

Message #111 of *Scripture Beneath The Surface*

"Southpaw"

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Hello! Thanks for being with us. I hope you enjoy today's program, and I hope that you get something out of it which convicts you and encourages you. Our program is called, Scripture Beneath The Surface, and it generally concentrates on the underlying principles of the Bible, rather than just surface issues. We like to look a little closer at scripture and do what the Bible refers to as, rightly dividing. We like to pull it apart and look at it from different perspectives in order to see all that God's word has for us. When the Bible talks in types and symbolisms, such as in the parables that Jesus spoke, we like to take it apart, dividing it from the surface concepts and taking a closer look at its underlying meaning. Of course, you will have to be the judge of what we say, because you can't just take what we say as truth. It is the Holy Spirit of God that you have to trust in for your understanding. We just like to present the different aspects, and then we leave the rest up to you and God. After all, when you stand before God in the end of days, we won't be asked to vouch for you or for what you have believed. You will be responsible for that. Don't believe any preacher or teacher until God's Holy Spirit has revealed the truth to you. Anyone can say anything that sounds good, but it is only God who can lead you into all truth. Be careful. Satan, as a roaring lion, seeks whom he may devour. Don't be his next meal. Lean on God. Don't lean on preachers and teachers. The Bible does say, "How can they hear without a preacher?" But, after you hear, then pray fervently that God will show you his truth, and not just some preacher's words, for it is God's truth that will set you free, not the preacher. Anyway, I hope you get something out of today's message. That's our hope. That's why we do this.

So, let me start out today with a question for you. And that is, “Are you a Northpaw or a Southpaw?” O.K., so you're somewhat familiar with the term Southpaw, but the term Northpaw isn't within your vocabulary, right? But then, it should be. Where do you think the idea of Southpaw came from? No, it didn't originate in baseball, as you've probably heard. That's an erroneous belief. Left handed people have actually been referred to as Southpaws for a long time. But where does the concept come from? And, if a left handed person is called a Southpaw, then what is a right handed person called? Well, a right handed person may not be called a Northpaw in today's common terms, but in ancient times they were. Let me give you some description of the origination of these terms and see what you can glean from them.

Originally the right and left hands of people were determined by first considering a person as facing in an easterly direction. When facing east your right hand is on the south side and your left hand is on the north side. So in essence, you have a south hand and a north hand. This is important. History looks at a human being as standing on the earth facing in an initial eastward direction. This is where mankind starts out, facing east. You must start out with your face oriented toward the east or otherwise you wouldn't be able to determine the right and left.

So, we have a man facing east which has a south hand and a north hand. But then, the terms for the right and left hands come from original language words which give additional meaning to the right and left sides. Consider this, if you would. The term south, when used to designate the right hand of a person, comes from the idea of being 'open'. Therefore, the right hand, meaning the south hand, was considered to be the hand that could open, and therefore was able to grasp objects and manipulate them. In short, the south hand was the dominant hand. It had greater dexterity than the left hand, and it could grasp things and manipulate things.

Now, of course, this is the same thing for us in our current day. If you're a right handed person, your right hand is the dominant hand. It's the hand you usually use to take something for yourself, and it's the hand that you use to do precision work such as writing or threading a needle. The left hand, the secondary hand, is not the dominant hand, and it is used much less than your dominant hand. This is common knowledge in today's society. We all have a dominant hand, and our other hand is the secondary hand which helps us in two handed projects, but has less dexterity. Our other hand is generally not used for writing or threading needles, but it nevertheless is useful in accord with our dominant hand.

Now let's take a look at the original language which determined the left hand. Originally the term 'left hand' came from a word meaning, 'to be wrapped up'. And, the reason for this is that when a man faced eastward his left hand was toward the north. The 'North', as in the North quarter of the earth, was a term which meant darkness. Ancient language described the North as being a dark place, a place where there was a covering of darkness over the land. It was considered a sinister place, a place from which evil came. Therefore, the left hand was considered to be the hand of the north which was covered over with the North's dark covering. It was wrapped up, and therefore hidden from light.

Now, think of this. With the left hand wrapped with this imaginary wrapping of darkness, the hand would no longer be agile or dextrous. If you wrap your hand and fingers with a bandage, your hand becomes bound together. It then takes on the characteristics of a paw rather than a man's hand. And this is where the original concept came from that the left hand of man was a paw. The right hand was not bound by the cover of the darkness from the north, and therefore it was open. But the left hand, toward the north, was the one which was wrapped up. Therefore the people in Biblical times just looked at the right hand as a south hand, and the left hand as a north paw. Because most people are right handed, this was the normal way of looking at the terms for right hands and left hands. However, as I referred to previously, there has always been a portion of the population which were left handed. In essence, left handed people were turned around. Instead of facing the normal direction of east like others, they were facing west. Therefore, their north paw was on the south side. Basically, there you have the essence of Southpaw. A left handed person's dominant hand is the left hand. If he is opposite to the normal definition of right hand and left hand, he is turned around and his dominant open hand is toward the north and his closed hand, his wrapped up hand is toward the south. He is then considered a Southpaw in stead of the normal term Northpaw.

But don't confuse left handed people and right handed people with the concept of South hand and North hand. It's important to recognize that the general understanding in Bible times was that a man's south hand was the dominant hand, and his north hand was the wrapped up hand, and therefore referred to his paw hand. It was a North paw. So imagine yourself with this same concept, and that your right hand is your dominant hand, and your left hand is your paw, in that it doesn't have the same dexterity that your dominant hand has. If you're left handed, just turn this scenario around and you'll get the same understanding.

Now, imagine yourself with a dominant hand that can open and grasp objects and can write and thread needles. Then add the concept that you have an animals paw for a left hand. When you do this you can begin to see some of the interesting parts of scripture which give us deeper insight into God's word. The right hand and the left hand actually demonstrate the two qualities within humans, the one being the good side, and the other being the bad side. Every man and woman on the face of this earth has these two qualities. One quality is the nature of man who is able to comprehend the spiritual existence of God. The other quality is the nature of animals who are brute in knowledge, which have no ability to apply reason. They cannot fully comprehend the existence of God, nor comprehend the awesomeness of his eternal glory. Man who gives way to the animal nature within, will be a man who cannot receive the goodness of God for he finds it to be without sufficient value to him. You, of course, as a Christian, have already rejected the presence of the animal nature and have recognized the God of heaven as being the supreme Lord of all things. You have rejected the animal nature within you and have given yourself over to the righteous nature of God. In short, you have been born again in spirit, no longer pursuing the stimulations of earthly delights, but pursuing the heavenly things of God. You have made a choice as to which nature to follow. You have stood upright on your feet and have begun to suppress your animalistic desires. You no longer find yourself acting like a brute beast, but are now actively seeking the deep things of God. To say it as plainly as possible, you

have chosen to reject the animal nature of Satan's sinful temptations and have chosen the righteous nature of God.

The earthly contest between the animal nature and God's spirit nature is at the core of our earthly existence. We have been created as flesh and blood human beings with flesh and blood desires for earthly things, but we have also been created a little above the animals in that we can also contemplate the spiritual things of God. God wants us to choose the righteous nature of his Holy Spirit and to reject the sinful nature of Satan. Just as the angels in heaven made a choice to either follow after Satan's animalistic nature or to remain loyal to God, we also, as human beings, are presented with the temptation of Satan to reject God and to turn to the strength of our own hands for our salvation.

The Bible indicates that a third of the angels turned away from God and followed after Satan. And a very interesting scripture tells us that they were pulled away by a very significant force. This force was a tool of Satan which drew a third of the angels away from the eternal light of God and into the outer darkness. Let me read this verse. It's found in Revelation 12:4. It says, "And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, to devour her child as soon as it was born."

This is a reference to Satan's temptation of the other angels. Notice that what Satan used to draw the other angels away from God was his tail. Now, animals have tails. It was at this point that we have the very first historical event which points to the two natures. Satan, acting in rebellion against God, acted as an animal, drawing the other angels away from God by the force of his tail.

Now, this may be confusing to some of you, for we know that Satan is considered to be created as an angel, not as a beast. And also, Satan was considered to have occupied the highest position in heaven before the time of his rebellion. But once that rebellion took place, God's references to him take on the terms for beasts in the earth, and animalistic names are continually applied to him. In the Garden of Eden, Satan was called a Serpent. Now, some people would consider that Satan was an actual snake. But I rather think that the term 'serpent' is representative of his nature, not his general form. I think of Satan as being in the form of an angel, but as to his nature, he is the nature of animals. And his nature is so evil, that he is considered to be a snake, which is the lowest form of animal, and most hated, in this earth. The serpent is feared and hated by more persons than any other animal. God's use of the term, serpent, implies some interesting concepts, in that snakes slither rapidly across the ground. They have no feet, and therefore can make absolutely no effort to stand upright. All animals, in general, are hindered from being upright creatures. However, notice that the very term, upright, is one that is used Biblically to describe the righteousness that God desires from man. Man is considered upright when he acts and speaks in a right manner. Animals are not upright, and instead of standing upright, they go on all fours.

Satan's tail is symbolic of his great animal magnetism. Just as Job's description of Behemoth's great tail, that moves like a cedar tree, indicated great animal strength, Satan's great strength in this world is in the form of the animal nature, and is opposed to the lofty spiritual nature of God. God is a Spirit, and those who worship him must worship him according to his truth, and also must enter into worship of him in the spirit of it. However, it is Satan's intent to draw all men away from God with his animal nature, his tail, in the same way he drew away a third of the angels from God with his tail.

The animal force of earth is a major power. If you don't believe me, just look around at the historical events of earth and see how many wars are being fought, and have been fought in the last 6000 years. This is not a sign of peace from God's Holy Spirit, but a sign of the nature of beasts who have rejected the peace of God's Holy Spirit, the dove of peace, for the self-exaltation of power. It is the animal nature, the beast nature that is at the core of selfishness and pride. The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life are not elements of God's Holy Spirit, but are the elements of a sinful beastly form which has permeated the earth from the days of Adam and Eve's original sin. Satan is called the Serpent, the Dragon, the Great Red Dragon, the Serpent in the Bottom of the Sea. He is Leviathan, the sea monster, who wants to drown all men in his sea of lies.

But you have not been put on this earth to become entangled with the animal nature. You may be forced to occupy your flesh and blood body for a short time yet, just as Jesus had to endure the flesh for a time until he conquered it. But, again, just as Jesus conquered the fleshly desires of this world, we are also called to conquer the desires of this flesh which pulls us toward the beast nature of Satan. We are to be born again in spirit, and therefore to come out from among the creatures of this world and become a separate people. We are to become sons of God, and not sons of Satan. If we are sons of God, who is the Spirit of righteousness, then we will be spirit creatures in righteousness. If we are sons of Satan, who's nature is beastly, then we will align ourselves with this same beast nature and will eventually become creatures who are brute in knowledge, creatures which lack the ability to apply reason and therefore cannot understand nor embrace the awesome power of God.

It remains that we are creatures on this earth who have been given the choice of two natures. Our hearts are the battleground where either the nature of righteousness will be established or the nature of evil will be established. And, in order to guard our heart, we must make necessary provision for it. King Solomon says in Ecclesiastes 10:2 that a wise man's heart is at his right hand, but that a fool's heart is at his left. This means that the wise man knows that his heart has great value from an eternal perspective, and that therefore the heart must be fed with the true word of God and also must be guarded against the evil intrusion of Satan's lies. A fool will assign his left hand, or in other words, will assign his north paw to the task of providing for his heart. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to recognize that if you want to do something that takes a great amount of movement and dexterity, you would do it with your dominant hand. If your heart means very little to you, you might assign your north paw to provide for it. In this case your dominant hand, your hand which is most often used for taking, would be assigned to making

provision for your fleshly desires. The result of this would be a fleshly appetite that will be fed to the full. Your fleshly man will be fat and sassy. However, because your heart is being fed with your paw hand, it cannot keep up with the demands. Soon your heart will begin to atrophy, and will shrivel up and become a hard little stone that has very little or no room for the indwelling of God's Holy Spirit.

You know, the book of Daniel is a most interesting portion of the Bible. It is filled with historical events which also are greatly symbolic of the overall picture of God's plan for the salvation of his children. One of the most significant portions of Daniel is the fourth chapter which describes the King of Babylon being turned into an animal for seven periods of time and then being restored to the understanding of a man, and by this, becoming aware that the God of heaven was truly the supreme power over everything and everybody. Most people have a hard time envisioning King Nebuchadnezzar being turned into an animal and eating grass in the forest. But that's exactly what the Bible says. But then, why would God cause this specific king to experience something so unusual? He wasn't the only king in history to be caught in his own pride. The answer lies in recognizing the place that King Nebuchadnezzar occupies in the whole concept of the warfare between God and Satan. I don't have time today to explain this in detail, but consider this. King Nebuchadnezzar was the King of Babylon, who was also the king of the north. The experiences of King Nebuchadnezzar, although they are true historical events, also represent Satan. Satan is the spiritual king of Babylon in the sense that he is King of Great Babylon. Babylon, and the king of Babylon, are representative of the evil force that permeates this world from a central concept of selfishness. It is selfishness based in the desire to exalt ones own power, and to reject God's true word which states very plainly that God is the Almighty God, and that there is no power but that which comes from God. Satan, just like King Nebuchadnezzar, has claimed to be able to build a universal kingdom by the power within himself, and attributing his great kingdom to the power of his own hands. Just as God debased King Nebuchadnezzar by turning him into an animal until seven times passed over him, God has changed the heart of Satan from a heavenly angel, made with the heaven nature of God, into a beast form which has the evil nature of sin. The pride that caused King Nebuchadnezzar to exalt himself is also the same pride that caused Satan to exalt himself against God. In essence, the beast nature has been put into Satan until seven times passes over him. In the end, when the millennial reign of Christ is over, Satan will return to conscious awareness of what has been done to him, just as King Nebuchadnezzar returned to conscious awareness of what had been done to him. No, Satan will not be saved, but he will then be forced to acknowledge that the God of heaven is truly the only power that exists. However, for you and I, the question is this. "Will we also be deceived into dabbling with the nature of the beast?" I hope, for your sake, that you make a wise choice, and assign your south hand to the care and provision of your heart, and let your north paw take care of your flesh. If you want to take mostly of the good things for your heart, then you will want to use the hand which is generally used more than the other. Otherwise you will load up your flesh and your heart will go begging. If your heart goes begging, so will you, eventually.

Thanks for being with us.

