

Come to Understanding

**They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding,
and they that murmured shall learn doctrine. — Isaiah 29:24**

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Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled

As Yahshua (Jesus) sat with His disciples eating His final Passover meal, He revealed that He knew what was in their hearts. One of them, He said, was going to betray Him:

- 21 When Yahshua had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Truly, truly, I say to you, that one of you shall betray me.
- 22 Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he spoke.
- 23 Now there was leaning on Yahshua's bosom one of his disciples, whom Yahshua loved.
- 24 Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he spoke.
- 25 He then lying on Yahshua's breast said to him, Lord, who is it? -John 14

Yahshua soon revealed that His betrayer was Judas Iscariot, into whom Satan then entered:

- 26 Yahshua answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped *it*. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave *it* to Judas Iscariot, *the son* of Simon.
- 27 And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Yahshua to him, That you do, do quickly. -John 14

How is it possible that Judas, one of Yahshua's twelve chosen disciples, could betray Him? He had not only been called and ordained to preach, but he had also been given the power to heal the sick and to cast out devils (demons):

- 14 And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach,
- 15 And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils: -Mark 3

Even though Yahshua knew from the beginning which of His disciples did not believe in Him and also that one of them would be His betrayer, He still chose them:

- 64 But there are some of you that believe not. For Yahshua knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him. -John 6

Many of us may scornfully look at Judas and think, "How terrible he was! He must have been scheming his betrayal of Yahshua from the beginning." Even though

Yahshua knew his heart, it is highly possible that Judas did not even know that he was to be the betrayer until he was tempted. That was when his heart was put to the test by which its content was openly revealed.

While we are often tempted to judge the hearts and intents of others, we are likely to be especially confident that we know what is in our own hearts. Paul, however, said, even though others may try to judge him, he could not even judge himself. The Lord only, Paul said, is his judge:

- 3 But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you, or by man's judgment: yes, I judge not my own self.
- 4 For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judges me is the Lord. -1 Corinthians 4

Many of us may overestimate our faithfulness and the steadfastness of our faith as we boast of our confidence in our strength. Peter found this to be true. Shortly after Judas was identified as the betrayer, Peter pridefully boasted that he would remain faithful to Yahshua until the very end. However, Yahshua knew Peter's heart and told him that he would deny Him three times that night:

- 37 Peter said to him, Lord, why cannot I follow you now? I will lay down my life for your sake.
- 38 Yahshua answered him, Will you lay down your life for my sake? Truly, truly, I say to you, The cock shall not crow, till you have denied me three times. -John 13

Like many of us, Peter failed to see his own weakness. He thought he could endure great afflictions for the cause of the Messiah. Little did Peter understand that God was going to give Satan permission to put him through a heart-wrenching trial of his faith. Luke more fully explains this exchange between Yahshua and Peter (Simon):

- 31 And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has desired *to have* you, that he may sift *you* as wheat:
- 32 But I have prayed for you, that your faith fail not: and when you are converted, strengthen your brethren.
- 33 And he said to him, Lord, I am ready to go with you, both into prison, and to death.
- 34 And he said, I tell you, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that you shall three times deny that you know me. -Luke 22

**So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense,
and caused them to understand the reading. — Nehemiah 8:8**

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Peter pridefully thought that his strength was within himself. It was this pride that made him vulnerable to Satan's work in his heart. Yahshua, however, told Simon Peter that, after he had learned his lesson and was "converted," he was to use his experience to "strengthen" his brethren.

As part of Satan's sifting process, Peter did deny the Messiah three times before the cock crowed in the morning. After his third denial, Peter realized what was happening to him and his prideful heart was tearfully humbled:

60 And Peter said, Man, I know not what you say. And immediately, while he yet spoke, the cock crowed.

61 And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said to him, Before the cock crows, you shall deny me three times.

62 And Peter went out, and wept bitterly. -Luke 22

Peter's faith not only survived this Satanic attack, but it was actually strengthened. His first-hand encounter with the enemy of God's people further equipped him to teach his brethren how to become stronger in their faith and, especially, how to resist Satan (the Devil).

Ironically, as Peter learned, the first step to gaining the power to resist Satan is to humble ourselves "under the mighty hand of God." Once we rid ourselves of a prideful heart, we finally realize that our strength does not lie in ourselves. That is when, knowing our own weakness, we will cast our cares upon God and trust Him to take care of us. We can only do this if we believe that He loves us:

6 Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:

7 Casting all your cares upon him; for he cares for you. -1 Peter 5

Once we are humbled and have placed ourselves "under the mighty hand of God," giving Him all of our cares and worries, we need to be ready for a test of our faith. That is when we can expect to encounter the subtle workings of Satan. He is not going to give up easily. He will test our hearts for weaknesses which he might be able to use to attack our faith. We must then take the next step, which is to "be sober, be vigilant," as we stay on high alert and keep diligent watch for the subtle workings of Satan.

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Peter explains that Satan operates like a "roaring lion" looking for someone to devour:

8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walks about, seeking whom he may devour: -1 Peter

This analogy of Satan as a "roaring lion," gives us a better understanding of how he operates. Lions are opportunistic eaters, constantly lurking around looking for vulnerable prey. When they have an opportunity, they ruthlessly kill and eat. As such, Satan is subtly looking for openings in our hearts and weaknesses in our faith that he can exploit and use to "devour" us. That which is eaten becomes part of that which eats it. In other words, Satan wants to make us part of him. He wants us to become part of his kingdom, instead of part of the Kingdom of God.

Satan successfully accomplishes his work in our "brethren that are in the world." However, we will be able to resist him if we remain steadfast in our faith:

9 Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. -1 Peter 5

One of Satan's subtle deceptions is to try to persuade us that, as people with faith in God, we will not be subject to afflictions. Peter, however, explains that those who have been called by God "unto his eternal glory by the Messiah Yahshua," will have "suffered a while." However, the outcome of this suffering will be to make us "perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle" us:

10 But the God of all grace, who has called us unto his eternal glory by the Messiah Yahshua, after that you have suffered a while, make you perfect, establish, strengthen, settle *you*.

11 To him *be* glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. -1 Peter 5

When one of Yahshua's good friends, Martha, was in the midst of suffering because of the death of her brother, Lazarus, Yahshua comforted her with these words:

26 And whoever lives and believes in me shall never die. Believe you this? -John 11

If Satan can convince us to doubt the promises of God during our real or imagined troubles, then he would have accomplished his goal. We would have lost the steadfast faith that we need to resist him. Not fully trusting in God and in the faithfulness of His word, our hearts will remain troubled. Contrary to popular opinions, Yahweh never told us that we would have lives without problems. He did, however, promise to be with us as we pass through those troubles:

1 But now thus says Yahweh that created you, O Jacob, and he that formed you, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed you, I have called *you* by your name; *you are* mine.

2 When you pass through the waters, I *will be* with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you: when you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon you. -Isaiah 43

Believe you this?