

Call to Obedience #217
PO Box 299 Kokomo, IN 46903 USA
www.schultze.org

When you go to a place of no warfare, there is probably nothing worth fighting about.

When The Devil Growls...

By Reimar Schultze

We know that God is present!

“But when the Philistines heard that they had anointed David king over Israel, all the Philistines came up to seek David; and David heard of it, and went down to the hold” (2 Samuel 5:17).

Any time God steps into history to do a great thing, the devils will plan a massive attack to disrupt, discourage, confuse, divide, and deceive.

David, who had spent the last 15 years a fugitive in the wilderness, was finally about to receive his anointing to kingship, and no one knew more about what this would mean than his enemy.

Indeed, it is a mystery that the enemy generally knows much more about the value of a man of God than his own best friends. As this was true with David, so it was also true with Jesus and the Apostle Paul.

The devil had no doubt that Jesus was the Son of God--never ever--but even the greatest man born of woman--John the Baptist--left the earth with a flicker of doubt about the divinity of Jesus.

Paul also was only reluctantly received by Holy Ghost-filled people and was finally abandoned by most Christians. Yet, in the book of Acts, we read about an evil spirit saying of him, “Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?” (19:15).

The devil and his demons know the anointed saints of God; they never have a doubt about them. They know what they are about to do, and they know what it will cost them if these men and women of God succeed. Hence, the evidence of God’s presence is the devil’s growl.

As God was about to work through David as an anointed king, the Philistines, Israel’s enemy, gathered in full force, in full battle gear to seek him out and destroy him. Yes, as A. B. Simpson says, the moment you and I get a work from the Lord worth contending for, the devil comes to seek us.

Simpson continues by saying that when the enemy meets us at the threshold of any great work for God, let us accept it as a token of salvation and claim a double blessing of victory and power, for power is developed by resistance. Hence, “When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him” (Is. 59:19).

In the meantime, we must not fear the devil’s growl but have faith in the Lord’s presence. We must not allow the devil’s growl to intimidate us, neither scare us nor run us off.

We must know that in the presence of the Lord, the growl of the devil never becomes a bite, but it only and always remains a bluff!

The devil, who goes around “as a roaring lion...seeking whom he may devour” (1 Pe. 5:8), can only devour us if he, through his growl, can drive us away from the shadow of the Almighty,

from the secret place of the Most High, and from the Rock of our salvation (Ps. 91:1; 2 Sa. 22:47).

So, as David was about to be anointed king, the enemy came up to seek him. Now, what did David do?

It says, when David heard of it, he “went down to the hold.” The Amplified Bible says that David “went down into the stronghold.”

Do you have a stronghold? Do you have a place of quiet rest near to the heart of God? Do you love it? Do you frequent it? Are its walls stained by the breath of prayer and praise?

When the devil growls, go to your stronghold. When the devil growls, something good is in the making if you just hold on to God.

And what do you think God has in mind when a whole army of devils come against you and growl? What is the sound of a thousand growling devils? Can you endure it; can you keep your heart in the midst of it; can you do like Moses at the Red Sea, saying, “stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord” (Ex. 14:13); or do you become a deserter of a cause rather than a seeker of your stronghold?

Many times, things go from bad to worse even while you are in the stronghold. While David was in the stronghold, “The Philistines also came and spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim” (v. 18).

While you pray, while you seek the Lord face to face, more often than not, the demons spread themselves out, they surround your stronghold, they dig in for a drawn-out affair. But while the enemy digs into the sand, you, my friend, dig into the will of God. And with that in mind, who do you think is going to win?

Normally, when it gets to this part of warfare, we get down to the remnant, to the last 300 of Gideon’s army. The rest will have fled, or excused themselves, or given up faith to go join some other battle where the devils show less interest because much less is at stake.

Oh, dear friend, may we know that David knew that God’s “kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,” whose “dominion endureth throughout all generations” (Ps. 145:13).

David knew that what he was in would never end, even if he should perish in the midst of the battle. David knew that the “everlasting kingdom” would work through those who cannot be scared by the roars of devils and their wicked devices. David knew that if he would hold steady, the “everlasting kingdom” would work right through him and then through his children and his children’s children!

When the Philistines come, will you hold on to what God is in so that you may pass the blessings of the kingdom on to your children, or will you step out and away and miss the blessings and let your children and grandchildren miss it along with you?

Yes, at times, we may fall in the battle. Yes, we may be bowed down under the load of spiritual warfare. David also knew this, yet, he put his trust in his God.

“The Philistines also came and spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim. And David enquired of the Lord, saying, Shall I go up to the Philistines? wilt thou deliver them into mine hand? And the Lord said unto David, Go up: for I will doubtless deliver the Philistines into thine hand. And David came to Baalperazim, and David smote them there, and said, The Lord hath broken forth upon mine enemies before me, as the breach of waters. Therefore he called the name of that place Baalperazim” (vv. 18-20).

Hold on. Hold on, my friend. Although it may look dark now, you will soon find out that for “the upright there ariseth light in the darkness” (Ps. 112:4).

“And David enquired of the Lord, saying, Shall I go up to the Philistines? wilt thou deliver them into mine hand?”

Amidst the roar of a thousand devils, David inquired of the Lord. He was cautious, and he was careful. George Mueller made it a practice never to begin inquiring of the Lord until he had lost all his prejudice and personal choices in the matter to be enquired about.

David was willing to stay in the stronghold--forever. David was also willing to go to battle. David stayed in the stronghold until he found his heart without desire toward either choice. His one choice was only to know and do God's will.

Do you stay in your stronghold long enough to become neutral on all the options that are before you so that your desires and prejudices will not pollute the hearing of the voice of God?

“And the Lord said unto David, Go up: for I will doubtless deliver the Philistines into thine hand.”

Oh, and did the Lord ever help. At the end of the battle, David could say, “The Lord has broken through my enemies before me, like the bursting out of great waters” (v. 20b, Amplified).

It seemed like a tidal wave of heaven swept away the enemy as if he were nothing. Oh, hallelujah! Yes, now he could say, “My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord: and let all flesh bless his holy name for ever and ever” (Ps. 145:21).

Dear friend, let us review our lesson.

What does it mean when the devil roars?

Where do you go when the devil roars?

What inner attitude must you seek when you are in God's stronghold, when you inquire of the Lord?

Will you let the everlasting kingdom pass through you on to your children, or will you be a deserter in the heat of the battle and find an easier place to serve? Will you forfeit the “everlasting kingdom” and pass on to your children and to their children a spirit of cowardice, mediocrity, and God-emptiness?

Do not let the growl of the devil get your attention. Keep your focus upon the Lord's mighty plan.