

PREPARING TO STAND

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“In this age, just prior to the second coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven, God calls for men who will prepare a people to stand in the great day of the Lord.” SW 3-21-1905

THE MOST POWERFUL DECEPTION

by Jim Buller

What is the most powerful deception? Notice, the question is not, *What will be* the most powerful deception? Or, *What is Satan's most powerful deception?* For we will find that this deception has been with us all along, and that this deception is also even more powerful than Satan himself! Therefore we would be wise to be fully aware of this deception and its power, so that we may flee to the Lord for safety, and not be deceived by it!

But before we get too far into this topic, let's ask some questions that will be the basis of an illustration that will be made a little later. This illustration, by the way, will also give one reason why the Sabbath—Sunday question will be a key issue in the end-times.

Several years ago, at a morning worship service, Jere Franklin, (You Can Survive Ministry), asked, “How many different types of days are there?” We answered that there were (1) the regular week days, (2) the Sabbath, and then, with just a bit of uncertainty, added (3) that there was also Sunday.

We'll get back to Jere's worship talk in a minute, but first let's step aside and ask another series of questions with, what I suspect might be, some typical answers. (1) What do we do on the regular week days? —we go to work or school, do whatever 'chores' we have to do, and carry on whatever business our life consists of. (2) What do we do on the Sabbath? —we meet together for worship and fellowship, and maybe take a nap, (and some might also add: we don't get to work, or do certain other things.) And, (3) What do we do on Sunday? —we get to sleep in, we don't have to work, and we can basically do what ever we want to do.

Before we tie this all together, let's continue with Jere's worship talk. He responded to our suggestion that there were (1) the regular days of the week, (2) the Sabbath, and (3) Sunday, by asking another question: How many different types of days are there in God's eyes? Or, according to the Bible, how many types of days are there? We had to conclude that there were really only two types of days: week days, and the seventh-day Sabbath. He concluded by discussing, *Why do we give Sunday any type of special status?*

As stated earlier, we'll come back to these ideas in a bit and use them to illustrate the main point of this study. So hold on to these thoughts as we will go back to the subject of the most powerful deception.

Once, up in heaven, there was Lucifer, [*luce* . light, *fer* . carry (as in our word 'ferry')]. He was one of the covering cherubs, (see Ezekiel 28:14), one of the two angels that were the closest to the Father Himself! Of all created beings, he was completely *surrounded* by the best and *strongest* of all possible good solid spiritual influences. At the time he was described as the very "seal of perfection." (See Isaiah 14:12-15 and Ezekiel 28:12-19.) Yet this deception crept in, brought him down, and turned him into Satan, the Devil, the very epitome of evil.

Almost as a side note, let's contrast Lucifer's original setting with Jesus growing up in Nazareth, the town with the reputation — "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" (John 1:46.) While it is true that 'influences' *can* influence us, apparently that is all they can do. We still have to make our individual choices.

Fast forward a little in history, and we come to Adam and Eve. They too were perfect holy beings. Angels visited with them. They walked and talked with God in the cool of the day. They were also surrounded by good solid spiritual influences. It was "only at the forbidden tree" that Satan could have access to them. (*Patriarchs and Prophets* page 53.)

So, how was Satan going to deceive the holy pair? —by using the same deception that brought *him* down. Notice what he tells Eve in Genesis 3:5. "... In the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." This sounds very similar to what he said to himself when he fell. Fortunately it is recorded for us in Isaiah 14:14. He said, "I will be like the Most High." But notice that this isn't referring to being like God in *character*, it is referring to being like Him in position, and in "knowing good and evil." This deception claims that we, as intelligent creatures, can know for ourselves what is good or bad, right or wrong. And therefore we can choose for ourselves what we should do or not do. In other words, we don't need *God* to tell us what to do. Simply stated, this 'most powerful deception' is that we can do whatever we want to do, and not have to be responsible to God. That we can lean on our own understanding, instead of having to trust God's wisdom and follow His instructions. (see Proverbs 3:5.)

But the truth is, we are simply not wise enough to be able to discern what is "good and evil." Life is just too complicated. All too frequently, what seems to be a good thing at the time turns out badly. Only God, who can see the end from the beginning, and who knows all the intricate workings of everything He created can *know* what is truly best. By stepping away from God and His instructions, whether we are a covering cherub, an angel or a human, all we are left with is our own selfish perspective. As Ezekiel 28:17 describes the results of Satan's fall, "you corrupted your wisdom."

The sure result can only be chaos, lack of fulfillment, and death. For if we would be honest and think things out, even with our limited human reasoning we should be able to see that if everyone did whatever they wanted to do there would be problems. It wouldn't be long before what *you* wanted to do would get in the way of what *I* wanted to do. No wonder James describes all our fights and quarrels as stemming from our selfish desires. (See James 4:1.) It wouldn't take long before we realized that in order to be able to do what we wanted, we would need to control everyone around us, which would lead to desires for an ever widening circle of controlling influence. (Historically this has

lead to wars among the nations, and imperialism.) Ultimately this desire for control covets the very position of God Himself —the One who controls *all* things. As Satan planned in his heart, “I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.” (Isaiah 14:13-14.) Yet, even though we may reason this out, the idea of being able to do whatever we want to do sounds *so good!* Is so enticing that it is almost irresistible! No wonder it is the most powerful deception.

However, for the universe to function smoothly, and be a safe place to live, *everyone* must follow the Creator’s instruction. This means we must trust His love, and His wisdom, rather than leaning on our own limited understanding. A total surrender to God’s wisdom, a total trust in His love, and perfectly following of His instructions is the only way the universe can be a safe and happy place to live.

Yes, this ‘total surrender’ means giving up what we want to do. Which is why Galatians 6:16-17 says, “I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, *so that you do not do the things that you wish.*” (Emphasis supplied.) For those of us wanting to be redeemed from sin and its effects, this ‘total surrender’ to the indwelling Holy Spirit absolutely essential.

So, let’s go back now to what we were saying about the different types of days to illustrate what we are talking about. At a recent convocation of area wide churches, Jonathan Henderson was the speaker for the main service on Sabbath morning. He pointed out that the Sabbath is the ‘model’ for all of our other holidays, (literally: ‘holy days’ = ‘holidays’). This is shown by the fact that one of the things we appreciate most about the various holidays is that we don’t have to work! We get the day off!

The Sabbath ‘model’ also includes holidays being a memorial to commemorate something. The Sabbath commemorates the Creator and His creation. And all the other different holidays have their roots in commemorating some other event, or person.

So, to put this all together: God created two types of days, week days, and the Sabbath. However, a counterfeit Sunday sabbath has been introduced. And we find that Sunday also follows the ‘model’ of the original Sabbath by being a day of rest and not working, and although it has strong roots in paganism, it supposedly commemorates the resurrection of Jesus.

With all this in mind, let’s be honest, and evaluate a typical weekend: Friday night we are exhausted from the week. Some of us may get together for a Bible study or other activity, but most of us probably just relax at home. Sabbath morning is a rush to get everything together and hurry off to Sabbath School and Church. Many of us also spend the rest of the day doing various church related activities, maybe a church potluck, and then attending additional meetings, or passing out literature. Saturday night is usually a social time. Then, whew! It’s Sunday. We can sleep in, (rest), and basically do whatever we want to do.

Look at what’s happened! Even without being *enforced*, (as when Sunday will become the Mark of the Beast), it has still served Satan’s purpose by the way many of us typically spend our weekends. As we busily do various church related activities our Sabbaths aren’t very restful. Whereas Sunday, the ‘do what you want’ holiday commemorating the most powerful deception, has become our ‘day of rest!’

Think about it. Which day do we appreciate, enjoy, and look forward to most? Which day do we rejoice and “delight” in? (See Isaiah 58:13.) Do we celebrate the day that reminds us of our Creator, and our relationship and accountability to Him? —the day that reminds us to surrender our will to His? Or do we celebrate the ‘do whatever you want to do’ holiday? Maybe we need to change the way we spend our weekends.

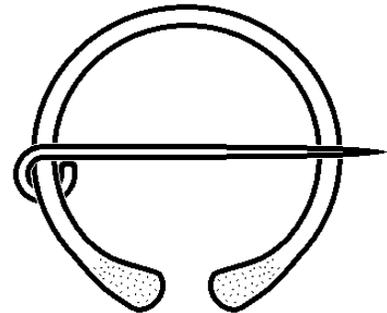
But let’s be careful that we don’t lean on our own understanding here either. God has given much instruction about how to make the Sabbath our day of rest, and how to celebrate creation on this special day. Let’s search these things out, and in the spirit of total surrender be sure we are following *His* instructions.

Understanding all this, it is easy to see how the Sabbath / Sunday question will be a key issue in the final end-times —even among Sabbath keepers! By truly keeping the Sabbath as a memorial to the Creator’s creation, God’s authority must be recognized, and the only appropriate response is a complete surrender to His leadership. In contrast, observing the Sunday ‘do what you want’ holiday implies a complete disregard of the Creator’s authority.

Jeremiah 12:5 is translated different ways by different versions, but the basic message of this verse is, If you fail when things are relatively easy, what are you going to do when things really get rough? If we have difficulties with these issues now, what will we do when Sunday observance becomes the Mark of the Beast? May we be willing to break with our traditions, and change our habits now. In the spirit of a total surrender to our Creator, let’s start observing His Sabbath according to His instructions. And, let’s stop celebrating the ‘do whatever you want to do’ holiday.

CLOAK PINS

Before the safety pin was ‘invented’ in 1859, many other types of clasps and pins were used. One common type, utilized by many people groups throughout history, was the ‘penannular pin.’ These pins are useful for keeping blankets from falling off the shoulders when using one as a cloak or ‘match coat,’ and for pinning a ‘foot pocket’ in the blanket when sleeping. Although there are some intricately designed examples, a simple cloak pin of this type is fairly easy to make. Below are instructions for a penannular pin made from copper. Other metals such as iron might make a stronger pin, but forge work would be required, whereas copper is soft enough to work cold, and makes a serviceable pin. One added benefit of this type of cloak pin is that the point of the pin can be used as an awl for leather work, sewing, and repairs.



Materials & Tools:

- 6 or 8 ga heavy copper wire for the ring —be sure to get solid copper, (there is copper coated steel that looks similar), it is sometimes called ‘grounding wire’
- 10 ga copper wire for the pin
- A short piece of rod to aid in forming the ‘eye’ of the pin. This rod needs to be the same diameter as material the ring is made from, or *slightly* larger. You could use a piece of the same 6 or 8 ga copper, but an iron or steel rod, possibly the shaft of a bolt or a large nail, would probably work better.

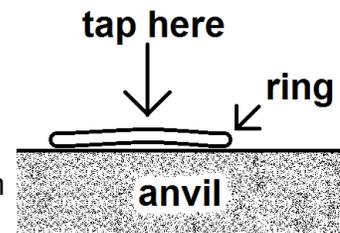
- Pliers (A pair of 'Vise Grips' would be nice, but they are not absolutely necessary.)
- Hammer (A light-weight ball-peen hammer would probably be best, but just about any hammer would work.)
- Anvil (If you don't have an anvil, a large hammer head, a splitting wedge, or some other large chunk of iron or steel could be used—even a large smooth stone.)
- File (An electric bench grinder or possibly a 'dremel tool' might also be useful but they are not absolutely necessary.)
- Something round about 1½ in. / 3 cm diameter to form the ring. (A section of 1¼ in pipe, either PVC or Metal, works well for this, or a clean section of tree branch about this same diameter.)

Procedure:

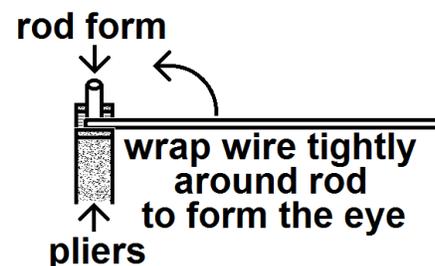
(1) Bend the 6 or 8 gauge copper wire around the form to make a ring. Clamping one end of the wire against the outer edge of the 1¼ pipe with the 'Vise Grips,' and bending it around the pipe works good. Cut off the extra wire using the cutting jaws on the inside of the pliers, (the 'Vise Grips' work good for this too). The ends of the ring need to be about ½ in / 1 cm apart. Note: if you are going to be making several cloak pins, multiple rings can be made by wrapping the wire several turns around the form and then cutting off sections of this 'coil' for the rings.

(2) Smooth and round the ends of the ring with the file. (Frequently the cutting of the wire leaves a sharp scratchy edge.)

(3) Straighten out any 'waviness' in the ring so it will lay flat. Do this by placing the ring on the anvil, and lightly tapping the high spots with the hammer. Try not to dent the ring with the hammer blows. Copper is soft, and will take impressions from both the face of the hammer and the face of the anvil. (If you are wanting to make 'jewelry grade' cloak pins, it is best for both the hammer face and the anvil face to be 'polished' and to be very careful with any hammer blows, or even when gripping the copper with the pliers.)



(4) Form the 'eye' of the pin on the end of the 10 ga copper wire. First smooth and round the end of the wire with the file. Then form the eye by grasping the end of the wire, along with the rod form, with a pair of pliers, (again, the 'Vise Grips' work well here). The 10 ga copper should be grasped at the tip of the jaw of the pliers and cross-wise to it, whereas the rod form should be in-line with the pliers. Position the end of the copper flush with one edge of the rod. Tightly wrap the 10 ga copper around the rod to form the eye. This process can be a bit awkward, as the rod may have a tendency to slip out of place. (If you will be making several cloak pins, it might be worth making a 'jig.' This can be done either by: grinding a groove to hold the rod in one jaw of the pliers; brazing or welding the rod in place; or by grinding one jaw of

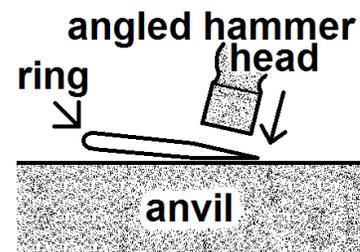


a cheap pair of pliers down to an appropriate sized pin.) Take the 'waviness' out of the eye with the hammer and anvil the same way the ring was flattened.

(5) Slip the eye onto the ring to make sure the eye is the right size. The diameter of the eye should be fairly close to the diameter of the wire that the ring was made from, however it should not bind but be able to move around the ring easily. If the diameter of the eye is much larger than the diameter of the ring wire, tighten the eye with the pliers and/or hammer and anvil. While the eye is on the ring, measure how long the pin needs to be, then cut it to length.

(6) Sharpen the point of the pin with the file (or grinder). It is OK to file or grind in any direction while doing this, but once the point is formed, make several final passes with the file in-line with the pin —otherwise it will be more difficult to push the pin through the fabric when using it.

(7), Flatten and flare one end of the ring with the hammer and anvil. This is to keep the pin from slipping off. This will take more serious hammer blows than the light taps used earlier to simply flatten the ring and pin. At this point you are actually wanting to reshape the copper. Angle the hammer head so as to create a wedge shaped flare. (Remember also the note about copper easily taking impressions given with #3.) Then, place the finished pin on the ring from the other end, and slide it around to the flared end see if it can come off. If necessary, remove the pin and flatten and flare the end some more, or tighten the eye of the pin. When the pin cannot slip off the flared end, place the pin on the ring, and flatten and flare the other end of the ring to keep the pin from coming off. During this final process, position the eye of the pin along the ring so it is out of the way and will not be damaged.



How to Use the Cloak Pin

- (1) Overlap the two edges of the fabric to be pinned together. Poke the pin in-and-out through both layers.
- (2) Flip the ring, so it is over the pinned area. If necessary, turn the ring so the point of the pin can pass through the opening in the ring.
- (3) Rotate the ring so one end passes between the pin and the fabric. Continue turning the ring in this same direction so that the point of the pin and the opening of the ring are about 90 degrees apart.

