

# Know Your Enemy

An R.A.F. Hurricane aircraft flew low over the coast and dipped even lower over the sea, just skimming over the waves in the pre-dawn dusk.

The young pilot was tense with concentration in this risky flying attitude, which was essential to fly under the beams of the enemy radar.

The aircraft was unarmed to reduce weight and thus helpless against enemy attack.

The only chance the pilot had was speed and secrecy.

The object of the risky mission was to observe and photograph the enemy's defence positions.

This was essential information for army commanders to win the soon-coming battle.

The Ministry of Defence was willing to risk the best pilots and planes to obtain this information.

**They knew how important it was to know their enemy.**

I personally know such missions to be true.

One Saturday early morning I was playing with some of my friends on the village recreation field when we heard an aircraft overhead with engine trouble.

We then saw it crash only some 200 yards away.

We all rushed to the scene and arrived just before the local fire engine and crew.

The scene was one I will never forget.

Parts of the aircraft and pilot were scattered over the corner of a field.

I joined the fire crew to pick up pieces of the pilot and place them in his unopened singed parachute.

I then saw his map and on it the route he had just followed over the Belgian coast.

There was no sign of any guns in the wreckage and no ammunition was exploding in the fire.

**We are also in a battle with an evil power that wants to destroy or enslave us.**

*Ephesians 6:10-12 [NIV] "Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armour of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. **For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.**"*

**Our battle is a spiritual one that is fought in our minds and "human spirit."**

By ourselves we are helpless against Satan's onslaught just as the pilot was in his unarmed aircraft.

**We also need to know the tactics Satan will employ to destroy or enslave us.**

*Matthew 4:1-2 [NIV] "Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. After fasting for forty days and forty nights, he was hungry."*

Jesus Christ our Saviour from the power of Satan to destroy us, fasted and spent many days in prayer to receive information on how He was to defeat humanity's enemy Satan.

**The only way to victory for Jesus the Son of Man was a painful way.**

**Matthew 26:36-42** [NIV] *“Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, “Sit here while I go over there and pray.” He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. Then he said to them, “My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me.” Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, “My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.” Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. “Could you men not keep watch with me for one hour?” he asked Peter. “Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak.” He went away a second time and prayed, “My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done.”*

**As a human being Jesus knew the agony and pain He faced, but also knew it was the only way humanity could be saved from the influence of their enemy Satan.**

**Three major tactics that Satan uses to influence our minds, to gain control and cause us to become rebellious against our Creator God.**

**1. One sure way to influence human beings to follow your lead is to feed them and give them material wealth**

**1 Timothy 6:10** [NIV] *“For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.”*

**Satan offers material wealth now and blinds us to our having to pay later.**

**Psalms 73:1-3** [NIV] *“Surely God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart. But as for me, my feet had almost slipped; I had nearly lost my foothold. For I envied the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.”*

King David's faith in God as his provider almost slipped when he saw how Satan had given wealth to evil human beings.

**Satan loves to see wicked people prosper for he knows that their lack of knowledge of how to use such wealth will destroy them spiritually.**

It is far easier for a rich person to sin in many ways than a poor person who has little to spend on worldly pleasures.

**Psalms 73:16-20** [NIV] *“When I tried to understand all this, it was oppressive to me till I entered the sanctuary of God; then I understood their final destiny. Surely you place them on slippery ground; you cast them down to ruin. How suddenly are they destroyed, completely swept away by terrors! As a dream when one awakes, so when you arise, O Lord, you will despise them as fantasies.”*

**It was only through a personal relationship with God that King David realised how dangerous wealth can be.**

**Loving wealth is to make a double mistake.**

a) **Acts 20:35** [NIV] *“In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”*

Wealth misused teaches us the “get” way of life instead the love motivated “give” way.

b) Wealth doesn't get to the root of humanity's problems.

**The reason for greed and famine and all the violent problems that surround such states, is rooted in the mind and human spirit of human beings.**

**Spiritual pride and spiritual famine are the root cause of all the evil in this world.**

Take for example one simple law that is based on God's Word.

**Deuteronomy 8:3 [NIV]** *“He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your fathers had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD.”*

**“Bread” is symbolic of material wealth.**

**God's Word, the Christian Bible, is our guide to using all the material blessings we have received from God.**

**It is a lack of knowledge and understanding of God's Word that causes the problems we see in society.**

**2 Thessalonians 3:6-10 [NIV]** *“In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers, to keep away from every brother who is idle and does not live according to the teaching you received from us. For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. **We were not idle when we were with you, nor did we eat anyone's food without paying for it. On the contrary, we worked night and day, labouring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you. We did this, not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to make ourselves a model for you to follow. For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: “If a man will not work, he shall not eat.”**”*

Paul did **not** take from the converts to Christianity goods or money for his work of bringing to them the message of salvation and reconciliation.

**A personal example of the rule he gave them, no work no food.**

**This may seem harsh to many people but Paul understood the result of such idleness.**

**The Welfare State today is generating large numbers of people who feel it is their “human right” to be supported by others and remain idle themselves.**

This is generating the selfish “get” attitude of mind, rather than the loving “give” attitude of mind.

**Such people are blinded by Satan to the very reason for our existence as human beings, to be moulded into the character of a giving, bountifully, Creator God, Who is love.**

[See our article ‘Why Work?’ on this website listed under ‘Work’.]

There is one wise human proverb that fits well in the solution to this problem.

*“Give a man a fish and it feeds him for a day” [Welfare State and some charities] ... “Teach him the right way to fish and you feed him for a lifetime” [God's way as taught by Him in the Christian Bible.]*

## **2. Satan attracts humans to him and his servants by sensational acts.**

**Matthew 24:24-25** [NIV] *“For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect, if that were possible. See, I have told you ahead of time.”*

Part of the general deception that Satan is placing on all humanity.

## **3. Satan offers a compromise to obeying God’s Word**

**Revelation 12:9** [NIV] *“The great dragon was hurled down, that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.”*

**This deception that is leading most humans away from God’s Word, or at least puts doubt into their minds as to its authority.**

Satan has used this tactic from the very beginning of human history.

**Genesis 3:1-5** [NIV] *“Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, ‘Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden?’” The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.’” “You will not surely die,” the serpent said to the woman. “For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”*

A very clever deception on Satan’s part. Most likely God had explained to Adam and Eve the reason for their existence, to be moulded into the “likeness” of God.

**Satan was offering a “short cut” to this goal that had been given Adam and Eve, but such a path would not accomplish this goal.**

**Matthew 4:1-4** [NIV] *“Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. After fasting for forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. The tempter came to him and said, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.” Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”*

To a very hungry Jesus the human Son of Man, this was a strong physical temptation, which Jesus countered with a spiritual principle.

**Matthew 4:5-7** [NIV] *“Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. “If you are the Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down. For it is written: “‘He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.’” Jesus answered him, “It is also written: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’”*

This would have been a sensational act that would have attracted many people to Jesus Christ.

Satan even quoted scripture to back up what he said.

**Again Jesus countered this temptation with scripture.**

Already knowing what He was committed to do was **not** such a sensational act but a humiliating act on the cross of crucifixion.

**Matthew 4:8-10** [NIV] *“Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour. “All this I will give you,” he said, “if you will bow*

*down and worship me.” Jesus said to him, “Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’”*

Jesus did **not** deny that the world was Satan’s present kingdom to give, but was again submissive to God’s Will, **not** a tempting “*short cut*” to accomplish his goal.

**All of these three temptations were aimed to put doubt in Christ’s mind as to the authority of God’s Word and His Will as expressed in that Word, the Christian Bible.**

**Don’t ever allow these tactics of Satan put doubt as to the authority of God’s Word in our minds.**

Be sure to know the strength and plans of our enemy, Satan, by a daily study of God’s Word, the Christian Bible, to reinforce our trust in God and His way of life.