

Nuggets and Gems from the Bible

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OVER SATAN
BY LIFE
AND
BY THE BODY

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Living Stream Ministry

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To reign in life is to subdue three main enemies: Satan, sin, and death. In this booklet we shall consider the matter of reigning in life over Satan.

SATAN, SIN, AND THE FLESH

Satan is the source of sin. Sin is the nature of Satan injected into man. According to the revelation of the Bible, Satan as sin is in our flesh, in our fallen, contaminated body. [Romans 7:18](#) says, “For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, nothing good dwells.” When God created man, He created him with a body that was pure. But when Satan injected himself as sin into man’s body, the body became corrupted. Hence, in the Bible man’s body is called the flesh.

In our flesh we are one with Satan, for the flesh is Satan’s dwelling place in man. In the same principle, our spirit is the Lord’s dwelling place in us. A saved person is rather complicated because Satan as sin is in his flesh and the Lord as the life-giving Spirit is in his spirit.

Satan, sin, and the flesh go together. When

Satan injected his evil nature into man, Satan became sin in man. When the nature of sin was injected into man's body, the body was transmuted into flesh. Hence, Satan, sin, and the flesh are mutually related within man. If we would overcome Satan and reign in life over him, we need to recognize that Satan as sin dwells in our flesh.

Because Satan is the source of both sin and death, he is the greatest enemy of all. It is not sufficient to reign over sin and death without subduing Satan. We must also defeat the source of sin and death. Then we shall truly be able to reign in life.

THE WAY TO OVERCOME SATAN

What is the way to overcome Satan? In her writings, Mrs. Jessie Penn-Lewis had a great deal to say about overcoming Satan. However, although I put her suggestions into practice, what she suggested did not work for me. What Mrs. Penn-Lewis wrote regarding this matter was correct, but I had no way to apply it. Since the time Mrs. Penn-Lewis wrote her best books, more than fifty years have gone by. By the Lord's mercy and grace, the saints have gone on during these years to see two important matters related to spiritual warfare: the Body and life.

A MATTER OF LIFE AND THE BODY

In the early 1940s Brother Nee gave a number of messages in Shanghai on the subject of the Body. He told us that spiritual warfare is not an individual matter but a Body matter. Satan is the enemy of the Body. Hence, in order to overcome him, we must stand with the Body. *The Spiritual Man*, completed in 1928, presented spiritual warfare as an individual matter, not as a Body matter. For this reason, after he had come to see the Body, Brother Nee told some of us that he did not want to have it reprinted.

We have not only seen the Body, but we have also seen the place of the divine life in dealing with God's enemy. Life is nothing less than the Triune God dispensed into us to be our content. According to the book of Romans, life and the Body are one; they are inseparable. If there is no life, then there can be no Body. Life is the content, and the Body is the expression.

SATAN CRUSHED UNDER OUR FEET

In Romans Paul does not mention Satan by name until [16:20](#). In this verse Paul says, "Now the God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet." The Greek word rendered "your" in

this verse is plural; this points to the Body. God will crush Satan under the feet of the Body. [Romans 16](#) does not refer to the Body in a universal sense, but it refers to the local and practical expression of the Body. This means that Satan can only be crushed under the feet of the practical expression of the Body in the local churches. If we speak about the Body in a doctrinal way, we have nothing but terminology. It is only when we have a proper local church as the practical expression of the Body that Satan is crushed under our feet.

This practical expression of the Body is possible only through the divine life. We may have the experience of redemption and salvation, but if we do not experience the divine life, it is impossible to have the practical expression of the Body of Christ. The Body of Christ is built up with Christ as life. Satan is overcome by life and by the Body.

THE REBORN SPIRIT KEEPING US

[First John 5:4](#) says, “For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world.” This verse does not say “whosoever,” referring to a person; it says “whatsoever,” referring to a thing. In contrast to [1 John 3:9](#), which speaks of “whosoever,” or

everyone who is born of God, [1 John 5:4](#) speaks of “whatsoever,” or everything that is born of God. If we understand [1 John 5:4](#) in the light of [John 3:6](#), we shall realize that what is born of God is the human spirit. [John 3:6](#) says, “That which is born of the Spirit is spirit.” Hence, [1 John 5:4](#) refers to our regenerated spirit. It is the reborn spirit that does not sin, and it is the reborn spirit that overcomes the world.

[First John 5:18](#) says, “We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth him, and the evil one toucheth him not” (lit.). Who is the “he” that is begotten of God, and who is the “him” who is kept? This verse is saying that he who is born of God keeps me. There is something within me born of God that is keeping me. All believers have something within them that has been born of God. In the same principle, all of us have something evil within us born of Satan. After Adam fell, he became one with Satan. But praise the Lord that we can now proclaim with confidence that we also have something within us born of God!

PROTECTION FROM THE EVIL ONE

This verse also says, “The evil one toucheth him not.” As long as we are kept by that which is

born of God, the evil one does not touch us. We are protected. Our protection from the evil one is that part within us which is born of God. As we have pointed out, it is our human spirit that has been born of God, born of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, our regenerated spirit is our protection.

Because we have the Son, we have life ([1 John 5:11-12](#)). Do you know where the Son of God is within you? He is in your spirit. Thus, your spirit is a place of protection, a high tower. The very life in which and with which we overcome Satan is now in our regenerated spirit. As long as we remain in our regenerated spirit, Satan, the evil one, cannot touch us. This is the way to overcome Satan.

If we get out of the spirit and stay in the flesh, we shall keep company with Satan. Whenever we are in the flesh, we have Satan as our companion. But when we are in the spirit, Christ is our companion. Satan as sin is in our flesh, but Christ as the Spirit is in our spirit. Therefore, we should choose to stay in our spirit with Christ.

[Romans 8:4](#) says that if we walk according to spirit, not according to flesh, the righteous requirement of the law will be fulfilled in us. As we walk according to spirit, we have Christ as our companion, the companion who is truly life

to us. When we stay with Him in our spirit, we are protected within a high tower, and the evil one cannot touch us.

We are either in the spirit or in the flesh. There is no third place for us to be. Whenever we are out of the spirit, we are spontaneously in our flesh, where Satan dwells as sin.

ABIDING IN CHRIST

Do not try in yourself to overcome Satan. The writings of Mrs. Penn-Lewis regarding the warfare with Satan were not wrong, but they placed too much emphasis on the negative aspect. Mrs. Penn-Lewis said that the way to overcome Satan is by seeing that we have been crucified with Christ on the cross. According to the New Testament, it is a fact that through the cross Christ has destroyed the Devil ([Heb. 2:14](#)). Nevertheless, the more we try to cross out our flesh, the more active and living our flesh becomes. What Mrs. Penn-Lewis saw was mainly on the negative side—the matter of reckoning ourselves dead. She saw very little, if any, on the positive side. Overcoming Satan is not a matter of making up our mind to put our flesh on the cross; it is a matter of seeing that the very Christ who is life to us is now in our spirit and then of seeing

that we must abide in Him. Since Christ is in our spirit, we must remain in the spirit if we would abide in Him. If we stay in our spirit, we have the reality of being crucified with Christ, and we have Christ as our reigning life. In ourselves we cannot reign over Satan, but in Christ as the reigning life we can reign over him.

Do not try to defeat Satan. He is too strong, too powerful, for you. The more you try to defeat him, the more you will be defeated by him. None of us is an exception. The only way to overcome Satan is to stay in the high tower of our regenerated spirit. When we are in this tower, we can laugh at Satan and say, "Satan, don't you know that I am here in the high tower of my spirit? What can you do to me? Very shortly, you will be crushed under our feet."

BUILT UP IN THE BODY

Furthermore, when we stay in the spirit, we are built up in the Body in a practical way. But if we stay in our minds, we shall be divided. This is true not only in the church life, but also in married life. If I remain in my mind and my wife remains in her mind, it will be impossible for us to be one. I have learned to have a healthy fear of staying in my mind. Oh, I want to be in my spirit!

Whenever I am in the spirit, there is no problem with oneness. Both in the church life and in our family life we must be afraid of our minds that are so easily set on the flesh, afraid of the division caused by our dissenting thoughts and opinions (see [Romans 8:6](#)). When we find ourselves thinking critically of others, we need to turn immediately to the Lord in our spirit and pray. We all must learn the lesson of turning to the spirit and staying there.

In the spirit we experience not only Christ as life, but also the Body. In the spirit Christ is both our life personally and the life of the Body. Therefore, in the spirit with the divine life and with the Body of Christ, Satan is overcome and even crushed under our feet. He is defeated not by individuals, but by the Body.

Never neglect your regenerated spirit, the high tower within you where you may hide from Satan. Whenever you are tempted to argue with your wife or husband, you should run into this tower. Arguments in married life come from the mind assisted by the flesh. Whenever a brother has negative thoughts about his wife, the flesh will try to provoke him to argue with her. This indicates that the flesh is always ready to help the mind in a negative way. What should we do

about this? We should escape into the high tower of our reborn spirit, the place where Satan cannot touch us, the place where we enjoy Christ as our life and experience the reality of the Body. When we are in such a place, Satan can do nothing to us.

It is not difficult to get into the high tower of our spirit. We simply need to call on the name of the Lord Jesus. As long as we stay in our spirit, we have victory over Satan. He is subdued and even crushed under our feet, and we reign over him in Christ as our life. May we all practice staying in the high tower of our reborn spirit.

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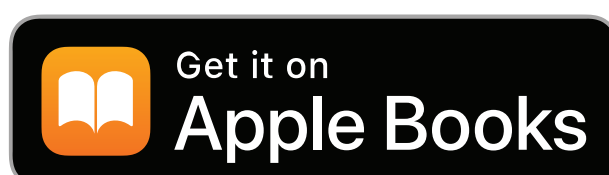
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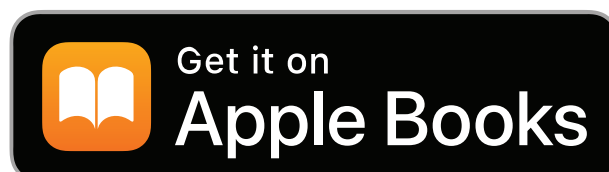
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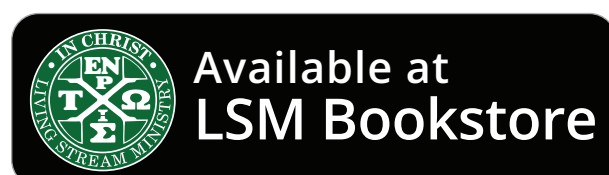
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