**BE ON GUARD**

*Isaac Torres*

(Rick’s Note: Each Friday Isaac will write our “Feed The Flock” article. He is doing a great job as our new summer intern preacher. He is a good student of the Word and is working hard to improve his skills in order to become a preacher of the gospel. Give attention to his sermons, and his articles, for they will bless your walk with the Lord.)

Right before Cain murdered his brother in cold blood he had a one-on-one meeting with the Lord. The LORD asks a couple of questions and gives a warning to Cain. His exhortation is to be on alert for “*sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it*” (Gen 4:7). “*Sin is crouching at the door*;” it is waiting to strike and master us. Instead, we must master it.

Similar language can be found in 1 Peter 5:8. It says to “*be of sober spirit, [and to] be on alert [for] your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour*.” Our adversary is waiting and prowling, seeking any opportunity he can find to consume us.

We get a brief glimpse of this idea in Job 1. Satan says he “[*roams] about on the earth*” (Job 1:7). By doing so, he is also studying the people of the world, particularly God’s people, and how to convert them to his side by exposing their weaknesses. This is seen by how he knows Job already when God asks him “*have you considered my servant Job*?” Satan thinks he knows a couple of ways to cause Job to stumble (Job 1:9-11). This, of course, does not work, but he will get other people by exploiting their weaknesses. Satan is looking for and will use the ways that give him the best chance to “*devour*” us.

If Satan is finding out our weaknesses and temptations, how can we hope to defeat him? The answer is, through God’s power and strength we can overcome. James 4:7 states that we are to “*submit… to God*” and we are to “*resist the devil and he will flee from [us]*.” It is no accident that the first half of that verse is placed where it is. We must submit to God and then we can, through God, resist the devil.

A similar encouragement is found in Ephesians 6. “... *Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil*” (Eph 6:10-11). The Lord is our strength and our shield. He will protect us. We must always be striving to serve and please God. If we remain steadfast in prayer, thankfulness, meditation on His word, edifying others and other actions like these, the Lord will help us and guide us.

The serpent was said to be “*more crafty than any beast of the field*” (Gen 3:1). So he will try to twist our thinking by causing sin to look “*good enough to eat*” or making a delight to the eyes. But we must remain on guard. If we remain dedicated to serving the Lord and being in His word, it will be much more difficult for the devil to operate and overtake us. If all our thoughts are heavenly, clean, and righteous, it does not leave room for the devil. We must trust in the Lord and His power. It is through Him we can “*stand firm*” against the devil.

Do not let sin devour you. Do not let sin overtake you as it did Cain when he killed Abel. Instead you master it. Stay on guard. Stay alert. The devil does not take days off, so we must remain vigilant. Think on godly thoughts, stay alert, and stay strong.

Be on guard. - Isaac