



**LION
ON THE
LOOSE**

In Rio de Janeiro on May 19, 1997, a man was walking his pet lion on a leash when the animal broke loose and mauled a four-year-old boy to death. In 2006, a lion at a circus in Beijing jumped over a barrier and charged the crowd, injuring three people and causing one to have a miscarriage before it was finally killed. In 2019, a mining community was put on alert when a pride of fourteen lions escaped Kruger National Park, but a more deadly threat is posed on the world at large, and many are unaware of it. While many wander about in a daze, unconcerned, the Bible warns, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pet. 5:8).

Imagine that a lion escaped from a zoo and was spotted in your community within a mile of your home. How would you feel? Would it concern you? Would you leave the house? Think of how careful you would be if you had to leave the house under such conditions. I imagine you would be very alert, looking in every direction, making each move with extreme caution, and yet the most a lion can do is kill your life. The Bible tells us that there is a deadly lion-like enemy on the loose who is trying to destroy your soul. While God has created you to live forever, the devil is in a desperate attempt to rob you of eternal life, and his methods are very successful.

Perhaps the greatest method of the devil is unbelief. Philosopher Charles Baudelaire once stated, "The finest trick of the devil is to persuade you that he does not exist." Tragically, there are a growing number of people in denial of the supernatural. They believe that the world consists of only the things that we can see and feel while denying any form of supernatural life taking place in the fourth dimension. In spite of wind, electricity, gravity, radio waves, and other invisible elements around us, it is becoming more and more popular to disbelieve in things you cannot see. While claiming to be educated, we are rearing a society of babies who refuse to believe in things beyond sight.

You see, when babies are little, it has been said that their reality is only subject to their vision. When the baby cannot see a person, they cease to exist in the baby's mind. Whether this is true or not, some have certainly adopted this mindset regarding spiritual things. The tragedy of modern culture is that many who claim to be intelligent cling to this concept. They claim that reality only exists in what we see and refuse to expand their minds to accept the possibility that there is an invisible world that is taking place in the things that occur in the fourth dimension, in spite of the incredible evidence. As a result, their ignorance has placed them in a deadly position.

There is more than sufficient evidence that Satan is real. Common sense should tell us that some evil force exists in the world around us. The fact that such horrible evils have existed all through history is evidence of an evil supernatural power, but there is more profound evidence than this in the countless accounts of supernatural phenomenon that occur around us all the time. Many people have personally experienced things, felt things, and seen things taking place beyond human sight that cannot be explained. Those who have spoken to the devil and his angels, and experienced the supernatural, know for a fact they are real, and those who say these experiences are simply self-induced have their heads in the sand.

Years ago, my son and I saw a documentary on lions. The film showed a water pit in Africa where a number of gazelle had gathered to drink. A lioness, hunting for prey, saw the animals and casually began to make her way towards the water pit. The gazelle just stood there drinking the water while the lioness lurked into the middle of the group. Finally, the lioness jumped for the attack, and the gazelle tried to run, but it was too late for one of them. Sadly, this is taking place every day on a spiritual level. The Bible tells us that the devil lurks about like a lion, seeking to destroy souls, yet many of us, like the gazelle, are distracted and remain unalarmed, with the devil in our midst.

According to the Bible, Satan and his angels are on the loose, mauling souls and dragging them into his lion's dens of sin. Like those who fish, Satan has many different kinds of bate to trap people. As noted, one bate is disbelief. If he can get you to disbelieve he is real, you are easy prey for all his other traps, which include drugs, alcohol, gambling, pre-marital sex, pride, homosexuality, pornography, envy, hatred, foul language, and so much more. Satan has many different lion dens, and his angels are prowling around the earth trying to lure you into one of them. It doesn't matter which one. It doesn't even matter if you call yourself a Christian, as long as you get trapped in one of his deadly dens.

Perhaps you have fallen into one of the devil's traps. You may be addicted to something that has you under its control. You have tried to escape, but found yourself powerless to overcome. As a result, some have simply resigned to life as a sinner, claiming that God will just have to accept them as they are. Sadly, those who have given up the fight against sin will not make it to heaven. The Bible says, "there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles," "he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still" (Rev. 21:27; 22:11). This life is our time to overcome sin. While many have become trapped in the devil's dens, there is still hope.

When I was in junior high school, I had a best friend named Dwight. While Dwight was large, I was small and skinny, so I often got bullied. There was one kid in particular who taunted me, but one time he made the mistake of taunting me around Dwight, who not only stood up for me, but fought for me. Similarly, we are no match against the devil. Those who try to defeat the devil in their own strength will lose. We must ask God to fight our battles. When God fights our battles, we will find victory over the sins in our lives, but many do not know how to fight their battles. As a result, they continue to be hopelessly bullied by the devil, led around by their lusts, their passions, and their sins, without ever finding the key to victory.

In the Bible, there is a famous story of a man who was thrown into a lion's den. This story gives us the key to victory. In the story, people were looking for a way to trap Daniel because of his religious beliefs. Since Daniel was faithful, they convinced the king to make a religious law that forbade Daniel to pray to his God, but Daniel continued to pray. As a result, they "cast him into the den of lions" (Dan. 6:16). The next morning, when they called into the lion's den to see if Daniel was dead, Daniel called back, "God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths, so that they have not hurt me, because I was found innocent before Him" (Dan. 6:22). This is the key to defeating lions.

Just as Daniel was cast into the midst of the lions, we are walking in the midst of a roaring lion, but we too can defeat the lions if we follow the pattern of Daniel. Daniel prayed. The thing that his enemies thought would defeat him was the thing that defeated the devil and his lions. So often, we wait until we are in trouble to cry out to God, but Daniel shows us that the key to victory over the lions is by getting in a daily habit of prayer. We must pray before the temptation comes. Then, once Daniel was thrown into the midst of the lion's den, it is certain that he prayed with more intensity. Similarly, when temptation rises, instead of falling for our sins, we must fall on our knees and cry out to God with deep intensity.

So many people are defeated by the devil and his deadly attacks because they don't believe in the devil, or they believe, but they try to fight in their own strength. Then, when they fail, they cry, "I can't do it, so God will just have to accept me like I am," instead of wrestling with God in prayer until they get the victory. Many make ten times more effort to learn a sport than to overcome sin, when sin is destroying their very soul. If we will fall on our knees and plead for God's mercy, then we, like Daniel, may find power to defeat the devil and find victory in Jesus.

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