



FOREWORD BY DARRYL STRAWBERRY

JEANNIE ORTEGA LAW

WHAT
IS
HAPPENING
TO
ME?

HOW TO DEFEAT YOUR UNSEEN ENEMY

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JEANNIE ORTEGA LAW



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FOREWORD

I met Jeannie in 2012 when she appeared on a TBN broadcast my wife, Tracy, and I were hosting. We were first blessed by her anointed music and then the testimony of what God had done in her life.

Like Jeannie, my home life drove me to pursue fame. But I did not see what the enemy was doing. Soon I was led astray down a dark path. Neither of us knew we were under the attack of the enemy, whose goal is to steal, kill and destroy God's purpose. But God's grace and mercy snatched us out of the darkness. Now as followers of Christ we know the tricks of the enemy, so we can defeat him and overcome.

I have a heart for people, especially those who are faced with conditions, situations or battles in their lives that bring a deep sense of hopelessness to the soul. It is hard to see what is happening on the inside or in the spiritual realm. Rejection, abuse and brokenness in my life led to some really bad habits. I was successful by the world's standards but broken. At my lowest point, I was diagnosed with colon cancer, and

was a liar, cheater, womanizer, alcoholic and drug addict. But God pulled me out of a pit and saved me.

When you have as many troubles as I did, it is easy to want to give up. When you want to give up on yourself, and when others may be finished with you, God is never, ever finished with you. He meets you where you are at.

We do not always know what is going on in our lives. But God has put this book into your life to help. Whatever your starting point, God will help you get out of your pit and onto a solid rock. The devil is always going to be busy. Do not miss the miracle of God in your life by giving up too soon. Do not quit, no matter what. Jesus is here to rescue you, redeem you with His blood and restore you with His grace.

Jeannie is having a powerful impact on her generation, and her message is for anyone who believes God is still in the business of turning lives around. Nothing is greater than finding Jesus and discovering His purpose for your life. Although I came to know Jesus in 1991, I was not disciplined to walk with Him. I had worldly knowledge but not Kingdom knowledge, and you only get Kingdom knowledge when you pick up the Word of God and put it into practice in your life. This book will help disciple you from wherever you are into a place of freedom.

I trust that as you read your eyes will be opened. God has called you to great things. Taste and see that God is good. He is better than anything you could hope for.

Darryl Strawberry
Four-time World Series Champion,
author, speaker and founder of Strawberry Ministries

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How Lies Begin

It is not fair to pick on a child, but the enemy of your soul does it all the time. The evil one begins telling you lies before you can even comprehend what a lie is. In turn, these lies shape your world and everything you believe and know to be reality. I have learned that what you cannot see can actually hurt you. In this book, I hope to help you learn how to discern what is happening in the spiritual realm. As a result, you will be able to overcome anything that is not of God. God sees beyond the distortion of this world, and He wants us to be able to as well. He desires that we walk in our God-given inheritance as His born-again children who walk in the Spirit.

Let me begin by sharing with you what the enemy did to get the lies started in my life. In doing so, I pray that my story will help you recognize the evil devices he is trying to employ in your life.

The Probability of Me

I almost died before I was born. I am an eighties baby who was conceived during an era when getting rid of a baby in the womb was not encouraged, as it is today. My parents were in their mid and late twenties, and a whole mess of things had led them to each other. They had been married four years when they found out they were pregnant with me. At this season of their lives, they were still learning how to survive marriage and create a unified team. My mother often tells me that if she had known having kids would have made her marriage better, she would have done it a lot sooner.

It was not until I asked her recently to tell me everything about that period in her life that she revealed to me that having me was something that she and my dad chose to do. They had an abortion before my birth, and they had one after I was born. My birth was allowed intentionally to happen. To this day she can barely speak about it. I asked her to share her story with me so that I could communicate it accurately. It was important for me to know the whole truth.

Before I was born, I was pursued by the threat of death. You might have heard the Scripture “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy” (John 10:10). He often starts early. I cannot imagine a better way to take out a generation of world changers who are created in the image of God than to persuade their parents that life only begins outside of the womb. If that is a lie they believe, then they can choose to end that life before it ever begins. My mom and dad had their reasons for what they chose at the time—as do others who make similar decisions—but I am grateful that by God’s grace I made it to the other side.

God urges us to choose life. “Today I have given you the choice between life and death, between blessings and curses. Now I call on heaven and earth to witness the choice you make. Oh, that you would choose life, so that you and your descendants might live” (Deuteronomy 30:19 NLT). I believe He equips us to do what the enemy sometimes tries to convince us that we cannot do.

Right up until the moment of my birth my parents believed I was a boy. That belief came from a few things. First, doctors did not conduct sonograms at that time—at least not in my mother’s neighborhood. Second, I was born into a superstitious family. My mother’s family practiced a religion that believed spirits communicated with them, and those “spirits” said that I would be a boy. My dad already had two girls and one boy from his first marriage, so I think they wanted another boy to even things out.

I find it fascinating how people are always looking to structure things so that their lives can function smoothly. The heavenly realm functions within a similar system of structure. Perhaps that is why the human race is bent toward following that pattern. In my studies of the spiritual realm, I have learned that there is the mystery of the Godhead—who is three in one, Father, Spirit and Son—but that there are also other spiritual beings.

The evil one goes by many names: Satan, devil, adversary, accuser, tempter or serpent. He does not want to live under God’s authority. We learn of this evil creature in the beginning of the Bible in Genesis 3. When we meet him, he is in the Garden of Eden tempting Adam and Eve to sin. He is our first illustration of evil. He distorts truth and tries tirelessly to drag God’s creation into spiritual rebellion.

This being is against everything that is good, and he works through lies to lead humanity into disorder. These forces of both good and evil had an impact on my life from the very beginning.

My Abrupt Entrance

I guess I have never been one to be subtle in anything, and I came into this world in a similar fashion. My mom's due date was December of 1986, but she recalls that timeline changing after she was given a plant from one of her superstitious relatives. The Rose of Jericho, also known as the Resurrection Plant, is commonly found in northern Africa and southwest Asia. Despite starting as a shriveled brown ball, it will transform itself into a vibrant plant with brilliant green leaves. This transformation is what people believe gives it its mystical qualities.

It is said by those who practice magic that a house where the Rose of Jericho is kept is a blessed house. My mom was given the plant as a gift during her pregnancy with me. Shortly after receiving the plant, approximately a month before I was supposed to be born, my mother walked into the room where she kept the obscure plant and it bloomed right before her eyes. Moments later her water broke, and she was rushed to the hospital for an early delivery. Coincidence? It was not considered as such in our superstitious family. Even now as a Christian, I believe it could have been a spiritual indication that there was about to be a war in the heavenlies for my entrance into this world.

I asked my mom recently if she believed the plant was a sign from God, or if she thought it was some evil sign

of a threat against my life. She told me that even if it was an attack on my life the enemy lost, because I am here and am a blessing to many. Her positive perspective is right. We should always be grateful for the victory after the battle rather than focusing on the battle itself. Paul speaks about this in the book of Colossians. He says, “Don’t let anyone capture you with empty philosophies and high-sounding nonsense that come from human thinking and from the spiritual powers of this world, rather than from Christ” (Colossians 2:8 NLT).

Some people love stories that are steeped in superstition, but my very pregnant mom was afraid for both of our lives. She went into labor as I was in a breech position and premature. Because complications were a possibility, my mother had to go into emergency surgery and have me via C-section. In the eighties this procedure was risky for both the mom and baby. By the grace of God, I made it. The only indicators that the process had been tenuous was that I received a black eye and had a stint in an incubator. All things considered, we both made it out alive and well.

Every human is born into a state of war whether or not they realize it, like it or want it. The spiritual realm is battling for them until the end of their lives, and it does not abandon the mission. Looking back on your life, have you ever felt the threat? Would you say you were oblivious to it because you were not aware? Maybe a threat was disguised as something you now accept as normal. I believe an enemy placed a target on my back before I entered the earth. What was very evident was that it never had true power over my destiny. Having said that, it does not mean that the evil spiritual forces ever gave up trying to thwart my purpose.

Dealing with Envy

Once we were allowed to go home from the hospital, my little life soon became exposed to another great evil that infects the people of this world: envy. I was one of the few in my family who was born with green eyes. This was a recessive trait that was passed down from my father's mother. Neither my parents nor my siblings had this eye color, so I stuck out like a sore thumb. As life went on, I got to see the spirit of envy rear its ugly head many times. For the sake of amusing myself, I called it Cousin Envy.

At this stage of my life I do not always see it, but it comes around from time to time. This is true especially when life is going well. Envy is always looking to leech off of me. Getting distracted by envy has drained the joy out of many blessings. It is something to keep an eye out for.

Throughout the book of Psalms, every time we see the word *blessed* it is defined as, "happy, fortunate, and to be envied." If you are like me and being envied is something you have dealt with in your life, you should recognize that it is an attack from the enemy of your soul. His intention is to hinder your life. Do not fret. Look at it as the Bible does. You are blessed! "Happy and blessed are the people who are in such a case; yes, happy (blessed, fortunate, prosperous, to be envied) are the people whose God is the Lord!" (Psalm 144:15 AMPC).

My parents describe me as having been a friendly and brave little baby. I would hop out of my carriage while it was in motion, and I would jump down steps and off of furniture. Apparently, I made friends with everyone. My mom said I became the family and neighborhood star, which, of course, did not help the case of others being envious of me. They

said my personality led to what Latinx people call *mal de ojo* or “evil eye.” The evil eye is said to be a curse brought on by excessive admiration or a malevolent glare.

In my Puerto Rican culture, infants are considered to be very susceptible to the evil eye because of their innocence. I was given a special bracelet called *Manita de Azabache*, which is a gold bracelet with a dark hand hanging from it. This symbol is meant to ward off evil and should never be removed. “For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice” (James 3:16). This verse followed me into adulthood.

My parents must have felt the envy over me, because they did what they knew to do at the time to keep me safe. My mother’s best friend christened me in the Catholic Church. This was a tradition that my Catholic family deemed necessary for every infant. They believed it was a way to ensure that a covenant was made between a child and God. Even though my parents and godparents vowed to raise me in the statutes of God, my mom confessed that her real focus was on the lack of peace at home. She described those days as a war zone due to the violence that surrounded her.

As an adult, I was rebaptized. I felt it was important to do when I could comprehend fully what baptism signified. Jesus was an adult when He was baptized. As John the Baptist said, he baptized people for repentance (see Matthew 3:11). I wanted to understand all of that and be immersed in the water as a symbol of my faith, too.

My infant baptism was filled with strife, and evil was all around. In contrast, as an adult I was dunked in a pool and immediately saw heaven open up. I saw angels all around me. It was truly glorious. I believe that the glimpse into the

spiritual realm that I received was God's way of solidifying that there is more around us than the eye can see.

It would be a long time before I would see that type of glory and feel the peace that comes with that outward profession of faith on a regular basis. I believe, however, that because of these early spiritual practices, God had a stake in my life. Thankfully, He was not letting go.

The Spirit of Fear

Within the first three years of my life, I had already been exposed to near death and envy. What followed closely behind was fear. Most people do not remember anything from the first few years of their lives, but I do. One of my first vivid memories is witnessing my mom and dad fighting. It is my earliest memory of the feeling of terror. We were living with my grandmother at the time, and my parents were face-to-face in a heated discussion in her kitchen. The argument ended with my mom being taken by an ambulance to the hospital. I am in my thirties now, and I still have the memory as clear as a picture. It might have been at that moment that my perception of love became one of intense passion and violence.

We can all relate to experiencing some kind of dysfunction as children; however, with spiritual opposition at work and no true knowledge of what is really behind all of the discord, many people allow havoc to reign in their homes. The Bible says we do not wrestle against flesh and blood (see Ephesians 6:12). Even though evil sometimes comes in the form of those who are flesh and blood, we have to remember there is a greater power at work. We need to tap into the power of God to know how to deal properly with evil, and

we need to pray against the spirit of division. “A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger” (Proverbs 15:1). Psalm 37:8 adds that we should “Refrain from anger, and forsake wrath! Fret not yourself: it tends only to evil.”

Jesus explained what I witnessed at home. “Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and no city or house divided against itself will stand” (Matthew 12:25). Despite the love my parents had for me, the anger they sometimes had toward each other made me feel as if I was not enough to bring our family together. The enemy used that against me. In God, however, His love always brings unity and peace.

Since we had no example of godly love, my family did the best we knew how. Despite everything, my parents stayed together. I have seen firsthand why the Bible tells parents not to provoke their children to anger. They are to bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord, instead (see Ephesians 6:4). Had I allowed anger to lead my life, I would probably be in jail today.

The rage I witnessed, coupled with the envy I felt from those outside of my home, made me despise my life. That was exactly what the enemy wanted. He knew that if he could make me hate myself and question my identity and purpose, he could cripple me. If that happened, I would forfeit that for which God placed me on this planet. He started that attack from the beginning of my life.

Rejection of Self

Cousin Envy made sure that I had no real friends in my neighborhood. My green eyes made me stand out from my peers. The other little girls conspired against me and formed

their cliques and circles without me. I spent most of my time playing outside with the little boys. This, of course, made me even less popular among the girls. But what else did I have? I had no idea what purpose was, let alone that I had one. I did not come to this awareness until I reached the age of 21. As I grew in age and comprehension, I would start to feel the spirit of fear come in the form of rejection. The resistance I felt constantly from an early age awakened the fighter in me, and it ignited my drive to survive. That drive led me ultimately into the loving arms of my Savior, Jesus Christ.

From as early as age five, I remember the sting of rejection and how it made me feel as if I were alone. I am sure every child has felt ignored or silenced at one point or another, but I always took on a more elevated feeling of rejection because of my incessant need for attention.

Since I could not get the fighting at home to stop, I thought, *Maybe they don't love me enough. Maybe I am the problem. They will not listen to my pleas for them to stop. My voice is useless.*

Among relatives, I thought, *They hate me because I look and act different. My opinions do not matter because they keep telling me to shut up.*

In school, I thought, *I'm an outcast.*

Playing in the neighborhood, I thought, *No one wants to be my friend. They are all talking about me because I am different.*

All of these lies became a part of me. For years, I believed them as truth, and they shaped my early identity. "For as he thinks within himself, so he is" (Proverbs 23:7 NASB). Because I believed the lies, Cousin Envy and rejection continued to follow me into my adulthood. Can you think of things in

your early life that you believed that may not have been true? Deception is a weapon used by the enemy, the father of lies, to make us question anything and everything about our existence and purpose. He knows that our belief is the lens through which we see the world.

Before we receive any spiritual knowledge of God, our experiences are meant to shape our perception of truth. “The god of this world [Satan] has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ” (2 Corinthians 4:4). It was not until recently that I identified a lot of the lies that had shaped my world. I had to replace them with God’s truth about me and my purpose. Have you ever done a lie inventory in your life? If so, how many lies have shaped your life? If not, may I suggest that you take some time to do so?

Happily Never After

Because of how lonely and alienated I felt in my early life, I often found comfort in talking to myself. I used my imagination to picture the life I wished I had. I was one of the only children on my mother’s side of the family, and I spent the majority of my time with those relatives. I felt so alone.

I would try to talk to the adults around me, but I was often told to stay out of grown folks’ conversations. Talking to myself or acting out elaborate scenes that I saw in my imagination was all I had. I imagined a life without fighting, violence or alcohol abuse. I pretended to have the happily ever after story I saw in the movies. I also imagined being rescued by my prince charming. In my mind, my prince would be everything I ever needed. He would treat me as his queen,

he would never hurt me out of anger, and he would never make me feel as if I was not enough for him.

I am not sure if it was what I saw on TV or if it was something innately inside of me, but I knew that the world was not as broken as I often witnessed it being in my environment. I imagined a world where everyone valued each other despite their differences and where love was the leading force. I think back on it now and see that God's heart was always embedded deep within me. How could a young girl believe for anything good after having witnessed the opposite so many times? I know that despite my surroundings, experiences and negative beliefs something greater was calling me.

I refused to allow hatred to break me, and I would not allow it to invade my heart. I used it to give me purpose. Optimism was a weapon I had that I did not see anyone else using. Most people called me a dreamer, and that is something I still am. I somehow always knew that not everything I saw was what it appeared to be. "Faith is the assurance of things hoped for" (Hebrews 11:1). Even though I did not know it at the time, faith kept me going. "Hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us" (Romans 5:5).

I am sure that you have seen similar spiritual attacks. Although we all have unique stories, the enemy is not unique in his tactics. He uses the same attacks, which include lies, fear, deception, anger, rejection, jealousy, unforgiveness, doubt and more. His ultimate goal is to keep us separated from the love of God so that we die without salvation in Christ. It is important that you see spiritually what is really at work against you.

God has a plan, and so does the enemy. In this book, I hope to teach you how to see the spiritual world for what it is, both good and evil. I want you to realize that if God is leading, you will win!

You will find at the end of each chapter a few extra sections. First is a section of reflection. I have provided questions to prompt you to look at your life to see how the topics discussed might be expressed in your life. You will also find a section where I summarize the key takeaways from each chapter. They are listed out to help you keep your spiritual eyes open. I have also listed out a few applicable Scriptures that you can meditate on. And finally, I have written a prayer and declaration for you to speak out to the Lord.

What Do I See?

1. What early experiences do you remember that have shaped your life and what you believe?
2. Have you allowed envy or jealousy to affect you in a negative way?
3. Upon what is your definition of love based? Is it based primarily on how God defines love, what your life experiences have been or a mixture of the two?
4. List the ways that you are blessed. Make this list in spite of the negative aspects or consequences of your life.
5. Have you accepted God's truth about family, yourself and His purpose for your life?
6. How can you shift any negative atmosphere that might be in your life presently?

What Can I Learn?

- The enemy opposes God's people and tries to destroy, but God's grace causes you to live.
- The enemy targets your identity by making you hate yourself or despise your life.
- Evil will assault the innocent, so you need to be on the offense.
- Blessings attract envy and strife. Be prepared to stand strong and own your identity in Christ.
- Fear can be used in multiple ways to cripple you and make you inactive.
- Never give up hope. Choose to believe that God's best will always trump evil.

Scriptures for Meditation

John 8:44 NASB

He [the devil] was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

Psalm 138:7

Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve my life; you stretch out your hand against the wrath of my enemies, and your right hand delivers me.

Proverbs 22:6

Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.

Prayer and Declaration

Father God, in the name of Jesus, I thank you for how You have protected me from the time I was in my mother's womb until now. Even though I did not always have the best example of love and peace, I know that You led me here to remind me that You have a great purpose for my life. Lord, I pray that my identity will be found in You alone—not in what I was told as a child or in what I was taught by the world. Let the source of my self-worth be Your words. I pray that You uproot every spirit of fear that has tried to cripple or short-circuit my calling in life. Also, please uproot every lie that has tried to shape my understanding, from the time of my birth until now. Please replace those lies with the truths of Your Word. Thank You for every one of Your blessings. I realize I do not deserve them, but You give them to me anyway. I am grateful! I pray for those who struggle with envy and jealousy. Lord, may their eyes be turned toward You, the rewarder of their faith. Lastly, in the midst of life's difficulties, may I never stop believing in Your greatness. May I always choose to believe that better is coming. I declare that my hope is in You. In Jesus' name, Amen.