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#SS23

SATANIC COUNTERFEITS

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The present supreme purpose of Satan in regard to man is to deceive him in relation to the truth of God. He would misrepresent His person, His work, and His word. His success in doing this has been phenomenal, especially so in this the day of man when God permits all nations to walk after their own ways (Acts 14:16). The masses of mankind are today deceived by Satan in a deception that is both tragic and pitiable. They are blinded by his treachery and fraud.

A counterfeit is Satan's most natural method of resisting the truth of God. In doing this he has no more effective help than the idea that is common among men that everything that is supernatural is divine. This erroneous notion leads men to play into his hands. It is most effective in this time of the silence of God when God does His work in secret. All Satan needs to do today is to perform a public miracle and thousands will follow him in the belief that they are following God.

One of the greatest spiritual tragedies that unfolds repeatedly before the eyes of those who are engaged in the service of Christ is the great number of people who become involved in these satanic delusions. This tragedy is often accentuated when we realize that they became ensnared in these delusions while they were groping for the higher and deeper things of God. "I was healed;" "I saw a vision;" "I heard a voice;" "A woman was cured of cancer." Words such as these are spoken in setting forth the basis for their faith that the man or meeting in connection with which these things occurred is truly of God.

Does Satan lack the power to heal? Is it impossible for him to give a vision? Is he dumb and unable to speak? Does he lack the wisdom to cure a malignancy? These are the questions that we would cry back at them, but when we do our words are drowned out by the firmly fixed idea that all things supernatural are of God.

Many years ago this writer adopted as a guiding principle the maxim, "Do not write until you are sure you have something to say." In all humility he believes he has something of importance to say concerning these Satanic counterfeits. It comes out of the thirty-three years he has devoted to the study of the Word of God. He believes it will be a positive help in dealing with the satanic delusions that trouble so many

people today. In order to present this truth a beginning must be made by establishing in the mind of the reader certain facts and principles that are clearly set forth in the sacred Scriptures. These facts are so positive that they are beyond dispute. To reject them will be to reject the simple testimony of the Word of God.

The first fact to be considered is based on an incident in the life of Moses. Near the end of his forty year sojourn in the land of Midian, while shepherding the flock of his father-in-law, he came upon a bush that burned with fire (Exodus 3:1-3). This would not be a common sight in an uninhabited desert, yet it was not an impossibility. Moreover it was possible for it to be a purely natural thing with a natural explanation.

However, when Moses examined the bush it was not being consumed by the fire that roared through its branches. No leaf had wilted, no sparks were flying, no ash was falling as one would expect from a bush on fire. This stamped it at once as being a supernatural occurrence. Thus we see that while it could have been natural, it was supernatural. The fact that this bush was not consumed stamped it as supernatural.

In describing an occurrence such as this we can employ a number of words. The word *supernatural* has already been used. Or we may use the word *miraculous*, *superhuman*, and *supermundane*. In fact, *supermundane* is an excellent word to use in describing an event such as this, but since *mundane* is not a word in common use it carries little force to the average reader. However, ***mundane* means earthly**, so the term *superearthly* will be used numerous times in this study. The word may have no standing in the dictionary, but it is essential to the accurate presentation of some of the truth to be presented. All will agree that no matter what term we use to describe it, this bush on fire proved to be superhuman, supernatural, superearthly.

The second fact to be considered is that when an event is supernatural or superearthly it can be either satanic or divine. In fact all things superearthly are either satanic or divine. If they are human, then they are not superearthly, they are earthly.

Even a bush burning that is not consumed could be a satanic miracle. All who have learned from Scripture the truth about the power and wisdom of Satan will not doubt his ability to produce such a phenomenon. But we can rest assured that this flaming bush was not a satanic miracle. This was not a purposeless, trifling incident, unrelated to the overall purpose of God for Israel. All that followed this miracle showed that it was truly of God, even as it was shown to be a work of God by the voice that came to Moses. "God called to him out of the midst of the bush," is the affirmation of the sacred writer.

Moses Before Pharaoh

Having been told to go before the Pharaoh of Egypt and to demand of him freedom for the people of Israel, Moses was given a specific miracle that he was to perform in the presence of Pharaoh.

When Pharaoh shall speak unto you, saying, Shew a miracle for you: then thou shalt say unto Aaron, Take thy rod, and cast it before Pharaoh, and it shall become a serpent. Exodus 7 :9.

From this we learn that the Lord anticipated that Pharaoh would demand a miracle as the credential of Moses. Therefore, God armed him with full power to perform an exceedingly strange miracle in the presence of the ruler of Egypt.

And Moses and Aaron went in unto Pharaoh, and they did as the Lord had commanded: and Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh, and before his servants, and it became a serpent. Exodus 7: 10.

Beyond all question this act of Moses was superearthly. There was no power resident within men on earth, and no power available from any earthly source that could make it possible for men to perform such a miracle. If men do such things the power or wisdom that makes it possible must come from a higher or greater source.

The answer of Pharaoh to this superearthly demonstration was to call for his own wise men and sorcerers. They duplicated the miracle performed by Moses in every detail. **"They cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents."**

Exodus 7 :12. The fact that later Aaron's rod swallowed up the rod of these sorcerers in no way invalidates or detracts from the miracle they had performed. Thus in the presence of Pharaoh two superearthly acts had been performed. They were identical in every respect so far as human wisdom could determine. But when the superearthly act of Moses is traced back, its source and power is found in God; and when the superearthly act of the sorcerers is traced out, its source and power is found to be Satan.

This establishes another great fact that cannot be denied. Things that are superearthly and miraculous may be either of God or Satan when they are identical in their outward form. This is further demonstrated by other passages.

And Moses and Aaron did so, as the Lord commanded; and he lifted up the rod and smote the waters that were in the river. . . . and all the waters that were in the rivers turned to blood. . . . And the magicians of Egypt did so with their enchantments. Exodus 7 :20-22.

And Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt; and frogs came up and covered the land of Egypt. And the magicians did so with their enchantments, and brought up frogs upon the land of Egypt. Exodus 8:6, 7.

In these records we see things being done by both Moses and the magicians of Egypt that are neither natural nor earthly. What Moses did by the power of God, they did by the power of Satan. Satanic wisdom made it possible for them to produce the same superearthly manifestation that Moses produced by the wisdom of God. The fact that these sorcerers were stopped dead in their tracks when they attempted the next miracle (Exodus 8:16.19) does not alter in the least the facts already established. They *did* cause their rods to become serpents, they *did* change the water into blood, they *did* cause frogs to come up out of the river. These were supernatural, superearthly acts and they were parallel in every detail to the acts of Aaron and Moses.

These scriptural facts deny altogether the commonly held idea that everything supernatural is divine. They prove beyond all question that many supernatural acts are satanic. Anything supernatural may be either satanic or divine. The miracles performed by Moses before Pharaoh were positively divine. The miracles performed by the Egyptian magicians were satanic counterfeits.

All these facts are in harmony with the positive teachings of the New Testament. **In Matthew 7 :21-23 we read:**

Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven. Many will say unto Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity.

In these words we have a very solemn warning from the lips of our Lord in regard to satanic miracles. It is to be noted that these people are seeking admission to the kingdom of the heavens in that day when the chaff is to be separated from the wheat. They call Him "Lord." They bring to His attention that they have prophesied, that they have cast out devils, that they have done many wonderful works. And by a threefold repetition they emphasize the fact that they did all these in His name.

Their claim to have done all these things in His name is a claim that they did them in His character. A man's name is his character. These people sought to put on the character of the Lord in all that they did. This is not strange since Satan's one and only ambition has always been to be like the most High God (Isaiah 14:14). Because of this he leads his dupes to imitate the people of the most High God. Thus "the Lord" was always prominent in all that these people did. They always set forth their teaching and works as being the Lord's teachings and works. They continue to say "Lord, Lord" even in that day when they plead their case before Him. They are not lacking in works of any kind. They point to their preaching and their great miracles. But the Lord

brands it all as works of iniquity and says to them, **"I never knew you: Depart from Me!"**

Do we need any clearer proof that such things as preaching, foretelling the future, casting out demons, and works of wonder may be the works of Satan and not the works of God? Does not this indicate that we need to take a long, hard, critical look at every prophet who claims to be a worker of miracles? And should we not be all the more careful when these prophets hold out to Us a boon greatly to be desired-relief from the ills and infirmities that beset our bodies?

Some may argue from Matthew 12 :25, 26 that Satan would never supply the power to cast out a devil, since by doing so he would be overthrowing his own government. But we need to remember that circumstances alter cases. Satan would gladly release a victim if by so doing he could in the least further his own purposes. All of Satan's victims are expendable to him, and he would gladly surrender one to gain a hundred more. Furthermore, he can take captive again the one whom he has released: See 2 Timothy 2:26.

Another passage that demonstrates that the supernatural may be satanic is found in **Matthew 24:24:**

For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

Regardless of the time when this takes place, it gives the most positive witness that there can be "great signs and wonders" that are entirely satanic. These false prophets appear to be of the same company as those already considered in Matthew 7 :21,23. A phrase that describes them is found in **2 Timothy 3 :13, "deceiving, and being deceived."** Not only have these prophets convinced others that they are the messengers of Christ, they have deceived themselves into believing that they serve Him. Still further proof of the satanic nature of these great signs and wonders is seen in **2 Thessalonians 2:9:**

Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders.

Here we see an arch-deceiver appearing after Satan has prepared the way by working powerfully by signs and lying wonders. These signs and lying wonders speak a lie to all who witness them. The only armor against deceit is to "receive the love of the truth." (2 Thess. 2 :10). Find the man who desires God's eternal truth far above any desire he has for temporal relief from some bodily affliction and you will have found a man who is shielded from an such satanic deceit.

It is just here that Paul's warning to Timothy shines forth in a brilliance that makes it one of the most important warnings for the time in which we live.

Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils. 1 Timothy 4:1.

In connection with this passage, this writer feels that he can bring no stronger witness than to reprint an article which appeared in **PROPHECY MONTHLY** in October 1951, under title of *Satanic Counterfeits in the Spirit Realm*. This was written by **Dr. Carl C. Harwood**, and it is printed here by permission of the Editor of PROPHECY MONTHLY, Dr. Keith L. Brooks. This article deserves the widest possible circulation.

Among the most dangerous and confusing religions on the face of the earth today are those which deal with the power of SPIRITS and with no discernment between that which is of the HOLY SPIRIT and that which is produced by deceiving spirits, which, "in the latter times" are to become more and more active. Many unwary souls have been sadly deceived because they were made to believe that a demonstration was of "Pentecost" when actually it was from the PIT! And the latter can be true, even when the most sincere kind of people have gathered with "spiritual" desires.

There are those who call themselves "Pentecostals" who do not go in for extremes, and who well know the perils of counterfeiting demons. There are also "Pentecostals" without true discernment, who are manifestly dabbling in powers not their own, which are NOT related to the Holy Spirit. Crowds swarm to their meetings and the excitement grows. The havoc is not discovered until later.

All this adds up to one thing-"CONFUSION", and *"God is not the author of confusion."* (I Cor. 14:33) Pentecostalism may be Satanic and demonistic. I want to here make a few comparisons between these people getting what they call "the baptism of the Holy Ghost" and what wicked, demon-possessed spirit mediums call "a familiar spirit."

From the book, "Genuine Mediumship" (p. 37): "In entering the trance condition, your hands and body may twitch and jerk as if you were being subjected to a series of galvanic shocks." . . . "When the spirit-power comes, there is manifested a peculiar jerking, twitching or vibration of the hands and arms, sometimes extending to the whole body."

A note from a holiness paper, *Bridal Call-7-'20*, p. 18: "All at once my arms

began to shake, gently at first, then violently, till my whole body was quaking under the power. . . On Sun., May 16 in the prayer room I received the baptism. The Spirit came like a torrent as though He would tear my body to pieces."

Again, from "Genuine Mediumship," p. 239: The tingling of an electric current is avowed by Spiritism: "When the spirit enters, in the arms are felt peculiar tingling, prickling sensations like needles and pins, sometimes akin to a current of electricity passing through from head to foot."

In the *Bridal Call* (8-'20): E. W. Leach of Baltimore wrote: "The Holy Ghost took hold of me. What sensations I experienced! Indescribable indeed, as though I had in my hands the handles of an electric battery and the current passing through me from head to foot."

Back to "Genuine Mediumship": "A young medium will probably find himself either partly or completely conscious of what is being said and done by the spirit through his body or vocal organs. He will naturally try to escape the utterance of the strange cries, moans and gasps."

Evan Roberts, in his book, "War on the Saints," tells how an outraged friend who found a girl in a Pentecostal meeting, telephoned her mother to come and get her, for "She is lying on the floor of the mission chattering like a monkey."

Here is "Genuine Mediumship" again: "The spirit which has entered you will stimulate your breathing which will become rapid and irregular." One who claimed to have the Spirit's baptism testifies: "I seemed to be lost in God. My body had sank to the floor, my lungs began to fill and heave under the power."

On p. 236, "Genuine Mediumship" says again: "If you are likely to become a trance-speaking medium, you will probably experience a sensation as of falling or dizziness, as if you were going to faint. This may continue until you become entirely unconscious and you will know no more until you regain your normal condition."

Here is a report of a meeting in a church in San Jose, Calif.: "The slain of the Lord were many. In the choir loft lay the deacons and in the aisles and in the pews were the lady ushers and singers. Between the front pews and the altar, the preacher was prostrated. The Holy Ghost was speaking through all of them in a language of worship that was all His own."

"God is NOT the author of confusion. . . Let all things be done decently and in order. . . Forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church. . . I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand

words in an unknown tongue. . . The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to PROFIT WITH ALL"(lit. "for the common good"-edification of others, not personal thrills.) From Paul's instructions in 1 Cor. 11-14. BEWARE OF SATAN'S COUNTERFEITS!

Now to return to our theme. The facts which have been brought forth from Scripture give one testimony. That which is supernatural is not necessarily divine. The supernatural can be satanic. We are warned many times that Satan will make great use of the supernatural in accomplishing his purposes. Men play into the hands of Satan when they accept as a major premise the idea: That which is supernatural is divine. Thus when they see an event that is supernatural, they can come to no other conclusion that that it is divine. The Bible reveals the complete falsity of such reasoning.

Recovered Truth

A most positive revelation of truth bearing upon this subject has been lost to the believer due to the fact that it has been buried under the inadequate translation of one Greek word. This word is *epigeios* (pronounced ep-IG-i-os). As a rule a Greek word is apt to frighten most people, they being convinced in advance that Greek is something beyond their comprehension. Such fear is childish. It is a snare that keeps men from much truth. There is nothing that the most erudite scholar can do with the word *epigeios* that the mechanic or housewife cannot do if they put their minds to it. i

Do you remember in the early days of the last war that you began to read in the papers about the German *blitzkrieg*? Did the appearance of this word frighten you, so that you put aside the paper and determined to read no more? Of course not. You wanted to know what this word meant, what idea it set forth, the kind of war it described. If you asked someone who knew, you were told that *blitz* meant lightning and that *krieg* meant war, and that when you put these two words together it meant a war that was as swift and destructive as lightning.

Now let us do this same thing with the Greek word *epigeios*. This is formed from the word *ge* (pronounced, ghay), a word meaning earth. This word is found in our words *geography* and *geology*. *Ge* is a noun, but in the word we are considering it is an adjective, and as is usually the case when a noun is cast in adjective form, it changes its spelling. Thus we have the noun *ge* meaning earth, and *geios* an adjective meaning earthly. In the word *epigeios* we have the adjective meaning earthly with the word *epi* before it. The word *epi* is a preposition which indicates superimposition, that is, on. So *ge* means earth, *geios* means earthly, and *epigeios* means superearthly. The word *geios* does not appear in the New Testament, but it is found in classical Greek as a look at the *Liddell and Scott Greek Lexicon* will show.

The word *epigeios* occurs seven times in the New Testament. John 3:12; 1 Corinthians 15:40 (twice); 2 Corinthians 5:1; Philippians 2:10; 3:19 and James 3:15.

It is translated "earthly" 4 times; "terrestrial" 2 times; and "in earth" one time. These translations are not adequate. They would do very well for the word *geios* but they misrepresent the word *epigeios*.

The first occurrence of this word in the New Testament proves that it cannot mean "earthly" and it also gives a definite clue to its true meaning. In **John 3:12** our Lord declared to Nicodemus:

If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things.

In spite of the fact that *epigeios* is translated "earthly" here, it cannot mean that in this context. Not once in all His ministry did our Lord speak *of* "earthly things." On several occasions men asked Him questions about earthly things. "Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar, or not?" This was a question related to an earthly matter, the paying *of* tribute. And while our Lord provided an answer, His ministry and message did not have to do with earthly things,

It is to be noted that our Lord declared that He had told *of ta epigeia*, here translated "earthly things." If this has reference to the wider context, that is, the entire ministry *of* the Lord up to the visit *of* Nicodemus, then *epigeios* here cannot mean earthly. He had spoken *of* the kingdom *of* the heavens, a government that was to come upon the earth. This government is not *of* the earth and it is not earthly, for it is, "of the heavens." And even though it was to be on the earth, it was still to be heavens' government. A heavenly thing upon the earth is superearthly. "**My kingdom is not *of* this world,**" was our Lord's own testimony (John 18:36). Anything not *of* this world which is upon the earth is superearthly.

However, there are those who feel that the things meant by our Lord here belong to the immediate context, that is, the things which He had declared to Nicodemus. But even if this is true, the word *epigeios* cannot mean earthly. He had spoken to this "ruler of the Jews" *of* an essential spiritual miracle that no man, no means, and no power on earth could bring to pass. This miracle was described as being "born from above,"** a superearthly experience to say the least. Thus in this first occurrence *of* *epigeios* we find that it is used *of* something that is superearthly, and that this superearthly thing is positively divine.

In the final occurrence *of* this Greek word in the New Testament we find the exact opposite. There it refers to a superearthly thing that is satanic. In **James 3:15** we read:

This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish.

The Greek word *anōthen* means above, not again. See John 3:31; 19:11; James 1:17; 3:15 and 3:17 where it is so translated.

Three adjectives are used here to describe this wisdom. It is superearthly, soulish, demoniacal. That which is **soulish or sensual appeals to man's emotions**; A wisdom that is sensually attractive could be either earthly or superearthly in character. But this wisdom is also described as being devilish, or demoniacal. Anything demoniacal that is upon the earth is not earthly, it is superearthly. Since this sensual wisdom is from demons, it cannot be called earthly; therefore *epigeios* in James 3:15 must mean superearthly. [Let no one object that *epigeios* cannot mean superearthly because it does not seem to fit in the four other passages where it occurs. When these passages are correctly interpreted it will fit perfectly and illuminate the message which Paul is declaring. In fact if this truth is seen in Philippians 2:10 it will eliminate a crux of interpretation that has plagued students of the Word for centuries. The translators painted themselves into a corner here. Having translated *epigeios* by "in earth" here, they could do nothing else but translate *katachthonion* to mean "under the earth." This translation has always been a *source* of great comfort to those who hold the idea of universal salvation, but it is not what the Greek word means.]

There are three kinds of wisdom available to men. First, there is divine wisdom which comes from above, and which never can be gained from any earthly source. This can properly be called superearthly wisdom.

Then there is human wisdom. This can be learned in schools and gained from experience. This wisdom is earthly, and as long as it deals with facts it is good and nothing to be condemned. As examples we might mention the knowledge that doctors have gained of the human body, the knowledge that astronomers have gained of the stars, or the knowledge that geologists have gained of the earth..

Finally, there is satanic wisdom. In this passage it is called demoniacal. This wisdom is also superearthly, and cannot be honestly described as being earthly.

If the wisdom spoken of in James 3 :15 had been earthly it would have been described as human or fleshly, for that is what earthly wisdom is and it is all that it ever can be. But this wisdom is neither divine nor human. It is demoniacal, therefore, superearthly. It was the possession of this wisdom that made it possible for Jannes and Jambres to withstand Moses before Pharaoh's court and to duplicate his divine miracles.

Satan is the same today as he was yesterday. He still gives wisdom to men that makes it possible for them to do things that are far beyond any human power. And the greatest tragedy of all is that Satan, the arch Deceiver, gives this wisdom to men who use it and think they are making use of the power and wisdom of God.

From John 3:12 and James 3:15 we learn anew that some superearthly things are divine and that some are satanic. This is in complete harmony with all that we learned from the Old Testament about superearthly or supernatural things.

There is still another occurrence of *epigeios* which has an important bearing upon our subject. In Philippians 3 :18, 19 Paul speaks of some whom he characterizes as being "the enemies of the Cross of Christ." Of these he says:

Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly (*epigeios*) things. Philippians 3:19.

If the ones spoken of here were disposed toward or were minding earthly things their offence would not be so serious. Every day makes its demands that we give some thought to earthly things. We do this without setting our affections on things on the earth. But even those whose affections are on things on the earth and who give all their thoughts to earthly things can hardly be called "the enemies of the Cross of Christ." The real enemies of the Cross of Christ are those who have set their minds and hearts upon the superearthy in this the dispensation of the grace of God. These are the ones who are wrapped up in sights, sounds, and visions. They glory in the supernatural. They reject all truth concerning the present silence of God in this dispensation. "Back to Pentecost" is their cry. They are fascinated with the superearthy manifestations that were seen there. They refuse to go forward to the final epistles of Paul which give the most positive evidence that these supernatural manifestations are not God's order for today. To them everything supernatural is of God, and they think they find God in every supernatural manifestation. They judge men and movements solely upon the basis of the superearthy. They are the enemies of the Cross of Christ.

In relationship to this **Sir Robert Anderson** wrote more than fifty years ago:

A stranger appears, say in London, the metropolis of the world, claiming to be the bearer of a Divine revelation to mankind, and in order to accredit his message he proceeds to display miraculous power. Let us assume for the moment that after the strictest inquiry the reality of the miracles is established, and that all are agreed as to their genuineness. Here, then, we are face to face with the question in the most practical way. If the "Christian argument" be sound we are bound to accept whatever gospel this prophet proclaims. And no one who knows anything of human nature will doubt that it would be generally received. The Christian, however, would be kept back by the words of the inspired apostle: "But though *we or an angel from heaven* should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema." (Gal. 1:8 R. V.) ... He would insist, moreover, on bringing the new miracle accredited gospel to the test of Holy Writ, and finding it inconsistent with the gospel he had already received, he would reject it. That is to say, he would test the message, not by the miracles, but by a preceding revelation known to be Divine. (from "The Silence of God", pg. 35)

In the experience of the Apostle Paul he found himself in possession of superearthly gifts which conferred upon him powers that were so far beyond any present human experience that men today are inclined to disbelieve that he ever possessed them at all. These gifts were granted to him in connection with the government of God that was to come upon the earth and which had already made its beginning in the Acts period. In the Roman epistle, the last Paul wrote before the close of the Acts period he said:

I have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God. For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed, through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ. Romans 15:17.19.

Among those things in which Paul could glory was the superearthly power that was his in the gift of healing. We read of this and see it in action in Acts 14:3, 10; Acts 19:12; and Acts 28:8, 9. However, the time came when God suspended the purpose for which these gifts had been given, and Paul was called upon to surrender the very things in which he could take great glory. No man would find this easy to do, but the Apostle Paul was equal to the demand and submitted to the will of God. These truths are revealed in his letter to the Philippians. There he declares:

Being confident of this very thing, that he (God) who began a good work in you will bring it to a full end [This is the true meaning of the word *epiteleo* which the A. V. translates "perform" and which the R. V. translates "perfect". However, to "perform until" is to keep on doing a thing until a certain time, and *teleo* means to end, not to continue. Here where *epiteleo* appears with "until" it can signify nothing else but suspension.] **until the day of Jesus Christ. Philippians 1 :6.**

If this were true it meant that the prerogatives of the ministry they were performing had been withdrawn. They had been granted such glories as "miracles, gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues," but due to the suspension of God's kingdom purposes they had been stripped of all of these. In his letter to the Philippians the Apostle Paul calls upon them to accept this as God's will and cites the fact that even Christ who was in the form of God emptied Himself and took upon Himself the form of a slave. See Philippians 2 :5-8.

Further light on this is shown by Paul's words concerning Epaphroditus. Words such as these would never have needed to be written by him in the Acts period.

Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labour, and fellow soldier, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants. For he longed after you all, and was full of heaviness,

because that ye had heard that he had been sick. For indeed he was sick nigh unto death: but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. . . . Because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life, to supply your lack of service toward me. Philippians 2:25-27, 30.

Here Paul readily and honestly confesses the extreme illness of Epaphroditus and his inability to.. bring about his instant and miraculous healing. This same truth is confessed by him again in his first message to Timothy in which he said:

Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities. I Tim. 5:23.

It is tragic indeed that men have failed to see in this passage the truth that God's supernatural gift of healing had been withdrawn from Paul. Instead of being a great revelation of positive truth, this passage has become the favorite text of the tippler. The fact that Paul accepted as the will of God this withdrawal of the supernatural powers granted to him is his greatest glory and will bring to him great reward.

All who read Philippians 2 :25-30 and 1 Timothy 5 :23 will realize that the truth revealed there is much more in harmony with present experience than that revealed in Acts 19 :11, 12; Romans 15 :19; and 1 Corinthians 12 :28.

Today there are few indeed who are willing to accept the fact of God's silence in this dispensation of grace. The era of the dispensation of grace is precisely the era of the silence of God. But today because the average Christian has his mind on the superearthy, God is challenged by them to break His silence and declare Himself. In prayer meetings all over the land men are calling upon God to make bare His mighty arm and give some manifest token of His presence even as He did in days of old. In doing this they lay themselves bare to the deceit of Satan who often steps in and provides the superearthy demonstration which they seek.

The tongues, signs, visions, and wonders of the Acts period were related to God's purposes in connection with His government which was then moving in upon men and was already present in a stage comparable to the blade stage of growing grain [Before the great dispensational change marked by Paul's declaration in Acts 28:28 he wrote 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians and Romans. After that he wrote 1 Timothy, Titus, Philippians, Colossians, Ephesians, Philemon and 2 Timothy..]

But that purpose was suspended at the close of the Acts period. During this time we have nothing to lean upon except the written Word. We live in a time of pure faith during the absolute silence of God. God will provide no signs until this dispensation is over and He resumes His purposes to establish His government in the earth.

Many readers will be disappointed because the writer has not provided some touchstone by which they can immediately test all things supernatural and determine whether they are divine or satanic. The writer possesses no gift of "discerning spirits" and does not believe that any such gift is available today. The only safe course to follow is to refuse to become enamoured with superearthy things. The one who does this will find God's grace to be sufficient for every need, and it will keep him from becoming ensnared in the popular, prevailing satanic delusions.

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