

Living at the Next Level: The Devil Already Knows
Acts 12/ 2 Co.2.9-11 - We are not ignorant of his schemes!

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Intro – The book I have brought to you is called Living at the Next Level. The premise is that while we sit around looking for breakthrough, begging for a blessing and talking about going to the “next level” we are playing right into the hands of the enemy. He keeps people in bondage by convincing them that they don’t have what God says they have. He started that in the Garden with Eve and has never stopped the same game. He asks Eve to do something to get what she already had-knowledge. Thy named all of creation and had the knowledge to care for it all. How much smarter can you get? He tried it with the “Second Adam” when he told him to bow down and worship me and I’ll give you all the kingdoms of the world. How can you give Jesus the kingdoms that He made?!

And through uninformed preaching he’s doing it to us today! I spent years wondering why my blessing was always on the way. Why I was always “getting ready, getting ready, getting ready” for something that never came? Victory in 2003, Getting More in 2004, Coming Alive in 2005...Get Out of My Face in 2008!

But there is demonic strategy in place to keep you from walking in what you already have. A move to keep the church waiting when we should be walking. To keep us hoping when we should be having. To keep us in limbo when we ought to be laughing. It’s called tell them that one day they will get to the next level when we know good and well they’re already there. You see when Jesus died for you He took you to the next level. He gave you your breakthrough. All you had to do was receive it.

A Man Going to NYC

But we’re like a man that wanted to go to NYC and got dropped off at the train station in Penn Station. They stuck him in the restroom in the train station in NYC. It smells bad. It looks bad. Out of frustration he walks out of the restroom to try and find a train to NYC. He can’t find one. Trains to Philly and Chicago and D.C. But no train to NYC. Because when you’re already there, there are no trains to get where you already are. So you keep hearing these messages about getting there, but you never do because there is no way to get a train to the Next Level if you’re already at the Next Level. You have to get out of the smelly restroom of a defeated Christian life and start exploring what you have already been given because your key is already inside you.

Woman with a Small Jar of Oil

She didn’t know that what she had was all she needed to pay the bill once she moved in faith on what she had and what she had been told to do. The oil wasn’t coming. Her breakthrough was not on the way. Her Next Level was sitting in her house in a jar waiting for her to discover it!

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The Devil Knows and is Afraid!

If you ever figure out who you are. If you ever realize that you're at the Next Level. If you mess around and make it to the Empire State Building, the Statue of Liberty or Wall Street-the enemy is finished.

Peter in our story is like you. Everyone knows who he is except him, but you never walk in your purpose until you know who you are.

James 2:19-20

19 You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder.
NASU

1. Herod already knew who Peter was!

He places Peter under heavy surveillance with 24-hour guards, chains, additional staff and all inside the innermost walls of the prison.

- Four squads of soldiers

There were four watches or shifts since they only worked a six-hour shift. So Herod had fresh men for every six hours. There is always deliverance in that fourth watch or that fourth day. Lazarus was dead four days and Jesus brought Him back. The disciples were in peril on the seas and in the fourth watch of the night Jesus showed up.

- Set up for God's glory

I believe God wanted to make it difficult for Peter to get out and intentionally stacked the odds against him

- Herod/the devil already knows!

For all your life the devil has had more faith in your potential than you do. That's why he attacks you with fear. That's why he wants you to give up. If you were not a threat he would encourage you to move forward knowing that you would fail, but he needs you to stop right where you are!

2. Rhoda already knew who Peter was!

Everyone needs someone in their life who sees the power and the potential in you and works hard to build you up.

- She recognized him in spite of his outward appearance.
- In the face of others she boldly declared who he was.
- She was determined to make sure "he got in" where he belonged.

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3. Peter was slow in realizing who he was! Acts 12:11-14

11 When Peter came to himself, he said, "Now I know for sure that the Lord has sent forth His angel and rescued me from the hand of Herod and from all that the Jewish people were expecting." 12 And when he realized this, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John who was also called Mark, where many were gathered together and were praying. 13 When he knocked at the door of the gate, a servant-girl named Rhoda came to answer. NASU

- Time for you to come to yourself!
- It's not how others see you, but how you see you that determines destiny!

Num 13:32-33 There we saw the giants (the descendants of Anak came from the giants); and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight." NKJV

- It's about time that you learned something from the devil!