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# Invisible Barriers 1

## An Invisible World

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# Evidence of an Invisible World

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## Evidence of an Invisible World

There is more to the world than the eye can see. Life exists all around you, yet you are unaware. You are surrounded by an invisible world of microscopic organisms too small for your senses to detect.



You know they exist, but you couldn't prove it without the help of a microscope. You can feel the air gently caressing your cheek. You can hear it blowing through the trees. You just can't see it.

## In the Physical Realm

Some of the invisible things are very helpful and cause your life to prosper. Oxygen allows you to breathe and fuel your body with life-giving energy. Remove the molecules of oxygen from the atmosphere and within minutes you would perish.

White blood cells surge through your body attacking anything that may harm you. Remove the white blood cells from your body and there is no defense against sickness or disease.

Some of the invisible beings are harmful or dangerous and restrict your life and cause pain and suffering, even to the point of death. The HIV virus enters your life unseen. You might even go for years without experiencing any symptoms.

Slowly, but surely, the virus attacks the T cells to the point where your body is no longer able to protect itself. Your body is vulnerable and the virus begins to affect your overall health. If left untreated it will progress to full-blown AIDS and ultimately your death.

## In the Spiritual Realm

Just as there is an invisible physical world around you, there is an invisible spiritual world that impacts your life. Unseen forces are at work in your life. As a microscope reveals the physical things of this world, so the Bible gives us insights into the unseen spiritual world around us.

## God and the Angelic Realms

First and foremost in the spiritual realm is God. The Bible says that “God is Spirit, and those that worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24). No one has ever seen God (1 John 4:12), but we can see the works of His hand all around us.

God is the source of everything in the visible and invisible realm. He created all things through His Son, Jesus Christ. He created the heavens and the earth. He created the various angelic beings, the vast galaxies in the universe, plants, animals and man.

The book of Genesis tells us that everything God created was very good. Everything in God’s creation was in harmony. There was no sin, no sickness, and no death. Only life and peace.

We can also see the effects of evil in the invisible spiritual realm. If God created everything so good, why is the world the way it is today?

## Satan and the Demonic Realm

A rebellion took place in heaven. One of the angels, Lucifer, gathered one third of the angels of heaven and sought to overthrow God. He wanted to be worshiped rather than to worship the God who created him.

God easily quelled the rebellion by casting Lucifer and his angels out of heaven. Opposed to God and on their own, they quickly degenerated into all sorts of evil. They hated God and everything He stood for.

Lucifer is better known in the Bible as Satan and the devil. These two words describe who he is and what he does.

Satan means adversary. He fights against God and everything He holds dear. In his pride and arrogance, Satan will fight God until the very end when God judges him by casting him into the Lake of Fire.

The word devil means one who slanders or accuses. He is constantly slandering and accusing God. He is always trying to put God in a bad light so people will reject His ways. He also accuses people before God.

The fallen angels who were cast out of heaven are better known as demons, evil spirits, or unclean spirits. The focus is on who they are and what they do. They are unclean before God due to their rebellion and morally corrupt focusing on evil deeds that oppose God's truth.

The demonic realm is not the only invisible source at work in our world. Let's continue with the story and see what other forces are at work.

## God Creates Man



## Created to Rule

God created man in His image. Man was created to be in fellowship with God and with one another. He wanted this relationship to be free, which meant that Adam and Eve were created with the ability to choose.

God placed Adam and Eve in the garden and gave them a command to be fruitful and multiply and to rule over all the creatures of the earth. God's plan was for them to expand and grow and rule with wisdom that came directly from Him.

Adam was to rule the earth under the leadership and direction of God. It was God Himself that gave Adam the right to rule. He was to exert his authority and bring all things into submission on the earth.

God gave Adam and Eve only one restriction. He said that they could eat of any tree in the garden, except one, the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. He then clearly warned them that if they ate of the tree, they would die.

## Man's Rule Tested

Things went along fine until one day a serpent entered the garden. He came to Eve and began to talk with her. Doing the work of a slanderer he told lies about God and sought to tempt Eve to disregard what God had said and disobey His word.

He began the conversation saying, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden?'" He wanted her to focus on the only tree God said she could not eat from.

She did focus on it. She told the serpent that they could eat from any tree they wanted to eat but the one in the middle of the garden. She said "God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, lest you die.'"

The response of the serpent was immediate. He said, "You surely shall not die." He directly contradicted God's word. He was calling God a liar.

His direct confrontation of God's word meant that Eve had a choice to make. Would she believe God? Or would she believe the serpent?

But the serpent was not through. He Said, "For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

He wanted to call God's motives into account to make Eve feel that He was withholding something that was good for her. God was evil and purposely keeping her in the dark so He could have some sort of advantage over her. He did not want her to be like Him.

All this was too much for Eve. She looked at the tree in a new way. She saw that "the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise."

This is the point where she should have rebuked the serpent and commanded him to leave the garden forever. She had the authority to do it from God, but she didn't exercise it.



Instead she believed God was lying to her about dying if she ate the fruit. She believed the serpent's slander about God's character and desire to hold her back from becoming like Him. The serpent was questioning God's goodness.

She looked at the tree and its fruit and in her own thinking could see all the benefits that would come from eating the fruit. Then she made her choice.

## Man Fails the Test

She made a choice to follow the serpent over God. She made a choice to willfully disobey God. She chose her knowledge over God's knowledge.

She took the fruit and ate of it. She also handed a piece to her husband who was with her. Adam ate the fruit and it changed the world we live in forever. Sin and death entered the world through one man and it spread to all men (see Rom. 5:12-21).

When Adam and Eve ate the fruit, their eyes were opened. They now knew good and evil. It was not at all what they were expecting.

Their sin brought about an instant change in their relationship with one another, their relationship with God, and their relationship with the demonic realm.

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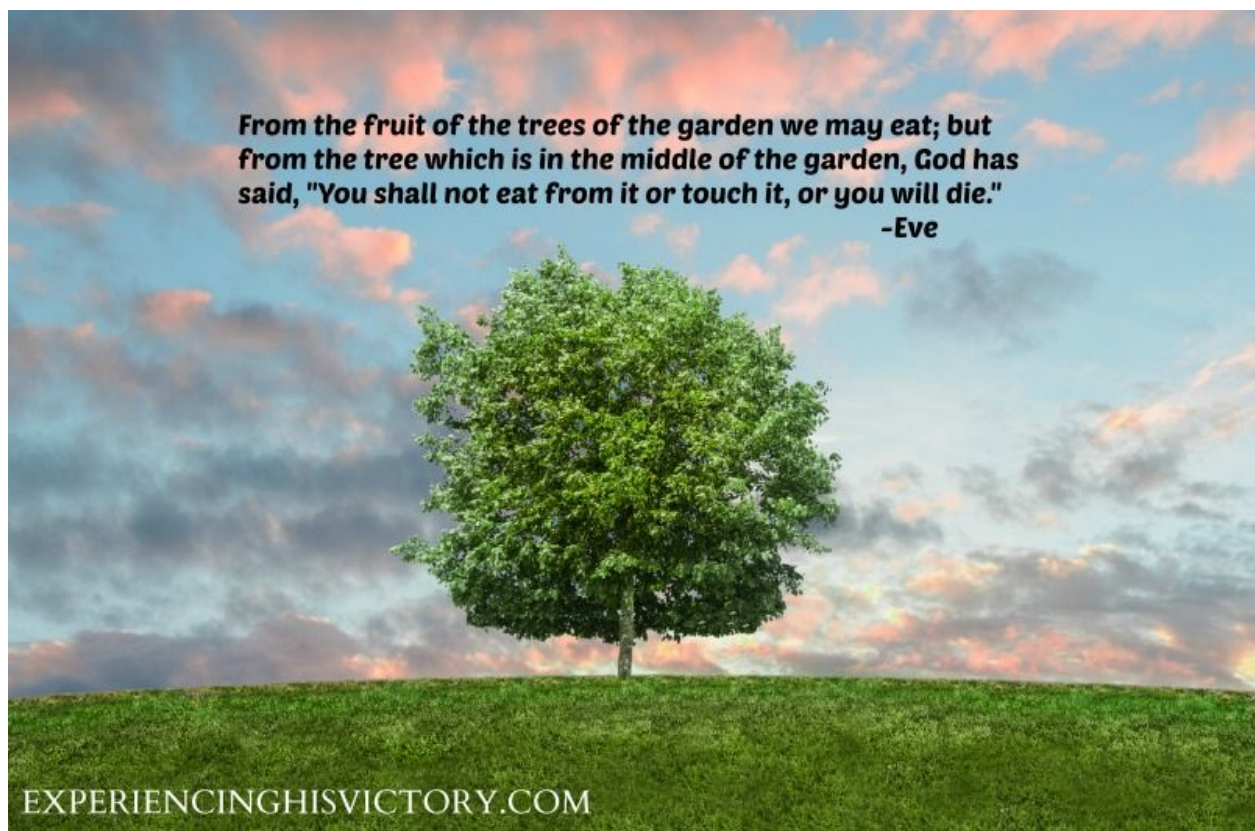
This pdf is part 1 of a series called *Seven Invisible Barriers to Spiritual Growth* by Terry Tuinder. You can see all the completed posts in this series by going to [www.experiencinghisvictory.com/invisible-barriers](http://www.experiencinghisvictory.com/invisible-barriers)

# The Effects of the Fall

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## The Effects of the Fall

When Adam and Eve sinned against God and ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, everything changed. I mean everything.



## Innocence Lost and Evil Released

The first thing Adam and Eve recognized is that they were naked. They **lost their innocence**. They were filled with **shame**, **insecurity**, and **embarrassment**. They immediately sought to cover themselves with fig leaves, but this would never free them from the effects of their choice.

They heard the sound of the Lord walking in the garden. They were **guilty** and they knew it. They were filled with **fear** and sought to hide from God. The **shame** that caused them to cover themselves from one another, now drove them to **hide** from God.

God knows everything. He knew what they had done and knew where they were hiding. In an effort to allow Adam to confess his sin, He called out to Him. He said, "Where are you?"

Adam comes out of hiding and tells God that he heard Him coming in the garden and was **afraid** because he was naked. He felt **condemned** and **hid** himself because he thought God would **punish** him for what he did. After all, God said if they ate of the tree they would **die**.

God asked Adam who told him he was naked. God said, "Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?"

Here was the moment of truth. Would Adam take responsibility for his **sin** or would he try to get out of it?

Adam decided to play the **blame** game. Instead of saying it was his fault. He **blamed** the woman and God for the part they played in his downfall.

See how he refuses to accept responsibility. He becomes like the devil and **accuses Eve** and God for all his problems.

He told God that it was the woman that You gave me. She gave me of the fruit and I ate. He made an excuse and **blamed Eve** for being the one who initiated this whole thing. If it wasn't for her, he never would have done it.

He reminded God that He was the one who gave him the woman. If you had not given me the woman, this would never have happened in the first place. He is **accusing God** of being the ultimate source of the problem.

God then turned His attention upon Eve. He asked her what she had done. Not wanting to be held responsible for this whole situation, she **accused** the accuser. She **blamed** the serpent. She pointed her finger at the serpent and said it was his fault. He **deceived** me, I am innocent.

God doesn't ask the serpent what he had done. He begins to speak of the curse he would experience for what he had done. He also speaks to Adam and Eve about the curse they will experience because of their **disobedience**.

## The Curse Affects Everything

Before we get into the various curses God speaks over these three, it might be good to understand the meaning of the word *curse*.



In the English language to curse means to say swear words. It can also be used for someone trying to harm a person through the use of magic, but that is not what the Bible is talking about when God is speaking about a curse.

A curse in the Old Testament had three concepts attached to it. Each of these meanings is directly related to God and to His blessing.

First, a curse is **a warning of the consequences** that will come about if God's command is broken. This is what God did when He warned Adam and Eve that if they are of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, they would die.

Second, the curse speaks about **the consequences and punishment of sin**. It speaks about the binding power of the curse that limits the life and productivity of the one who is cursed. The person is bound and unable to accomplish what he or she was once able to do.

Third, the curse is **a withdrawal of the blessing of God**. It is the blessing of God that brings freedom, peace, increase, and plenty. The curse speaks of reduction in every area of life. We can make a lot of money, but it is never enough. We can do things that should bring success, but it is always elusive.

Derek Prince says that the effects of being under a curse can be summarized in one word, *frustration*. We may have great success, but there is an inward frustration, relationships that are in chaos, and peace that always seems to elude us.

Pick any of the good things that God has promised for those who follow Him and choose the exact opposite and you understand the effects of the word curse. A curse is a limitation of the blessings of the Lord.



## The Effects of the Curse on the Serpent

The serpent is cursed to crawl on its belly all the days of its life. We have no idea how the serpent moved prior to this, but we know how the serpents move on their bellies today.

God informs the serpent that there will be enmity between him and the woman and her seed. This seed would bruise the serpent's head and the serpent would bruise His heel.

This is a prophetic word showing that God would destroy the serpent one day. Notice that the word seed is singular. The seed (who is Jesus) will come and crush his head. This is speaking of the Jesus breaking the power of the devil over the world and mankind.

The bruising of His heel speaks of Jesus's death on the cross. He was placed in the grave, but the grave could not hold Him. He was raised from the dead to save us from our sin.

## The Effects of the Curse on Eve

Women are most often centered on relationships. They are most often the nurturers in the family. They are more face-to-face in communication style.

The effects of the curse on Eve have to do with her relationship with her children and her husband. There would be pain in childbirth. This pain would affect her physically and

emotionally. She would go through the physical pains of childbirth and the emotional pain of raising and caring for her children.

The Fall also changed her relationship with Adam. Instead of the equality that they previously experienced, Eve would now be ruled over by Adam. We can see the effects of this throughout history where men have ruled over women. In some cultures women are little more than slaves to meet the needs of men.

The struggle of the sexes began as a result of man's rebellion against God's command.

## The Effects of the Curse on Adam

The binding effects of the curse hit man where he lives, in his work. Because of Adam's decision to reject God's command, the ground would be cursed. Prior to the Fall God created a beautiful garden filled with abundance. Adam would tend it and eat of its fruit.

Now the ground would be limited by weeds and thistles. Pain (the same word for the pain Eve experienced) and sweat would be required to get the ground to produce. For all the effort and pain, the ground would produce far less than he experienced in the garden.

God warned Adam that if he ate of the tree he would die. God informs Adam that he will work and strive until he dies and his body goes back to the dust from which it was formed.

## Man Driven from the Garden

There was another tree in the garden, the tree of life. God was concerned that if Adam and Eve ate from it, they would remain in their fallen state forever. To keep them from eating of the tree of life, God drove man out of the garden. He placed a cherubim at the tree that stood there with a flaming sword. It turned every direction to ensure they could not eat from the tree's fruit.

The Fall changed everything. Man's disobedience brought about spiritual death, a separation from God. It opened the door for all sorts of evil that God never planned for man to experience.

Sin brought separation from the man and woman. It robbed the couple of their innocence. It caused guilt, shame, feelings of condemnation, fear, insecurity, blame, accusation, and a multitude of other ill effects into the world.

It also brought about death. Death affected everything. It became an unnatural part of life. Pain, sorrow, sickness, disease, and ultimately physical death.

# Satan Becomes Ruler of this World

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## Satan Becomes Ruler of this World

The rebellion of man affected his rule on the earth. Adam's choice opened the door for a new ruler of the world and allowed demonic forces to impact the world in which we live.



Something monumental took place the day that Eve and Adam ate of the fruit. The Old Testament does not give us much insight into the shift that took place. We have to go to the New Testament to get some better understanding of what happened.

God gave Adam authority over the Earth. He was to rule and subdue it under the leading and direction of God. When Adam rebelled against God's command to not eat of the tree, sin entered the world and Satan became the ruler of the world.

We know this exchange took place because many New Testament passages reveal it. Look at how the following Scriptures describe the devil:

- The god of this world (2 Corinthians 4:4)
- The ruler of this world (John 12:31, 14:30, 16:11)
- The ruler of demons (Luke 11:15)
- The prince of the power of the air (Ephesians 2:2)

The question arises, If God is sovereign over all of creation, how can Satan be the ruler or god of this world? The simple answer is that God gave man authority over the earth. He lost it through disobedience. We can see the reality of Satan's rule over the world in the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness.

## Satan Offers Jesus the World

Let's set the stage. The first thing we should know is that God is not the least bit intimidated by the devil. He sent Jesus to the earth as a human being so He that He could face every lie and temptation of the devil and win.

I want you to notice that it's the Holy Spirit that leads Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil (Matthew 4:1). God sent Jesus into the world to reestablish His rule and reign upon the earth. Whereas one man, Adam, gave place to the devil and death through his disobedience, God sent one man, Jesus, to break the devil's power and bring life and freedom (Romans 5:12-21).

Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil (Acts 10:38) and break his hold over this world. In order to do that He must face the temptations of the devil and, unlike Adam, overcome them through obeying God.

We are only going to look at the temptation that deals with the devil's authority over the world. I want you to see that Jesus understood that he did have this place of authority.

After forty days of fasting, the devil came and tempted Jesus. Matthew 4:8-10 describes the encounter:

8 Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory; 9 and he said to Him, "All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me." 10 Then Jesus said to him, "Go, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.'"

Jesus never disputed the devil's claim of being able to give Him all the kingdoms of the earth and their glory. If he did not possess this ability, how could it be a temptation for Jesus? All Jesus would have had to say is, "Liar, you don't have the right to give them to me," and the issue would be settled.



The devil did rule over the world. He would give it all to Jesus if he would worship Him. This Jesus could not do. He reminded the devil that He is to worship and serve God alone.

## Satan is the Ruler of Demons

Satan is called the ruler of this world. He is also the ruler over the realm of demons. Paul gives us a glimpse into this realm in Ephesians Chapter 6. He says,

10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. 11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*. (Ephesians 6:10-12)

This verse describes structure within the kingdom of darkness. Satan is the head of ranks of demonic forces that are at battle against this world. Paul reminds us that the battle we fight is not against people, but these demonic forces.

I don't want to go into great detail about the demonic realm, but I don't want you to be ignorant of it either. There is a well-organized enemy arrayed against you that hates you and is intent on destroying you. You don't need to be fearful of the enemy, You need to stand against him in the power of God.

# Satan Has a Plan for this World



Satan has a plan for this world. It includes stealing, killing, and destroying (John 10:10). Paul tells us that we are not ignorant of his schemes (2 Corinthians 2:11) and that we can stand firm against the schemes of the devil (Ephesians 6:11).

Below is a partial list of ways that the enemy attacks you. It is in no way close to complete, but gives you some understanding of how the enemy operates.

- He is your adversary. He goes around like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour (1 Peter 5:8). The enemy is relentless. He is always pursuing. He is always trying different ways to bring death and destruction into your life.
- He is your accuser (Revelation 12:10). He will constantly remind you of the things that you have done. He will tell you how unworthy you are to call yourself a Christian. He will constantly condemn you and stir up feelings of guilt and shame. He will accuse you of being a hypocrite every time you try to live for God.

- He is a deceiver (Revelation 12:9). He deceived Adam and Eve in the garden and He will do the same to you. He will call into question the word of God in a way that will make God look evil. He will try to lead you astray through telling half-truths or outright lies. He wants to trick you into believing that his lie is the truth.
- He is a thief (John 10:10). The devil wants to rob you of the incredible blessing God has provided. He wants to steal your peace and joy. He wants to rob you of your identity. He wants you in physical and spiritual poverty. He will take whatever he can in anyway he can from your life.
- He is an oppressor (Acts 10:38). He wants you under his thumb. He wants you weighed down by sin and fear. He wants you addicted to drugs, alcohol, food, sex, or gambling. He wants you weighed down by the worries of this world. He wants to crush the life right out of you.
- He is a destroyer (John 10:10). He wants to destroy your marriage, your family, and any other important relationships you might have. He wants to destroy the church and separate you from other believers. He wants to destroy your faith and trust in God. He wants your life to be a shambles.
- He is a murderer (John 8:44, 10:10). The enemy wants to kill your hopes and dreams. He wants to kill and silence your call from God. He wants to kill you physically through sickness and disease, emotionally through hopelessness and despair, and spiritually through doubt and unbelief.

This list is intimidating and very depressing, but we cannot forget that God has a plan for this world and for your life.

# God Has a Plan for this World



We've seen the plans of the enemy now let's look at the plans of God. God sent Jesus into the world with a purpose. I would like to let Jesus describe the reasons for His coming. Through His words we get insight into what God is up to. Jesus said:

- "For I came down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent me." (John 6:38)
- "For this I have come into the world to testify to the truth." (John 18:37)
- "I have come as Light into the world, so that anyone who believes in Me will not remain in darkness." (John 12:46)
- "Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets, I did come to abolish but to fulfill." (Matthew 5:17)
- "For judgment I came into this world, so that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may become blind." (John 9:39)

- “I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.” (John 10:10)
- “For the Son of Man is come to seek and save that which was lost.” (Luke 9:10)
- “I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” (Mark 2:17)
- “Let us go somewhere else to the towns nearby, so that I may preach there also; for that is what I came for.” (Mark 1:38)
- “Just as the Son of man did not come to be served, but to serve and give His life a ransom for many.” (Matthew 20:28)
- “Now My soul has become troubled; and what shall I say, “Father, save Me from this hour”? But for this purpose I came to this hour.” (John 12:27)

Jesus came to this world in obedience to the Father. He came to be a light and share the truth of God’s word to a lost and dying world. He came seeking the lost and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom of God. He came a servant and laid down His life to minister God’s truth.

Jesus willingly went to the cross to die for me and you. He paid the price to save us and redeem us. Jesus died so we could be forgiven, reconciled to God, and live the abundant life that God desires. Which brings us back to the purpose of this post.

## Invisible Barriers that Block Your Spiritual Growth

Jesus came so that we might live an abundant life. So often that seems to elude us. The purpose for this long introduction is to lay a foundation in understanding why there are invisible barriers to your spiritual growth.

I am only covering seven barriers in this series of posts. There are many more, but I believe the following seven are the most common. Understanding how these barriers work will give you further insight into how others may affect your life.

I pray as you read through each of the barriers God will give you insight into any way they may be affecting you. Identifying the barrier is the most important part of the process. Once you know what is affecting you, you can deal with it in the power of Jesus’s name. Jesus has an answer for every barrier in your life.