

JULY 2004

RESISTING THE DEVIL BY THE POWER OF CHRIST

“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.” Ephesians 6:10

1. *“Be strong in the Lord”- endunamouste en kurio*

If there is one thing we can learn about life is that it takes power to go through it and withstand the many pressures and problems found in it. This verse starts out with, *“Finally, be strong in the Lord”*, the present middle imperative of *“endunamouste en kurio”*. This tells us, first of all, that with the use of *en* prefixed to *dunamoo*, *endunamoo* that the power will be operating inside of us so we would have it as to be strengthened inwardly, or to be in strengthened. Secondly, as we can see, it’s an ongoing command, which is to be exercised daily in our lives. God wants us to live life in his power, so much so that he commands it!

The next thing we see is that if we’re going to successfully stand up against the attacks of the devil, a very powerful being, then we are going to need the power of Christ. And fourth, the *en kurio* here should be taken as the instrumental of means, *“Be inwardly strengthen by means of Christ”*. It is his power and only his power that is greater than the power of the devil, so if we’re going to be able to withstand the attacks of Satan and prevail in the evil day of battle, then we are going to need the power of Christ. Lastly, the word for power here is *dunamis*, which looks only at the idea of power in itself.

2. *“And in his mighty power”- kai en tou kratei tes ischuos*

“In his mighty power” weakens the idea of what’s going on here and should be rendered, *“By the might of his power”*. There are actually three different words used here in this passage for power and each one of them has a different meaning, and the force of their meanings is left out in the translation.

The clause begins with the word *kai*, *and*, which does more than connect this clause to the one preceding it. It adds to the clause and explains it further giving us more insight into it. In the first clause we have the word *endunamoo* used for power. The *en* prefixed to it simply tells us that the power will be operating inside us, while the root word *dunamoo* just brings out the idea of power. But it doesn’t give us any information on what kind of power it is, its strength, nature, etc. It just tells us that it’s power. While in this clause it

does. It tells us about the nature of this power, its force, its strength, who it belongs to and **what makes it so special concerning us as we stand against the devil!**

The first word for power here is *kratos* and *kratos* spoke of power, force and mastery, the power to overcome, to prevail in a situation. In a **battle** *kratos* meant that one had all that was necessary to meet the enemy and overcome him on the field of battle. If you were the enemy and met your opponent you know that he could defeat you because of his prevailing force or superior strength.

In a **governmental** aspect it spoke of the dominion that a king had over his subjects; his power was greater than theirs. He had all the weapons; he had the army or police force; he controlled the governmental structure, and he had the money.

Satan has the power or dominion over Hell. Those that are there might want to get out, but his power is so great that they cannot escape. If they are to escape, only someone who has more power than the devil, the power sufficient enough to meet the devil in combat and defeat him, can get them out. That person is Jesus Christ!

So *kratos* speaks about power in its operation and effect, in that it meets, it overwhelms, it defeats and conquers because it is stronger; it is power that prevails. But it doesn't tell us about the nature of the power, only that it is strong enough to overwhelm a situation and prevail, that is why *ischuos* is used in the passage.

Ischuos looked at inherent power, power that resided in an individual. It was latent power, passive power, the individual possessed it at all times, but didn't always use it. It could become active if the individual chose to use it for it was always there. A fact not always brought out is that originally the word *ischuos* was reserved only for divine beings be they God or the devil, but as the years went by it was used interchangeably with the other words for power thus losing its force and strength. Much like the word awesome was used in America as the word used to describe God, but now is used for just about anything.

If we go with the original meaning of the word *ischuos* we would be looking at **the inherent power of God! It would look at the tremendous power that only God possesses**. God possesses power; the devil possesses power, all the celestial beings, both fallen and unfallen, possess power, tremendous power, power that is greater than God's man creatures. In fact, the idea of power is wrapped up in their existence, in their persons, even their identities, their names, are identified with power. There is God who is known as *El, Eloah, Elohim, El Elyon, El Shaddai, El* being the Hebrew word for power. Then there are unfallen celestial beings such as *Micha-el, Gabri-el*, even Satan who is referred to as *Hell-el*. Celestial beings are spirit beings, but they are all beings of great power.

In Revelation 12:7,8 we see that Michael and his angels wage war against the devil and his angels, and the devil and his angels wage war back against Michael, but Satan loses because he was not strong enough, *ischuos*, to prevail. As we have seen *ischuos* looks at the inherent strength lying in an individual, or in an army, if that is the case. So we have the inherent strength, *ischuos*, of the devil against the inherent strength, *ischuos*, of

Michael, and the inherent strength of Michael was and is greater than the strength of the devil. All men and angels possess strength or power to some degree or another; this is their *ischuos* strength. The power of unfallen angels is greater than the power of fallen angels, and the power of God is greater than all. Man possesses little or no power at all.

Now we come back to the idea behind what is going on in this verse. God wants us to be strengthened by means of the Lord; it is the **Lord's power** that will strengthen us. Then he goes on to tell us with the word *kratos* that the power of Christ is an active power, a prevailing power, **a power that overwhelms, overcomes and defeats the power of an enemy that opposes it!** Then he goes on to explain the reason why, because the power that Jesus Christ possesses is the power of deity, the power of God Almighty! And **because he possesses the power of deity his power is sufficient to defeat the devil!** It is this power that Christ strengthens us with on the inside, and it is this power that he imparts to us so that we can more than withstand the devil's attacks, but come out of them the winner!

You see God doesn't want us to meet the devil in combat in our own strength; we would be ripped to shreds and lose! He wants us to face Satan in his strength! And how does his strength, *ischuos*, compare to the devil's power? There is no comparison! The devil is powerful, all the demons are powerful, but their power is no match for the power of God for he is all-powerful! It is this power that he infuses into us.

When David went out to meet Goliath on the field of combat, he went out in the power of the Word of God and God gave him the victory. When we are attacked by the devil on the evil day we will be victorious if we have on the armor of God, if we withstand him being strengthened by the prevailing force of the power of the Almighty God.

A little side note on this matter, the warfare Christian's war against the devil is always **defensive in nature**, never **offensive**. We never take the offense to fight the devil unless the Lord is at the front of the column leading us into battle. Our posture is defensive; we stand our ground when being attacked by the devil.

If any believer has ever been attacked by Satan they know that it's a painful and frightening ordeal. But if we start turning our attention to the power that the Lord possesses, the power inherent in him and that can be imparted to us; **it is his power**, we can be comforted, gain confidence, stand our ground and be victorious.

Christ possesses the power to crush, defeat, overwhelm and conquer all things that stand in opposition to the will of God. His power is not just limited to dealing with the devil either; he has the power over all flesh, the power over all mankind and the power over the flesh of our bodies. There is nothing that can resist him, nothing that he cannot conquer, and we need to think about this and appropriate his power for our lives.

When Christ was raised from the dead and ascended into Heaven, he was seated at the right hand of the Father on high and God made him Lord over heaven and earth! He is the King of kings and the Lord of lords. He has been granted all authority, all power and all rule over the universe! **So this inherent power that Christ has as God, that he rules**

heaven and earth with from his throne on high, is the same power that he infuses into us. And if it's strong enough to do all that, then it is certainly strong enough to stand up against the attacks of the devil!

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