him, he cared for him, he kept him as the apple of his eye. Like an eagle that stirs up its nest, that flutters over its young, spreading out its wings, catching them, bearing them on its pinions, the LORD alone guided him, no foreign god was with him. He made him ride on the high places of the land, and he ate the produce of the field, and he suckled him with honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock. Curds from the herd, and milk from the flock, with fat of lambs, rams of Bashan and goats, with the very finest of the wheat— and you drank foaming wine made from the blood of the grape. But Jeshurun grew fat, and kicked; you grew fat, stout, and sleek; then he forsook God who made him and scoffed at the Rock of his salvation. They stirred him to jealousy with strange gods; with abominations they provoked him to anger. They sacrificed to demons that were no gods, to gods they had never known, to new gods that had come recently, whom your fathers had never dreaded. You were unmindful of the Rock that bore you, and you forgot the God who gave you birth.” (ESV)

Jesus has intentionally gone to this location for His discussion that has cosmic repercussions. The reference to the “gates of Hell: point to what He is saying when He say “rock.” And with the background of Deuteronomy 32, we now can see what He is saying and it has nothing to do with who would be Pope.

...the “rock” refers to the mountain location where Jesus makes the statement. When viewed from this perspective, Peter confesses Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the living God, at “this rock” (this mountain— Mount Hermon). Why? This place was considered the “gates of hell,” the gateway to the realm of the dead, in Old Testament times. (Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible* 2015, 284)

Matthew 16:17–18

And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” (ESV)

Πέτρος Pétros; gen. Pétrou, masc. proper noun. Peter, meaning stone. The masc. of the fem. pétra (4073), a massive rock or cliff. Pétros always means a stone, never a rock as referred to by Homer. It is a large stone, a piece or fragment of a rock such as a man might throw. (Zodhiates 2000)

πέτρα, ας, ἡ (Hom. [πέτρῃ as ‘massive stone’ Il. 15, 273; Od. 10, 87f]+; loanw. in rabb.).bedrock or massive rock formations, rock as distinguished from stones (s. 2 below)ⓐ lit., of the rock in which a tomb is hewn (s. λατομέω 1) Mt 27:60; Mk 15:46. (Arndt, et al. 2000, 809)

1 Peter 2:4–8

“And coming to Him as to a living stone which has been rejected by people, but is choice and precious in the sight of God, you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices that are acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For this is contained in Scripture: “BEHOLD, I AM LAYING IN ZION A CHOICE STONE, A PRECIOUS CORNERSTONE, AND THE ONE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE PUT TO SHAME.” This precious value, then, is for you who believe; but for unbelievers, “A STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE CHIEF CORNERSTONE,” and, “A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE”; for they stumble because they are disobedient to the word, and to this they were also appointed.” (NASB 2020)

Stone here is lithos.

ὁ λίθος in the NT means a. “stone,” whether hewn or not, more precisely defined as “millstone” (Lk. 17:2; Rev. 18:21), or precious stone (Rev. 4:3; 15:6 vl.; 17:4; 18:12, 16; 21:11, 19); b. at Mt. 3:9 (par. Lk. 3:8) very probably “rock” (→ 271), cf. Mk. 15:46; 16:3 f.; Mt. 27:60, 66; 28:2; Lk. 24:2; Jn. 20:1; Ev. Pt., 32 for the unhewn block of stone which was rolled before the tomb of Jesus; also c. “stone image” at Ac. 17:29 and Dg., 2, 2. (Jeremias 1964-, 269)

Another view, Jesus is the immovable rock, the same stone that Nebuchadnezzar saw falling and destroying the statue in his dream, Peter is a little throwing stone, but as believers, Peter and we are precious stones.

Jesus is standing right at the place known as the “gates of hell,” and He is saying to the enemy on their turf, right in front of the mountain that the fallen watchers came down and corrupted mankind in Genesis 6, that we, as the church, will be taking folks who were literally on their way to hell and turning them into believers.

Gates are defensive structures, not offensive weapons. The kingdom of God is the aggressor. Jesus begins at ground zero in the cosmic geography of both testaments to announce the great reversal. It is the gates of hell that are under assault—and they will not hold up against the Church. Hell will one day be Satan’s tomb. (Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible* 2015, 285)

In less than a week, actually six days later, Jesus issues an ultimatum to the enemy, which we will discuss next week.

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