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## A Biblical View of Demonology

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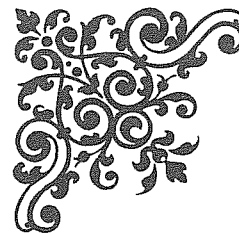
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# A BIBLICAL View of DEMONOLOGY

by Dr. James A. Laine

... with foreword by Stan Scott

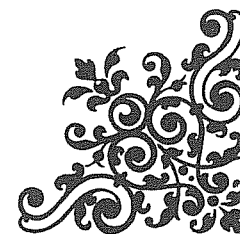




A BIBLICAL VIEW  
OF DEMONOLOGY

By:

*Dr. James A. Laine D.B.T.*



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## FOREWORD

Just to simply sit under the ministry of Jim Laine is to have an inner voice say . . . "Here, is a man who loves his Lord . . . and is anointed by God! To hear Jim pray . . . teach . . . share the Word . . . is to know that you are in the presence of a servant of God . . . who, himself, is in the presence of the Almighty!

It has been my distinct pleasure to consider Jim a personal friend . . . it has also been my joy to serve the Lord with this laborer for the Master, on many occasions. Because I truly believe this young man . . . is a man of faith . . . a man who reflects the compassion of Jesus . . . it pleases me to be able to help exhibit still another facet of the ministry of Jim Laine . . . the ability to expound the truth in the printed page.

In an age of 'the blind leading the blind' . . . in a time when sound doctrine is being ignored by seekers with 'itching ears' . . . it is most important to 'rightly divide the Word of God' . . . in the hopes of correcting damage done by some who have 'zeal, without knowledge!'

The book you are about to read . . . researched exhaustively, and written by Rev. Dr. Jim Laine . . . reveals the scriptural truths concerning the subject of 'demons' . . . there has been much damage done to the Body of Christ by teaching that has been misleading and has caused a spread of fear. The purpose of this volume is to cause a peace to flow over each believer . . . to build an assurance and a confidence in every Child of God. As you read, your Spirit will bear witness with the truth . . . because this book does not contain personal experiences . . . but basic Biblical truth, about the authority of the Christian and the limits of the enemy.

Read on . . . and let the joy of Jesus rise up in you, for the Glory of God!

Stan Scott

# INTRODUCTION

In the last ten years there has been a great rise in attention given to the demonic. A great many books purporting to be biblical or theological works have been written on the subject. Prayer groups and ministers have arisen whose sole reason for existence appears to be the study and treatment of demons. Deliverance seminars and services abound.

While all of this claims to be in a Christian context, the question arises as to how much of this material is truly Christian and how much is modern paganism. Most of the books are written from an experiential viewpoint rather than from Bible fact, and most of the adherents to this teaching seem more deeply bound in superstition than the unredeemed.

This question takes on greater importance when we examine the fruits of these ministries. While some truly seem to be helped, many others are harmed emotionally and spiritually, and the vast majority are left in theological conflict. My own counseling calendar is frequently filled with cases of people who, having been to a ministry which specializes in "deliverance," have come away more bound than they were before they went. They are fearful, confused, and misinformed. The concepts of self or flesh and demonic or spiritual have become irrationally confused. The main cause for this seems to be that the attention of these ministries is on the demonic instead of on Jesus Christ. Because of this, the adherents are more vulnerable to Satan than they think, and Satan rejoices at the attention.

The Bible clearly teaches the existence of demons and the reality of Satan. It teaches us how to deal with them and overcome them.

Therefore, it is our responsibility to clearly study the Bible's theology concerning these beings and our relationship to them so that we will not be duped by Satan or left vulnerable to his powers.

We must learn to deal with demons, but we must do it God's way. Pagan sources are frequently used by God's people in their quest for knowledge.

Very few people have sought to define what demon-possession really is in biblical terms. Even Christian authors who are respected for their view of scripture use examples drawn from their experience rather than Biblical criteria. Complicating the experiential approach is that fact that these studies also show that demon experience and demonology varies from culture to culture and from sect to sect.

As we will see in our study, even Acts 16:16 is an indication that Satan and his demons adapt their deceitful practices to the local culture. We also know that Satan is a liar and the father of lies, Jn. 8:44. He cannot be trusted in any situation to present himself as he actually is, since his whole approach is through deception. No cultural, literary, or historic material is free from his manipulation. Not even Jewish superstition can be trusted because that superstition itself was under Satan's control. In truth, we as Christians must look to Jesus' teaching to find the truth. The Word of God alone can be our authority.

For the purpose of this study we will base our theology only on biblical evidence. We will view some non-Christian sources, but we will only give credence to the Word itself. This, of course, presupposes a belief that the BIBLE is the true authoritative inerrant Word of God. It also presupposes a disbelief in all arguments against the validity of scripture such as the accommodation theory. Jesus went out of His way to "*show His own DISBELIEF in the popular demonology of His day, save in so far as disease caused by alleged demon possession was concerned. As Dr. William Menzies Alexander, a doctor of medicine as well as a student of divinity, showed some years ago, 'He commanded His disciples to gather up the fragments, thus discouraging the idea that demons lurk in crumbs. He had no faith in the ceremonial washing of hands; so repelling the notion that spirits may rest on unwashed hands. He asked a draught of water from the woman of Samaria and thereafter entered the city; proving that He had no*

*fear of borrowed water and no belief in local shedim. He retired repeatedly to desert places and fasted in the wilderness; therein rejecting the popular conception that the waste is the special haunt of evil spirits . . . The association of demons with animals is in conflict with Christ's assertion of God's special care over them.' In a word, apart from the context of disease and the possible exception of the storm on the lake, Jesus makes no reference to devils, though the conversations around Him were full of references to them. He makes an exception when He talks about certain types of illness. Then He does seem to accept the view of demon possession. There is a significance in such a marked exception."*<sup>1</sup>

It is clear that Jesus was not accommodating His contemporaries since He displayed beliefs concerning demonology which went against the rabbinic doctrine of demons. Jesus spoke the complete truth no matter whose theology He offended.

We will also be working from the belief that the Bible is as valid and applicable in this area today as it was in the First century. Hopefully, this is a point of view which the modern faithful should not only be open to, but should also hold to as the standard for all theology. To settle for anything less, especially in this area, leaves us open to such possibilities of deception that it is outright dangerous. To accept man's logic about things which are totally spiritual is just simply foolishness.

The BIBLE even warns us: '*Beware of those who come teaching doctrines of demons.*' (1 Tim. 4:1). Doctrine, is man's intellect added to biblical fact, to fill in the gaps. Once we step into doctrine we open ourselves up for an argument from sincere brothers. Once we step into doctrine of demons we leave ourselves open to Satan and his deception.

This is, then, a biblical study which will have practical applications for everyone, whether they are involved in ministry or not. We all need to know what the Bible says about demons.

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<sup>1</sup>Leslie D. Weatherhead, PSYCHOLOGY RELIGION AND HEALING (New York: Abingdon Press, 1952), pp. 89-91.

I pray that the reader will pray before you read, asking that God would teach and that you will be open. Far too often we try to make the scripture say what we want it to say or what we believe it should say, rather than truly trying to understand what it really does say. I have made an earnest attempt to be open. I have had to change some long-held beliefs now that I have truly been confronted by the Word.

Please do not deny anything presented without first prayerfully submitting yourself to the authority of the scripture.

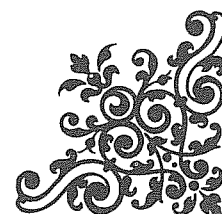
All scriptural quotations used will be from the Revised Standard Version unless otherwise indicated.





## Part I

# BACKGROUND





## LANGUAGE

The fact is that the biblical material on demons is somewhat limited. There appears to be no desire or attempt on God's part to supply us with a complete theology or understanding of demons. Forms of the word "demon" are only used seventy times in scripture, and these seventy times reflect only thirty-three separate situations.

The word "exorcists" is used only once. The modern word for this ministry is "deliverance." However, this word is never used in conjunction with demons or in reference to them. "Deliverance" is used to refer to deliverance from "*the evil one*" himself (Matt. 6:13), or from the "*dominion of darkness*" (Col. 1:13). In general we are said to be "delivered" from sickness, human enemies, situations, but never from demons or evil spirits.

This does not preclude the use of the term, but does question the basis for a biblical "deliverance ministry" as distinct from other ministries since there is no mention of such a ministry. Deliverance or exorcism was simply something that had to be dealt with in the course of things. There may have been itinerant Jewish exorcists but there were no itinerant Christian deliverance ministries. Exorcism was part of the normal function of the body. There were no deliverance ministries, *per se*. It is not a gift, a ministry, an office, a fruit, a law, or a commandment.

The word "diabolos" (devil) meaning "slanderer" or "false accuser" is used in the singular in the New Testament where it appears more than thirty times as a descriptive title of Satan. In its adjective form it is used three times to represent men as accusers or slanderers.

The words "daimonion" and "daimon" (or demon) are used very frequently in the New Testament, both in the singular and plural, but never interchangeably with "diabolos" (devil), and always in a sense different from that of "diabolos." Whenever the words "daimonion" or "daimon" occur the margin of the

newly revised version gives demon as their proper translation or equivalent. The synonym for demon is "evil spirit" or "unclean spirit." There is then in the scripture only one devil, but the number of demons is indefinitely large.

Demonic agents then are variously designated: Demon (DAIMON) Matt. 8:31; Spirit (PNEUMA) Matt. 8:16, etc.; Evil Spirits (PNEUMA TO PONERON) Luke 7:21, etc.; Filthy Spirit (PNEUMATA TA AKATHARTA) Mark 3:11, etc.; Spirit of an unclean demon (PNEUMA DIAMONIU AKATHARTON) Luke 4:33.

The subjects or recipients of their activity are variously designated:

The demonized	(DAIMONIZOMENOI)	Matt. 4:24
Having demons	(EXON DAIMONIA)	Luke 8:27
Driven by a demon	(ELAUNETO UPO TOU DAIMONIOU)	Luke 8:29
Whom a spirit seizes	(PNEUMA LAMBANEI)	Luke 9:39
Whom a spirit assails	(PNEUMA KATALAMBANEI)	Mark 9:18
Being in a foul spirit	(EN PNEUMATI AKATHARTO)	Mark 1:23
Having a foul spirit	(EXON PNEUMA AKATHARTON)	Mark 3:30
Whom a spirit enters	(PNEUMA EISIRXETAI)	Matt. 12:45
Annoyed by spirits	(OXLOUMENOI UPO PNEUMATON)	Acts 5:16
Harassed by spirits	(ENOXLOUMENOI APO PNEUMATON)	Luke 6:18
Containing an evil spirit	(EN O EEN TO PNEUMA TO PONERON)	Acts 19:16

The demoniacs are sometimes said "to have" or "to possess" (EXEIN) a demon or spirit.

Nowhere does the Bible say a person is "possessed" by a demon. In fact, none of the original language texts use this word. The Greek verb which means "to be demonized" or troubled by demons is consistently mis-translated in the King James

Bible which inserts the words "demon possessed." Other translations make similar mistakes. This mis-translation is due to overwhelming secular and pagan belief that people can be possessed. This, in turn, has caused a great theological problem for believers. How can a person "belong" to a demon?

One could say that we are possessed by Jesus, for we are "*bought with a price*" (1 Cor. 6:19-20). One could even make a case that those who do not belong to Jesus belong to Satan. (Jn. 8:44). However, it is a theological impossibility to "belong" to an intermediary being. Psychologically, the fear brought on by this inappropriate term can cause more damage than any demon which might be troubling a person.

While Greek secular writers, dramatists, and pagans believed in "possession," even the Jewish authorities of Jesus' day rejected this inaccurate notion.<sup>2</sup> They understood that being oppressed by demons had nothing to do with possession.

Unfortunately, even those authors who do their homework and state that the word means "demonized" and not "possessed" then continue to use the words "demon possessed." Almost all the authors writing in this field have succumbed to this grave error and accept the cultural usage which misrepresents scriptural fact. They accommodate their peers where Jesus refused to accommodate.

This particular discussion of phraseology is more than semantics. It has a great effect on our practical response to demons. It is imperative that we recognize that there is no such thing as "demon possession." Demons can never have the authority or power over a human being. They are subordinate beings, subject to us as Christians. We may have a demon but they can never have us.

Further, we as Christians should never glorify the demonic by attributing such powers to them. We will herein use the word

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<sup>2</sup>Alfred Edersheim, *THE LIFE AND TIMES OF JESUS THE MESSIAH*, Book I (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1977), P. 4.

"demonized" except where we quote other authors who illadvisedly insist on this pagan, non-biblical terminology.



## ORIGIN OF DEMONS

The fact that mankind is eternally inquisitive seems to require that we study the origin of demons. In truth, the canonized scripture is quiet on this point. One could suggest from this that God did not think it important to tell us how these beings found their lot in the eternal scheme, and possibly we should not endeavor to seek their origin. This falls in the area of doctrine rather than biblical theology.

Investigation of this point is bound to degrees of speculation since there is no canonical evidence to substantiate any single hypothesis. However, we will examine briefly several major theories, without trying to form a doctrine. The hope is that we may shed some light on some incorrect doctrine.

Attitudes of secular sources are reflected in Josephus' view that demons are the spirits of the wicked dead that enter into men who are alive. Origin also thought demons to be spirits of the dead.<sup>3</sup> This specific view has no direct scriptural support and is contrary to scripture which teaches one death, then judgment, and no return from beyond (Heb. 9:27; Job 16:22). Also, Jesus' parable of the rich man and Lazarus shows us that those who do not repose in Paradise suffer in Hades, a place of torment, waiting for the judgment (Luke 16:19-31).

In pseudepigraphical Judaism Satan's angels are called

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<sup>3</sup>Gerhard Kittel, ed., *THEOLOGICAL DICTIONARY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT*, Vol. I. trans. by Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964). p. 8.

demons.<sup>4</sup> This view is also widely held by many presenting themselves as authorities. Even Sumrall, who presents an otherwise excellent view of demonology, holds to this. He believes that the angels that fell with Satan are demons or evil spirits.

There are two major problems with this view. First, the Bible seems to make a distinction between angels and demons. There is not even the slightest hint of crossover or exchange of roles or of terms. Angels may take on human form, but they are never said to inhabit humans. Angels are always referred to as angels and demons are always referred to as demons or evil spirits.

The second problem with this view is even more insurmountable. The scripture explicitly states, contrary to popular belief and teaching, that Satan's angels are NOT active. *"For God did not spare the angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of nether gloom to be kept until the judgment"* (2 Pet. 2:4). The word here translated "hell" is actually TARTAROS, so it reads, "consigned them to Tartarus." "This was thought of by the Greeks as a subterranean place lower than Hades where divine punishment was meted out..."<sup>5</sup>

This scripture is directly supported by Jude 6. *"And the angels that did not keep their own positions but left their proper dwelling have been kept by him in eternal chains in the nether gloom until the judgment of the great day."*

Some hold that Paul's comment in Rom. 8:38 that we cannot be separated from God's love by "angels" argues for the idea that the angels of Satan are an active force. However, Paul nowhere makes this assertion. He says we are contending against principalities and powers (Eph. 6:12) but he does not show us contend-

ing against angels. In fact, we cannot find one New Testament occurrence of anyone confronted by or contending with or taking authority over Satan's "angels." This is a shock, having been taught a great deal about Satan's angels.

We have understood many passages to refer to angels, not because of the passage itself, but because of our misinformed theology and speculative teaching. Since the scripture cannot contradict itself, and since there is not one clear scripture which even challenges these verses, we must hold that Satan's angels are bound and not active. We contend against demons and Satan.

So, while we may find an occasional scripture which might be forced to fit the view that demons are Satan's angels, this view is inconsistent with scripture as a whole. This is a good example of the fact that just because "everyone" teaches it, it doesn't mean that it is scripturally correct!

Another major theory not treated by the majority of authors is that demons are the offspring of the union of the sons of God and the daughters of men (Gen. 6:2-4). Even while this particular scripture is open to controversy in interpretation, this idea may have some real credence.

This concept also finds its origin in the Pseudepigrapha, in the Book of Enoch. It should be noted that 2 Pet. 2:4 uses material from Enoch, and Jude quotes directly from this manuscript (Jude 14-15). So, there is a high degree of credibility given to this specific book. Enoch says this: *"And He answered and said to me, and I heard His voice: 'Fear not, Enoch, thou righteous man and scribe of righteousness: approach hither and hear my voice. And go, say to the Watchers of heaven, who have sent thee to intercede for them: 'You should intercede for men, and not men for you: Wherefore have ye left the high, holy, and eternal heaven, and lain with women, and defiled yourselves with the daughters of men and taken to yourselves wives, and done like the children of earth, and begotten giants (as your) sons? And though ye were holy, spiritual, living the eternal life, you have defiled yourselves with the blood of women, and have begotten (children) with the*

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., vol. II. p. 14.

<sup>5</sup>Walter Bauer, A GREEK-ENGLISH LEXICON OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, trans. by William F. Arndt and F. Wilder Gingrich (2nd ed.; Chicago, Illinois: The University of Chicago Press, 1952). p. 813.

*blood of flesh, and, as the children of men, have lusted after flesh and blood as those also do who die and perish. Therefore have I given them wives also that they might impregnate them, and beget children by them, that thus nothing might be wanting to them on earth. But you were formerly spiritual, living the eternal life, and immortal for all generations of the world. And therefore I have not appointed wives for you; for as for the spiritual ones of the heaven, in heaven is their dwelling. And now, the giants, who are produced from the spirit and flesh, shall be called evil spirits upon the earth, and on the earth shall be their dwelling. Evil spirits have proceeded from their bodies; because they are born from men (and) from the holy Watchers is their beginning and primal origin; they shall be evil spirits on earth, and evil spirits shall they be called. As for the spirits of heaven, in heaven shall be their dwelling, but as for the spirits of the earth which were born upon the earth, on the earth shall be their dwelling. And the spirits of the giants afflict, oppress, destroy, attack, do battle, and work destruction on the earth, and cause trouble: they take no food, but nevertheless hunger and thirst, and cause offences. And these spirits shall rise up against the children of men and against the women, because they have proceeded from them.*

*From the days of the slaughter and destruction and death of the giants, from the souls of whose flesh the spirits, having gone forth, shall destroy without incurring judgment - thus shall they destroy until the day of the consummation, the great (judgment) in which the age shall be consummated, over the Watchers and the godless, yea, shall be wholly consummated."*<sup>6</sup>

Some have suggested that this is an archaic attempt at explaining the origin of demons and not even a serious one at that. The authority of the book of Enoch is rightfully questioned as it is not part of the canon. Yet, Peter and Jude esteem the book highly enough to mention it or quote from it.

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<sup>6</sup>R.H. Charles, *THE APOCRYPHA AND THE PSEUDEPIGRAPHIA OF THE OLD TESTAMENT IN ENGLISH*, Vol. II: PSEUDEPIGRAPHIA (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913), p. 198.

It is unfortunate for this particular investigation that the canon does not specifically mention this chapter of Enoch. Still this seems to be our best choice, if we must choose, since there is some scriptural support for material from Enoch and since this chapter coordinates with other canonical material. It also helps explain Gen. 6:2-4. While we cautiously receive this view, personally, we do not present it as theology or dogma, but as a possibility for those who must know the origin of demons.

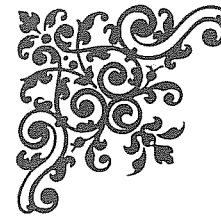
The most popular view ignores this material completely and holds that demons are a class of fallen spirit beings distinctly than either Satan or fallen angels.<sup>7</sup> This would also seem to be compatible with scripture, while not directly supported by it. It is also unoffensive theologically.

It should be remembered though, that demonic origins are not properly a part of a biblical theology of demonology. Neither is it central to a functional demonology, as the origin of demons has little to do with their treatment. One can surely be delivered without knowing how demons came into the world and the knowledge of their origin offers little in the way of protection from their attack. The only essential element is that we acknowledge that demons are members of the satanic task force. On this point, there is no disagreement among the theologians who admit their existence.



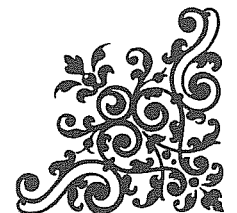

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<sup>7</sup>Kittel, *DICTIONARY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT*, Vol. II, p. 14.



## Part II

# EXAMINATION OF THE SCRIPTURE



## OLD TESTAMENT

The demonology of the Old Testament presents many problems. Word usages differ from the New Testament and theology seems to differ as well. Much of what the Old Testament sees as God's anger was later interpreted as the action of Satan or demons.

Most authorities agree, to an extent, with Kittel who says: *"It is particularly important to realize that the actual workings of destructive powers, which in the Greek would be attributed to DIAMONES are in the Old Testament ascribed to the rule of God."*<sup>8</sup> The theory that the doctrine of demonology in the Old Testament was progressive is widely accepted and consistent with biblical evidence.

This general progressive growth in theological sophistication is also felt to be displayed in the Hebrew theology of God, the movement of plural marriage or monogamy, theology of angels, and Satan, etc. Acceptance of this view removes many problems of interpretation which otherwise exist in many other areas in addition to these mentioned.

Specific examples of such problems central to our study can be seen in the Hebrew idea that God uses Spirits of Confusion (Isa. 19:14); Evil Spirits (Jdgs. 9:23; 1 Sam. 16:14); Spirits of Deep Sleep (Isa. 29:10) and Lying Spirits (1 Ki. 22:22). Those who reject the idea of a progressive Old Testament theology present the argument that God is indeed in authority over all things and could directly use even evil agencies. They follow with the idea that Satan is indeed only a servant of God, always doing His bidding. Along with this is the idea that sickness itself is a tool of God and in His direct will.

This however does not seem to be substantiated by Jesus' attitude or teaching in the New Testament, nor is it consistent with the idea of a loving God. Also, as we have seen, the Old

Testament has no visible concept of the agency of Satan. Writers of that period blamed even the satanic on God. The Hebrews' confusion in supernatural power is further demonstrated by the use of divination, witchcraft, and magic even though God warned them against it, i.e. Joseph (Gen. 44:15). Joseph seems to have no problem using the tools of Satan even while he is serving God. This side of the cross we understand God's injunction against such things. Yet Joseph and the pre-law scriptures seem oblivious to this glaring error. They saw all supernatural power as one and attributed all supernatural things to God.

Jesus spent much time in corrective education. He introduced Satan to them, continually pointing him out as the source of evil circumstance. He presents Himself as coming to destroy the works of Satan. He attributes sickness to demons and to Satan and He rebukes the demons. Whatever they do, He is against. His purpose is clearly in direct opposition to Satan's purpose. John 10:10 evidences this: *"The thief came to steal, to kill and to destroy, but I have come to give you life and life more abundant."*

Not only is there lacking any New Testament statement of an alliance between Jesus, Satan and his demons, but the absolute opposite is taught and portrayed. The demons respond in fear to Him rather than acting as obedient servants.<sup>9</sup>

All of this makes it extremely difficult to understand Old Testament references to demons experience, unless we accept the view of progressive theology. It also raises real questions as to how much help the Old Testament will offer in trying to form a theology.

Let us examine a few scriptures concerning Saul which will exemplify our interpretation dilemma still further:

When the evil spirit of God is upon thee.

1 Sam. 16:16

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<sup>8</sup>Kittel, DICTIONARY OF N.T., V. II, p. 11.

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<sup>9</sup>Matt. 8:29.

The evil spirit of God came upon Saul.  
1 Sam. 18:10

The evil spirit of the Lord came upon Saul.  
1 Sam. 19:9

Is there a clear distinction in the mind of the chronicler between these spirits and the spirit of the Lord as seen in these passages?

The spirit of God came upon him.  
Num. 24:2

The spirit of the Lord came upon him.  
Jdgs. 3:10

The spirit of the Lord shall come upon thee.  
1 Sam. 10:6

The spirit of God came upon Azariah.  
2 Chr. 15:1

The spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him.  
Isa. 11:2

Both say they are from (Elohim) God and (Jahveh) Lord, but the first set clearly portend evil and are so labeled while the second set reflects more of a New Testament view of "the" Spirit of God.

The evil spirit terrifies Saul (1 Sam. 16:14); when it leaves him, he is well (1 Sam. 16:23); when it returns, he is ill (1 Sam. 16:16); it causes him to prophesy (rave) in his house (1 Sam. 18:10); it incites him to murder (1 Sam. 19:9-10). The nomenclature and the details of the narrative fully confirm the opinion that Saul's illness was regarded as demonic in nature.

Matthew Henry, writing on these passages, recognizes that evil spirits are agents of Satan but also believes them to be used

of God.<sup>10</sup> Clarke is not sure, and allows that they may be from either Satan or God.<sup>11</sup> This allows for the possibility that the biblical author may not have understood their origin.

All clearly identified evil spirits in the Old Testament are said to come from God except an Unclean Spirit (Zech. 13:2); Spirit of Harlotry (Hos. 4:12) referring to the worship of other gods; and a Spirit of Jealousy (Num. 5:14). These are apparently considered to be from an unstated source other than God.

In addition to the above, some things we call spirits seem to refer, in both testaments, to attributes in man's spirit or flesh, rather than to spirits from God or Satan.

HAUGHTY (Prov. 16:18); PROUD (Eccl. 7:8), we are proud in our spirit; BITTER (2 Sam. 30:6) in soul; (Ps. 106:33) in spirit; DOWNCAST (Prov. 17:22); FAINT (Ps. 142:3, Isa. 7:4, Isa. 61:3); DECEITFUL (Jer. 17:9, Ps. 109:2, Ps. 32:2); ANGUISH (Job 7:11, Isa. 21:3); TROUBLED (Gen. 41:8, Dan. 2:1); HARDENED (Deut. 2:30) in their spirit.

There are similar attributes in the New Testament which the scripture attributes not to Satan, but to man. Demonists tend to ignore the flesh and see things almost exclusively as from God or Satan. We will deal with that problem later.

Many of the superstitious demon teachings come out of the Old Testament. Some Christians have come to believe that frogs, owls, ostriches, cats, etc. are in and of themselves demonic. This is not the teaching of God or the Word. It was however the superstitious pagan belief of Israel's neighbors.

God warned Israel to destroy the pagan nations and their ideas. Unfortunately, they failed to follow directions and took unto themselves the gods of other peoples and their demon

<sup>10</sup>Matthew Henry, MATTHEW HENRY'S COMMENTARY ON THE WHOLE BIBLE, Vol. II (McLean, Virginia: McDonald Publishing Company, 1708), p. 368,380.

<sup>11</sup>Adam Clarke, THE HOLY BIBLE CONTAINING THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS WITH A COMMENTARY AND CRITICAL NOTES, Vol. II (Nashville: Abingdon Press), pg. 259.

superstitions.

The Old Testament does teach that demons were behind the idols and idol worship. *"So they shall no more slay their sacrifices for satyrs, after whom they play the harlot. This shall be a statute for ever to them throughout their generations."* (Lev. 17:7)

Satyrs are he-goats. However, in this verse and in Isa. 13:21, and 34:14, it refers to demons. They were thought to be gods whom the Israelites worshipped (Josh. 24:14; Ezek. 20:7; 23:3, 8, 19, 21, 27).<sup>12</sup>

There was also the problem of human sacrifice to the demons. Deut. 32:17 says: *"They sacrificed to demons which were no gods, to gods they had never known, to gods that had come in of late, whom your fathers had never dreaded."*

Ps. 106:37-38 says: *"They sacrificed their sons and their daughters to the demons; they poured out innocent blood, the blood of their sons and daughters, whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan; and the land was polluted with blood."*

The Israelites were taken in by doctrines of demons just as many Christians are. Because they had no control over the demons they went to superstitions for relief.

*Precautions were also taken on account of the demons which were supposed to have a partiality for water and various foodstuffs. It was held that an evil spirit finds its way into foodstuffs and beverages even when they are enclosed within an iron receptacle. Before a person drinks water at night-time, therefore, in order to guard himself against the demons which cause blindness, after striking the cover of the water-jar, he must say to himself: 'Thou N son of N (i.e. himself), thy mother has warned thee, and said, Guard thyself from Shabriri, Briri, Riri, Iri, Ri. I am thirsty in a white cup.' After the repetition of this formula one may drink without fear, for the demon is believed*

<sup>12</sup>Charles Randall Barnes, ed., THE PEOPLE'S BIBLE ENCYCLOPEDIA (Chicago: The People's Publication Society, 1921), p. 421.

*to dwindle away as the syllables of his name are gradually reduced in number.*

*One of the most interesting passages relating to the subject is found in Josephus. I will cite this, since it shows so clearly the prevalence of the belief in demon possession and exorcism among the Jews, as well as Solomon's fame as an exorcist, and his mode of procedure in casting out demons: 'God also enabled him to learn that skill which expels demons, which is a science useful and sanative to men. He composed such incantations also by which distempers are alleviated. And he left behind him the manner of using exorcisms, by which they drive away demons, so that they never return, and this method of cure is of great force unto this day.' Josephus goes on to relate how he had himself seen a fellow countryman, named Eleazar, expelling demons in the presence of the Emperor Vespasian: 'The manner of cure was this: He put a ring that had a root of one of those sorts mentioned by Solomon to the nostrils of the demoniac, after which he drew out the demon through his nostrils; and when the man fell down immediately, he adjured him to return unto him no more, making still mention of Solomon, and reciting the incantations which he composed. And when Eleazar would persuade and demonstrate to the spectators that he had such power, he set a little way off a cup or basin full of water, and commanded the demon, as he went out of the man, to overturn it, and thereby to let the spectators know that he had left the man; and when this was done, the skill and wisdom of Solomon was shown very manifestly.'*<sup>13</sup>

So we have quite a confusion of belief in the Old Testament and several divergent views of demonology behind the Old Testament. The primary thought expressed by the Old Testament itself is that demons come from and are controlled by God. They are seen to serve His purpose, yet are also said to cause great problems to humans including drawing them away into idolatry's most extreme bondage of human sacrifice.

Old Testament Jews so heavily recognized the harm these

<sup>13</sup>Edward Langton, ESSENTIALS OF DEMONOLOGY (London: The Epworth Press, 1949) pp. 23-24 and 31-32.



spirits did that they ignored their own inappropriate idea that the demons were serving God. They tried to ward them off and defend themselves against them, rather than submit to them as of God.

There is little here to help us in our quest for understanding and treatment of demons. The only real help that we can hope for in developing a biblical demonology must come from the New Testament. Once an understanding is gained from the New Testament, then we will have formed a perspective through which the Old Testament may be viewed.



## NEW TESTAMENT

For our New Testament study we will examine, individually, all the major passages concerned with demons. With each passage we must ask the scripture to show us everything it can about demons. How do they act, what powers do they have? How do the demonized behave? How does the one ministering handle the situation? What does the language used teach us?

While a few of the New Testament passages have as their intent education about demons, the majority of these passages were presented for other express purposes. This means that we must be extremely careful not to try to force the material. We must accept its context and take its main purpose under consideration.

We must also be alert to the distinctions between Jesus' understanding and the beliefs of the Jews.

We will try to be faithful in dealing with each of these areas.

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Matt. 4:23-24

*And He went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease*

*and every infirmity among the people. 24) So His fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought Him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, and paralytics, and He healed them.*

It is interesting to note here that the word *ETHERAPENSEN* is used to denote Jesus' ministry to the demoniacs. While this word primarily signifies "to serve," Matthew and Luke use it widely to mean to treat, cure, or heal the sick.<sup>14</sup>

The word usage of the Greek scripture makes no distinction here in the treatment of the sick and the treatment of demoniacs. Many deliverance teachers emphasize the belief that there are sharp differences in approaches to ministering in healing and deliverance situations which must be observed to effect a cure. Their desire is to make deliverance a distinct ministry with unique skill and knowledge giving special place to those who have what they call a "deliverance ministry." As indicated by the preceding Greek, this simply is not the case. More biblical evidence on this point will be evident as we proceed.

\* \* \*

Matt. 8:16-17

*That evening they brought to Him many who were possessed with demons; and He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick. 17) This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah, "He took our infirmities and bore our diseases."*

The word "*DAIMONIZOMENOUS*" in the Matt. 4:23-24 passage is translated demoniacs while the R.S.V. translates the same word here "possessed with demons." The first translation is more accurate. The variation seems to be offered solely for the sake of variety. We prefer to say: "They brought to Him many who were demonized."

Next we see that Jesus "cast out the spirits with a word." This indicates that it was a simple procedure which required little time, energy, or attention. One word appears to have accomplished the act. There is no struggle implied.

Verse 17 refers us back to Isa. 53:3-5 where the Hebrew

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<sup>14</sup>Kittel, *DICTIONARY OF THE N.T.*, Vol. III, pp. 128-131.

“MACOB” means “sickness” and “CHOLI” means “pains or infirmities.” The Greek in this passage uses ASTHENEIAS for “weakness or infirmity,” and NOSOUS which usually means “disease.”

The quotation of the Isa. 53 passages implies that these acts of healing and deliverance are associated with the effect of the atonement. The argument for healing being part of the atonement is another entire study in itself. We hold with Matthew Henry that Jesus did bear away our sickness in the atonement.<sup>15</sup> We also hold that this passage clearly intends to show that the effects of the atonement include victory over demons. Through Christ's victory we are set free. There are no pagan practices or superstitious protective measures in the Old Testament or in the pagan culture which afford protection or effect a lasting cure. It is only in Jesus that we have mastery in this area. That this supremacy is won for us by the victory on the cross is not functionally significant. However, it is theologically consistent with the scriptural view of healing. If nothing else, the close relationship of the two, and the free exchange of healing and deliverance vocabulary support this view. Our only power over demons comes through the authority of the name of Jesus and our right to use that name comes through faith in His atonement.

It should also be noted that as He healed “all” who were sick who came to Him, so He set all free from demons who were brought to him. We have no biblical record of a failed deliverance or of anyone refused. Jesus never suggests that a demon has come from God or that it is God's will for anyone to stay in demonic bondage. There was no limitation to Jesus' power in deliverance. There was, however, a limitation in the ability of the disciples which we will examine later.

\* \* \*

Mark 5:1-20

*They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gerasenes. 2) And when He had come out of the boat, there met Him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, 3) Who*

*lived among the tombs; and no one could bind him any more, even with a chain; 4) for he had often been bound with fetters and chains, but the chains he wrenched apart, and the fetters he broke in pieces; and no one had the strength to subdue him. 5) Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always crying out, and bruising himself with stones. 6) And when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and worshipped Him; 7) and crying out with a loud voice, he said, “What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me.” 8) For He had said to him, “Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!” 9) And Jesus asked him, “What is your name?” He replied, “My name is Legion, for we are many.” 10) And he begged Him eagerly not to send them out of the country. 11) Now a great herd of swine was feeding there on the hillside; 12) and they begged Him, “Send us to the swine, let us enter them.” 13) So He gave them leave. And the unclean spirits came out, and entered the swine; and the herd, numbering about two thousand, rushed down the steep bank into the sea, and were drowned in the sea. 14) The herdsmen fled, and told it in the city and in the country. And people came to Jesus, and saw the demoniac sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, the man who had had the legion; and they were afraid. 16) And those who had seen it told what had happened to the demoniac and to the swine. 17) And they began to beg Jesus to depart from their neighborhood. 18) And as He was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed with demons begged Him that he might be with Him. 19) But He refused, and said to him, “Go home to your friends, and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how He has had mercy on you.” 20) And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him; and all men marveled. (See also Matt. 8:28-34 and Luke 8:26-39.)*

The man who is said to have an unclean spirit was an outcast of society. If the setting were current, he would be confined as criminally insane. He was tormented and he was a tormentor. He burst chains and snapped fetters, his strength being supernatural. Loud crying and self-torment was also part of his affliction. This could possibly indicate suicidal tendencies.

Seeing Jesus, he ran to Him and the demons identified Jesus

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<sup>15</sup>Henry, COMMENTARY, Vol. V, p. 107.

as being the Son of the Most High God.<sup>16</sup> The demoniac himself would not have known who Jesus was. It is common for demoniacs to show supernatural knowledge of Jesus' identity, because the demons know Him, bow before Him, and fear Him.<sup>17</sup>

In verse eight, Jesus addresses the spirit as singular: "Come out of the man, you UNCLEAN SPIRIT!" This points up several things. First, Jesus believed that the spirit was inside the man. It was not over, under, on, or around him. It was inside. That is why He said "Come out." This was not affliction from without, but a demon resident within.

Secondly, He called it an unclean spirit. This probably does not indicate a proper name so much as a generic term of description. Unclean, "AKATHARTON" is defined by Bauer as unclean, impure, vicious with predominance on the moral sense. Impurities of vice were also indicated.<sup>18</sup> Hence, some believe, the possibility that demons can force men to sin.

Thirdly, Jesus recognized this unclean spirit as a personality. He spoke to that personality and not to the man. It was not the man he was being confronted by, but the personage of the unclean spirit. He didn't instruct the man at all prior to the actual deliverance. All communication was with the demon.

Finally, this verse shows how He took authority over the demon. By His word, on His own authority He directed the demon to leave.

It should be noted that Jesus did not first engage in conversation. The demon spoke first. The most probable explanation for Jesus' conversation with the demon was to demonstrate to the onlookers the greatness of His power.<sup>19</sup> Verse 9 shows

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<sup>16</sup>The demons recognized Jesus as "the holy one of God" Mark 1:24, "The Son of God" Mark 3:11 and "The Son of the Most High God" Mark 5:7, etc. People coming just for healing recognized Him as Rabbi, Lord, Son of David, and Master.

<sup>17</sup>Phil. 2:9-11; James 2:19.

<sup>18</sup>Bauer, LEXICON, p. 28.

<sup>19</sup>This would have been quite a witness to Jesus' power. The demon identifies himself as "Legion, for we are many" and then 2000 pigs rush headlong into the lake. All this by Jesus' word alone.

that no information given by the demon was central to the exorcism itself. Jesus did not seek to gain information which could be used against the spirit. As already noted, Satan is the father of lies and his demons cannot be trusted to tell the truth.

The demon which Jesus addressed as singular, is now referred to in the narrative in the plural as "unclean spirits," (verse 13). Jesus did not address them individually, or even by the name given by the demon. He did not seek other names or time of entry or cause for the man's openness to receive the demon.<sup>20</sup> All the spirits left together instantly. If the number of swine destroyed is indicative of the number of demons, about two thousand spirits left under the one directive of Jesus. The name "Legion" may refer to the Roman name for a body of soldiers numbering when full, 6000 men.<sup>21</sup>

Note that the demons entered the swine. Apparently demons desire to be "in" a body, human or animal. This is also intimated by Matt. 12:43-45. As disembodied spirits they desire a host. It is not clear why Jesus permitted the demons to destroy the swine. Possibly, the symbolism of the swine representing sin is enough reason in itself.

The ultimate effect on the demons in this case is not clear either. We have no real indication that they were destroyed with the swine. It might be suggested that they dwell in water, as was believed by the rabbis, and simply used the swine as a vehicle to get there. Matt. 12:43-45 could lend credence to this, though it is nowhere clearly stated in scripture. The fact that the demons requested not to be sent out of the country indicates that they did not expect to be destroyed, vs. 10.

The demoniac, delivered by a simple word from the Lord within an instant, now was seen to be in his right mind. He clothed

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<sup>20</sup>In current demon cult deliverance services, it is thought that each demon must be identified by name, addressed by name, and cast out individually. The scripture directly opposes that practice. In fact, as we will see throughout, there is absolutely no biblical support for this at all. The name of the demon is unimportant and they do not need to be addressed individually.

<sup>21</sup>Rev. Ezra P. Gould, THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO S. MARK of the INTERNATIONAL CRITICAL COMMENTARY ed. by Rev. Archibald Robertson and Rev. Alfred Plummer (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1907), p. 90.

himself immediately (vs. 15), indicating proper normal behavior. No battle, no argument, no investigation of former sin life, no psychoanalysis, no lengthy confrontation.<sup>22</sup> Jesus simply commanded the demon(s) to come out.

One other description of the demonic activity here is seen in the parallel scripture, Luke 8:26-39. In Luke 8:29 we are told that the demonic influence came and went. There were probably periods when the demoniac was at peace and possibly even appeared normal, until the demon chose to seize him from within. One who is demonized is not necessarily always in torment or always manifesting. He may spend extended periods in normalcy.

The Old Testament view was that the demon came and went on the outside. The New Testament view is that it stayed within and curtailed its activity from time to time.

\* \* \*

Matt. 10:1

*And He called to Him twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every infirmity. (See also Mark 6:7-13, Luke 9:1-6).*

From this passage we can show that Jesus passed His authority (EXOUSIAN) on to the disciples. That is ruling power, official power or authority.<sup>23</sup> This authority was not inherent in the disciples. Nor can it be stated that this power came from the Baptism of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4,8), as that had not yet fallen.<sup>24</sup> It was the authority of His name, the authority of God. It is still the authority of the name of Jesus that works. Jesus, the Name which is above every name.

Authority has some very interesting qualities which affect its performance. It is bestowed by one who already has it, it is received by one who must use it in order to make it accomplish

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<sup>22</sup>Current cult deliverance also spends much time luridly examining the individual's previous and present sin life. There may be some dark enjoyment in this for the 'deliverance minister,' but there is no precedent for it in Jesus' ministry, and no need for it with real deliverance.

<sup>23</sup>Bauer, LEXICON, p. 278.

<sup>24</sup>John 14:17 - at that time, the Spirit was around them, but not yet in them.

anything, and finally it must be recognized by the one who it is being exercised over.

The only one who has authority inherently is God. God gives us the right to that authority with permission to use the name of Jesus as a municipality gives its police officers authority signified by a badge. This is made available to us when we render our lives in submission to Jesus as a police officer receives his authority as he submits himself to his superiors.

Once this authority is made available to us, we must use it in order to make it efficacious. A police officer must exercise his authority on the street. Authority that is not exercised is useless, except in its potential.

There is one important thing which must also line up with the preceding in order to get results. Authority must be recognized and submitted to by the one over whom it is being exercised. This may seem to be of little concern, but a fellow who has no respect for the law will not heed a command to "stop in the name of the law." Also, a person will not submit to authority if he believes the one exercising that authority to be a counterfeit, as in "impersonating an officer."

Spiritually, this last problem can be seen in Acts 19:15-16. The demons did not recognize the right of the Jews to claim the authority of Jesus' name. Not only did they not submit to Jesus' name, but they attacked the exorcists.

So, authority is bestowed by God upon believers. The believers must exercise the authority. And the demons must recognize the believer's right to use that authority.

The passage at hand shows the authority being given to the disciples but it is now passed on to ALL who believe: "*And these signs shall accompany those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons*" (Mark 16:17). This passage also reinforces our belief in the authority of the name of Jesus. Every creature must submit to the "name of Jesus" (Phil. 2:10).

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*The seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name!" 18) And He said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. 19) Behold, I have given you authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall hurt you. 20) Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you; but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."*

Here we see that the authority was not only given, it was effective.<sup>25</sup> We are to have no fear of these beings or any of the power of the enemy. The name of Jesus itself is total protection for anyone who has a right to use it. To fear these things gives demons more recognition than they deserve and elevates them to a position of authority. It also leaves us open to what they would do to us.

To continue our previous discussion, if we attribute to the demons the authority to afflict us, we make ourselves vulnerable. If we believe that God has given to them the authority and power to demonize us, then we will submit to their authority.

We must recognize their place and let them know that we are in authority over them.

At the same time, we are not to rejoice over our authority over the enemy. Even this extraordinary power must not draw attention from the central theme of Jesus' ministry; that being eternal life! The tendency today is for the joy of authority or the fear of the demons to become the central factor in the Christian's life. Many in the deliverance ministry, especially women, seem to thrive on this sense of power and authority.

We must not become prideful to the point of elevating ourselves above others as Satan himself did. We must never crave this power or use it to build our own ego.

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<sup>25</sup>The concept of "authority" rather than "power" is reinforced by the statement that the demons were "subject" to the disciples.

The fact that Satan is defeated by our Lord is secondary to the message of the eternal life that is gained through Him. Salvation is all that is important.

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Matt. 12:22-32

*Then a blind and dumb demoniac was brought to Him, and He healed him, so that the dumb man spoke and saw. 23) And all the people were amazed, and said, "Can this be the Son of David?" 24) But when the Pharisees heard it they said, "It is only by Beelzebul, the prince of demons, that this man casts out demons." 25) Knowing their thoughts, He said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and no city or house divided against itself will stand, 26) and if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then will his kingdom stand? 27) And if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges. 28) But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. 29) Or how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? Then indeed he may plunder his house. 30) He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me scatters. 31) Therefore I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. 32) And whoever says a word against the Son of man will be forgiven; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come. (See also Mark 3:20-30 and Luke 11:14-23).*

(Verse 22) This man was both blind and dumb because of demon activity. It is possible, being dumb, that he was also deaf, though this is not stated. Jesus healed or treated him and he was set free so that he both spoke and saw. The primary purpose for inclusion of this passage is to introduce the discussion which followed this deliverance.

The Pharisees accused Jesus of using power from "Beelzebul

the prince of demons." Jesus quickly substitutes the name of Satan, "since for him the kingdom of demons stands under the one Satan."<sup>26</sup> Satan was primarily known at the time as an accuser, so Jesus was doing some re-education. He was almost introducing a new character to them.<sup>27</sup> To them, Beelzebul was the power and authority behind demon activity.

The origin of "Beelzebul" is not clear. It either comes from "Beelzebub" which is the name of the god of Ekron who was the lord of filth, or from a separate meaning as "the one who dwells in the possessed." It may be from a clouded merger of these two ideas.<sup>28</sup>

In addition to informing the Pharisees that Satan, rather than Beelzebul, is over the demons, he also raises the question of the exorcisms performed by the priests' own sons. We will deal with this question in depth under Acts 19:13-16.

In verse 28, Jesus uses the power to deliver the demonized as evidence of the presence of the kingdom of God or God's authority. No such clear authority had ever been seen. It is no wonder that they attributed His power to a prince of evil. None of their contemporary priests had this power.

Next, the question of the identity of the "strong man" in verse 29 is the key to understanding this verse. There are several opinions as to the identity of the strong man. Clarke and Henry agree with most other commentators that the strong man is Satan bound by Jesus. This would render the meaning that Jesus has freedom to go in and clean out Satan's demons. This is probably the best interpretation, as it is theologically consistent, and consistent with the context of the passage. Jesus

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<sup>26</sup>Kittel, DICTIONARY OF N.T., Vol. I p. 605.

<sup>27</sup>This, as was afore stated, is one of the major arguments against the accommodation theory. Jesus' statements were contrary to the theology of the day, proving a lack of desire on His part to accommodate their mistaken beliefs.

<sup>28</sup>Kittel, DICTIONARY OF N.T., Vol. I, p. 606. footnote no. 4.

has already bound Satan and is indeed free to expel his subordinate spirits.

A second view arises from the word usage. "Strongman" elsewhere refers mainly to God's people. (1 Sam. 14:52; 2 Ki. 2:16; Ps. 19:5; Ps. 78:65; Prov. 24:5). These are the only scriptural uses of the word except in Isa. 22:17 where it refers to an "evil man." Five times it refers to God's people, and only once to an evil man. If we say the strong man is God's servant, it follows then that Satan must first bind us before he can demonize us. The binding probably comes through our willing acceptance of sin in our lives, or through participating in satanic things. This view would be consistent with the context of the Bible as a whole, but somewhat at odds with this particular scripture.

Still a third view from modern cultish demonology says the strong man is a ruler spirit which must first be dealt with before lessor spirits are cast out.<sup>29</sup> Some even take this strong man theory further to say that Satan has ruler demons, or strong man demons over nations, cities, churches and homes, as well as individuals. We will examine this in a later section.

That the strong man here refers to Satan alone, seems most evident from the context. To create ruler demons from this passage is the worst sort of isogesis. It also creates a non-biblical pattern for deliverance. Yet for some unknown reason, the ruler demon teaching is widely held by otherwise well-informed Christians.

We will not deal with the question of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit here, as it would require in-depth study not central to this subject.

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<sup>29</sup>In many deliverance services much time is spent in identifying the ruler demon so that access may supposedly be gained to the lessor spirits. We will examine this further in a later chapter.

*"When the unclean spirit has gone out of a man, he passes through waterless places seeking rest, but he finds none. 44) Then he says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' And when he comes he finds it empty, swept, and put in order. 45) Then he goes and brings with him seven other spirits more evil than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first. So shall it be also with this evil generation."* (See also Luke 11:24-26).

In the parallel passage in Luke, verses 24-26 are in the context of the passage we just examined. Jesus is speaking to the Pharisees and giving answers to their accusations.

In a broad sense, Matthew also includes this in Jesus' answer to the Pharisees. In the specific context here, Jesus is describing the end state of that generation by using a descriptive example from demonology.<sup>30</sup> Since the entire discourse takes place following a deliverance which was used to bring accusation against Jesus, it seems only natural that Jesus would use an example from demonology to speak to the Pharisees.

Whatever the context, it is safe to assume that Jesus believed the material of His statement to be truth. If Jesus found it valid, then we may try to glean something from it for our study.

The immediate question arises as to the significance and meaning of "waterless places." Clarke refers to Orphic demonology which stated that different classes of demons delighted in different abodes. There were said to be celestrial demons, aerial demons, aquatic demons, and terrestrial demons.<sup>31</sup> The rabbis, in like manner, believed that demons inhabited standing water. Also, we remember the demons which entered the swine in Mark 5:1-20 rushed headlong into the water.

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<sup>30</sup>Jesus was not attempting to teach a lesson on demonology here. He was trying to teach the Pharisees about their dangerous spiritual condition.

<sup>31</sup>Clarke, COMMENTARY, Vol. V, p. 141.

As to the breakdown of desired habitation in the Orphic scene, the Bible does not comment. But it does appear that when the demons' purpose to inhabit people is thwarted they will inhabit animals or revert to the comfort of water.<sup>32</sup> This could unfortunately lead to great superstition as it did in the first century. Care was taken in the drinking of standing water for fear of drinking a demon. As earlier stated, silly incitations were spoken to protect the drinker.

We must note that there is no indication at all that demons enter a person through water! There is, however, some evidence that demons are breathed in through the air. This idea comes from the fact that in the Greek the word "PNEUMA" is correctly translated as spirit, breath, or wind. God is also said to breathe the spirit of life into us.<sup>33</sup>

This information was never intended to be extended into practical application. Yet, even as the Jews started fearful superstitions about drinking water, current superstitions call attention to spirits coming and going during coughing, yawns and sneezes, and even more ridiculous superstitions warn of keeping your mouth closed while passing cemeteries.

Cultish Christian deliverance requires people to cough, spit or yawn out demons. We must note as we go through the scripture, that none of these phenomenon or responses are ever noted! True deliverance does not require such superstitious actions. Even to project such behaviour into the biblical scene is ludicrous! Imagine Jesus instructing the demonized to cough or yawn for freedom! Imagine Him passing out brown paper bags or paper towels and instructing the bound to spit up!

This pure superstition has no place in Christian deliverance. Neither is there place for fear of drinking in or breathing in a demon by accident. We must also remember that we who are

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<sup>32</sup>Mark 5:1-20.

<sup>33</sup>Gen. 2:7.

Christians are in total authority over these spirits.<sup>34</sup>

The passage continues that finding no place to lodge and no water for rest, the demon then decides to re-enter the one who he previously inhabited. We can assume that it is also his goal to do that since the original intent was for the destruction of the individual or to use him for some satanic purpose.<sup>35</sup> That task thwarted once, we assume the demon would desire to try again.

"Finding it empty, swept and in order," indicates that when the demon is gone, the former demoniac is able to put his life in order. This is evidenced in Mark 5:15. One can assume, if the metaphor is continued, that if a new resident had entered in, there would be no room for the demons to return. That is why many appropriately state that following a deliverance, the individual should be filled with the Spirit of the Lord to protect against rehabilitation.

Some assume this is accomplished by the act of accepting Jesus as Lord and Savior and receiving the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.<sup>36</sup> Others say this is done by actively living a godly life. Both are scriptural and correct. It would seem obvious though that returning to a life of sin or willingly entertaining the things of the Enemy would be a welcome mat for the demons to return.

If the one delivered does not receive the Lord's Spirit and pursue a godly life, the demon will find the house clean but empty. He will then invite seven others even worse than himself. We assume that the number seven is figurative. The indication is that the individual will be more demonized than he was before. The last state will be worse than the first. His only hope will be in another deliverance. Thankfully, there is no indication that anyone is ever too demonized to be set free, and all demons must submit to the name of Jesus. However, one's

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<sup>34</sup>Luke 10:19.

<sup>35</sup>John 10:10, 1 Pet. 5:8.

<sup>36</sup>Acts 1:4.

desire to be free will certainly be diminished by continued excursions into sin.

There is also indication here that some demons are more wicked than others. There is no way to scripturally delineate this though, and we would violate our desire to avoid vain imaginations if we were to pursue such a ranking. Also this knowledge could wrongly cause us to "fear" one demon more than others.

Because this material was not presented for the purpose of teaching us about demons, we should be cautious not to base any great doctrine on this passage. Far too many doctrines are derived from extraneous verses. This is a major fault of cultists.

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Matt. 15:21-28

*And Jesus went away from there and withdrew to the district of Tyre and Sidon. 22) And behold, a Canaanite woman from that region came out and cried, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David; my daughter is severely possessed by a demon." 23) But He did not answer her a word. And His disciples came and begged Him, saying, "Send her away, for she is crying after us." 24) He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." 25) But she came and knelt before Him, saying, "Lord, help me." 26) And He answered, "It is not fair to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs." 27) She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table." 28) Then Jesus answered her, "O woman, great is your faith! Be it done for you as you desire." And her daughter was healed instantly. (See also Mark 7:24-30)*

There are several noteworthy elements here. This time it is not the demoniac that Jesus deals with, it is the mother of the demoniac. This is not deliverance by proxy as some suggest, using a relative or friend as a point of contact. Jesus again simply speaks The Word. No hands laid on, no oil applied, no prayer prayed, He simply speaks The Word.



This was not even a Jew. The woman was a Canaanite. No creed or nationality stops those who recognize the power of Jesus Christ from being set free! Faith seems to be the key. The problem is that it seems to be the mother's faith at work here. In Mark 9:23 a father's faith is noted. In purely healing situations, a parent's faith is also noted. Apparently, a parent's faith and intercession can bring deliverance.

It is easy for us to accept the idea that our own healing or deliverance is dependent upon our own faith. It is hard to understand the relationship of someone else's faith to our situation, or our faith to someone else's condition. Yet, a parents' faith seems to be the key in several situations. Jesus says to this woman, "Great is YOUR faith." The daughter is not even present. In the Mark 9 passage the boy was clearly unable to have any faith at all. The father's faith is the key.

It would be convenient if we could restrict this second person faith theology to a parent's faith. However, in Matt. 8:10 the centurion's servant is healed because of the centurion's faith. Still, this could be said to be similar because it is a direct line of authority. Without theologizing or doctrinizing, we might speculate that where a direct line of authority or responsibility exists, the faith of the superior, parent or owner can stand in the place of the individual in need.

Whether this can be extended to friends or brothers or sisters in the faith is open to speculation.

Another controversial area touched upon by this passage is deliverance at a distance. We have no clear record of the disciples attempting this, but Jesus clearly expels demons with a word at a distance. It is always when asked, and where the faith of a parent or a superior is present. This area of deliverance has not met with much success experientially. While some seem to fail with the demonized present, most fail at a distance. This would clearly have to do with a lack of faith on the part of the exorcist.

The word which describes the girl's deliverance is (IATHE)

"was healed" or restored. The normal meaning of this word is "healed." In Mark 7:29 Jesus says "the demon has left your daughter," thus confirming that she was truly demonized.

According to the English this was done instantly. According to the Greek, it was done APO TO OROS EKEINES, "from that hour." This could indicate that her recovery began then and took some time; but, most probably, it means that her state of restoration began precisely at that time.<sup>37</sup>

The use of the word "healed" says two things. First, the affliction was evidently a physical ailment. Second, it reinforces the close relationship between deliverance and healing, and points out a lack of distinct technique in healing with the two.

Again we must substitute "demonized" for "demon possessed" in verse 22.

\* \* \*

Mark 9:14-29

*And when they came to the disciples, they saw a great crowd about them, and scribes arguing with them. 15) And immediately all the crowd, when they saw Him, were greatly amazed, and ran up to Him and greeted Him. 16) And He asked them, "What are you discussing with them?" 17) And one of the crowd answered Him, "Teacher, I brought my son to You, for he has a dumb spirit; 18) and wherever it seizes him, it dashes him down; and he foams and grinds his teeth and becomes rigid; and I asked Your disciples to cast it out, and they were not able." 19) And He answered them, "O faithless generation, how long am I to bear with you? Bring him to me." 20) And they brought the boy to Him, and when the spirit saw Him, immediately it convulsed the boy, and he fell on the ground and rolled about, foaming at the*

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<sup>37</sup>The authors of the New Testament were not concerned about precise time measurements. It would also have been impossible to directly coordinate the time the words were spoken with the time the girl was healed. There were no clocks, no second hands, or even minute hands. Time was relative. Our interest is knowing whether both things happened in the same instant would have no meaning to the authors.

mouth. 21) And Jesus asked his father, "How long has he had this?" And he said, "From childhood. 22) And it has often cast him into the fire and into the water, to destroy him; but if you can do anything, have pity on us and help us." 23) And Jesus said to him, "If you can! All things are possible to him who believes." 24) Immediately the father of the child cried out and said, "I believe; help my unbelief!" 25) And when Jesus saw that a crowd came running together, He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "You dumb and deaf spirit, I command you, come out of him, and never enter him again." 26) And after crying out and convulsing him terribly, it came out, and the boy was like a corpse; so that most of them said, "He is dead." 27) But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose. 28) And when He had entered the house, His disciples asked Him privately, "Why could we not cast it out? 29) And He said to them, "This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer." (See also Matt. 17:14-21 and Luke 9:37-43).

The first thing we notice here is the activity of the demon and the multiplicity of descriptive names given to it. In Matthew the boy is described as an epileptic (Matt. 17:15). In Luke 9:42 it is called an "unclean spirit," while Mark 9:17 attributes it to a "dumb spirit." Jesus later addresses it as a "dumb and deaf spirit" (Mark 9:25). The description of the manifestation of this spirit in verse 18 is that of grand-mal epilepsy. We are told in verse 22 that the demon has tried to kill the boy through casting him in fire or in water indicating self-destruction or suicide (John 10:10).

Logic demands the argument that while some demoniacs may be epileptic, not all epileptics are demoniacs. There are many causes for epilepsy, most of which are not demon related. The other caution here is that the spirit is nowhere referred to as a spirit of epilepsy. We may assume that since this spirit is called a deaf and dumb spirit, the boy was deaf and dumb and secondarily displayed symptoms of epilepsy. The scripture says the spirit saw Jesus, verse 10. Spirits are attributed with the abilities of sight, hearing, and even independent speech.

The father's faith played a significant role. The disciples' faith, or lack of it, also played a role. Jesus rebukes them for their lack of faith and says that "this kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer." Matt. 17:21, the King James version, says "prayer and fasting." What Jesus was saying here is not that a specific time of prayer and fasting will drive out the demon, but that prayer and fasting are necessary to build a strong faith.

While some assert here that this demon was more powerful than other demons and required greater faith, Gould does not think so. He asserts that the wording "TOUTO TO GENOS" refers to this kind of thing, i.e. the genus evil spirits, not this kind of spirit as if this was a specially vicious kind of spirit that it took a good deal to exorcise."<sup>38</sup>

Faith is the key; faith of the parent, faith of the exorcist, or faith of the demoniac. Faith is essential. The boy's father says to Jesus, "If you can do anything have pity . . ." (verse 22). Jesus answers: "If YOU can, all things are possible to those who believe." (verse 22) Faith is the key. If we believe Satan has control, he does. If we believe demons won't come out, they won't. If we believe that in the name of Jesus we are set free, we are!

Verse 19 indicates a concern on Jesus' part that the disciples will be unprepared in faith to handle these situations when He has gone back to heaven. He doesn't seem to take into account that these men are yet to be filled with the Holy Spirit. This would suggest that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is not a factor in the faith needed to exercise authority over demons.

Jesus indicates by His words in verse 25 that it is possible for demons to return after one is set free.<sup>39</sup> He also shows us that He is able to stop this from happening by command. However, this is not a ritual or a formula. He does not use this phrase anywhere else.

<sup>38</sup>Gould, S. MARK I.C.C., p. 171.

<sup>39</sup>See also Matt. 12:43-45.

The Greek narrative in verse 26 (KRAZAS KAI POLLA SPARAZAS) is in the masculine gender. This shows that the spirit was thought of as a person or personality rather than a neuter force.

Next, the question of manifestation during deliverance is also raised. While many demons came out quietly without a fuss, many also come out with a notable departure, leaving the boy so drained and still that some thought he was dead. Some demons actually seem to get one last spiteful act in before giving up and leaving.

This description could well be that of a grand mal epilepsy seizure. Following this final demonic manifestation, Jesus raises the boy to life and restoration.

Here we have clear evidence that specific demon names are of little consequence and there is no formula used to accomplish the exorcism. Names for the demon are freely interchanged. The multiplicity of manifestations is not attributed to a multiplicity of spirits nor are multiple spirits addressed. Faith and Jesus' authority are the key. Nothing else seems to be significant.

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Luke 4:31-37

*And He went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee. And He was teaching them on the sabbath; 32) and they were astonished at His teaching, for His word was with authority. 33) And in the synagogue there was a man who had the spirit of an unclean demon; and he cried out with a loud voice, 34) "Ah! What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God." 35) But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!" And when the demon had thrown him down in the midst, he came out of him, having done him no harm. 36) And they were all amazed and said to one another, "What is this word? For with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits, and they come out." 37) And reports of Him went out into every place in the surround-*

*ing region. (See also Mark 1:21-28)*

This demon appeared in the synagogue on the sabbath. They are no respecter of persons, times or places.

Here too the demon confesses knowledge of Jesus' identity. Demons have a clear understanding of heavenly things and appear even to be aware of the reality of the trinity (Jas. 2:19). The particular word used here for the demon's knowledge is (OIDA). This indicates a supernatural or instinctual knowledge rather than circumstantial knowledge from information supplied.<sup>40</sup>

I have heard some people "trying" a spirit by asking it if Jesus is Lord. They believe that this is directed by 1 Cor. 12:3:

*Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking by the Spirit of God ever says "Jesus be cursed!" and no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except by the Holy Spirit.*

This scripture most certainly refers to people, since spirits have this knowledge and can and do confess Jesus openly. The other scripture erroneously used this way is 1 John 4:1-3:

*Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are of God; for many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit which confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit which does not confess Jesus is not of God. This is the spirit of antichrist, of which you heard that it was coming, and now it is in the world already.*

If this is speaking about demons then it contradicts the gospel record. This is impossible. We must understand this to refer to prophets. Clarke says that the term spirit here is used to refer to anyone who pretended to be or speak under the spirit's influence.<sup>41</sup> This must not be used as a test to try demons.

<sup>40</sup>Rev. Alfred Plummer, THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO S. LUKE, of the INTERNATIONAL CRITICAL COMMENTARY (ed. by the author and Rev. Archibald Robertson), (5th ed. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1922), p. 134.

<sup>41</sup>Clarke, COMMENTARY, Vol. VI, p. 918.

Next we note that Jesus used no name or title in addressing this demon. He told him to "be silent and come out of him."

Telling him to be silent indicates that we do not have to put up with talkative spirits seeking to put on a show. Letting them ramble on only exposes us to the danger of receiving one of their lies.

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Luke 9:49-50

*John answered, "Master, we saw a man casting out demons in Your name, and we forbade him, because he does not follow with us." 50) But Jesus said to him, "Do not forbid him; for he that is not against you is for you." (See also Mark 9:38-40)*

These two verses open up a whole new line of questioning. How could someone other than a follower of Jesus cast out demons? We must assume that even though this man was not in the company of the disciples, he was a true believer. He used Jesus' name, which meant that he recognized the power of that name. Apparently the demons recognized his right to use that name because they responded by being cast out.

They seem to have the ability to know who has real faith in that name as evidenced by Acts 19:13-16:

*Then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists undertook to pronounce the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, "I adjure you by the Jesus whom Paul preaches." 14) Seven sons of a Jewish high priest named Sceva were doing this. 15) But the evil spirit answered them, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?" 16) And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, mastered all of them, and overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.*

Many such exorcists operated in that day (Matt. 12:27). Seeing the power of the name of Jesus, these exorcists decided to

try it since it most certainly worked better than their incantations. The demons recognized Jesus and Paul but knew that the exorcists had no authority to use Jesus' name. They manifested supernatural strength and overcame the exorcists.

Where the exorcists did succeed with their own methods, the results were not lasting. Where Jesus ministered or His name was used by believers, the cure was permanent.<sup>42</sup>

Since we examined Acts 19, we would be amiss if we neglected to deal with the two verses prior to this exorcist segment.

*Acts 19:11-12 - And God did extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul, so that handkerchiefs or aprons were carried away from his body to the sick, and diseases left them and the evil spirits came out of them.*

As we remarked in a previous section, the faith here is not in Paul or in the handkerchiefs, the faith is in Jesus. This is the same faith which was seen in the woman touching Christ's garment (Mark 5:24). The power is not in the handkerchiefs but in Jesus. Unless that faith is active, the artifacts would be useless. It is not magic or medicine, it is faith.

\* \* \*

Luke 13:10-13

*Now He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath. 11) And there was a woman who had had a spirit of infirmity for eighteen years; she was bent over and could not fully straighten herself. 12) And when Jesus saw her, He called her and said to her, "Woman, you are freed from your infirmity." 13) And He laid His hands upon her, and immediately she was made straight, and she praised God.*

While the context here is a discussion about healing on the sabbath, there are several details significant to our study. The spirit is called a "spirit of infirmity." The woman's physical

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<sup>42</sup>Michael Green, EVANGELISM IN THE EARLY CHURCH (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1970), pp. 190-191.

ailment is not clear, though it appears to have affected her posture. Jesus does not even speak to the demon. He announces her freedom and lays hands on her. Though many current teachers warn against laying hands on demonized people, supposedly for fear of a transfer of demons, Jesus didn't seem to feel any concern about that. Since He is our example, we shouldn't feel any concern about it either.

Again the similarity of healing and deliverance is shown as the woman is simply freed from her physical infirmity. These two things are not clearly distinct.

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### The Gospel of John

The fact that we are not examining any deliverance scriptures from the gospel of John may raise a question in itself. The reason will become evident with even the briefest study.

Nowhere are "evil spirits" mentioned or named in John. There are no recorded deliverances or exorcisms. The only mention of the word "demon" is found in the context of the Jews accusing Jesus of having a demon because of His actions and His teaching. These instances are found in John 7:20, 8:48-49, 8:52, and 10:20-21. The subject is not demons themselves.

The question of why John avoids demon experiences may be helpful to us. John is said to be the theological gospel. While the synoptics deal with history, John's purpose appears to be directed at presenting the truths which Jesus taught in a theological approach.

If this basic evaluation is true, then we can possibly see a point being made. That point is not to say that there are no demons. John is addressing another issue. As Jesus re-educated the Jews, drawing attention away from Beelzebul toward Satan, John does the same thing.

So much attention was being directed toward individual demons and the incalculable number, that there was a need to

change the focus of the faithful. It is not individual demons with which we truly battle. It is the agency of Satan. It is not a multiplicity of skirmishes which we fight but a unified battle against the agency of Satan.

This shift in emphasis will be further spoken to when we examine the sixth chapter of Ephesians. Let us here examine John's handling of that shift in emphasis.

Things which elsewhere are attributed to demons, John attributes to Satan directly.

John 10:10 *"the thief comes to steal, to kill and to destroy"*

John 6:70 *"one of you is a devil"*

John 8:44 *"you are of your father the devil"*

*"he is a liar and the father of lies"*

John 13:2 *"the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas"*

John 13:27 *"Satan entered Judas"*

John 17:15 *Jesus prayer to keep us from the evil one*

Nowhere is Satan attributed with omniscience or omnipresence. He must work through a vast number of subservient beings. So John 13:27 offers us two possibilities. Either Satan himself entered Judas for this most evil act of all eternity or a demon who served Satan entered Judas.

Satan is an angel. Angels take on the form of humans but are nowhere else ever said to have the ability to enter into a human. This seems contrary to all other evidence and contrary to the understanding of the nature of angels.

In all likelihood, John is saying that a demon entered Judas under direct order of Satan. He attributes this to Satan to draw attention away from a demon and to the source of the evil.

The goal is that we might not order our lives and our ministry in view of the demons around us, but instead recognize and deal with our real enemy, Satan. This should be a key to us in protecting ourselves. Simply ordering our lives toward Jesus and against Satan gives us our best protecting against demons as opposed to understanding each demon and protecting ourselves against this individual agency.

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#### Acts 16:16-18

*As we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain by soothsaying. 17) She followed Paul and us, crying, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation." 18) And this she did for many days. But Paul was annoyed, and turned and said to the spirit, "I charge you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And it came out that very hour.*

These verses offer us a unique glimpse at the culture. Luke calls this spirit by the name given it by the Greeks. The Greek scripture says the slave girl had a "spirit of python" or a "python spirit." In Hellenistic belief, a python was thought to be a spirit which could possess people and prophesy through their mouths without them even knowing it. Luke uses this name as he was writing to a Greek who would have been familiar with it.

However, when Paul casts it out, he uses no name at all. This is a good example of Satan and his demons accommodating themselves to the local pagan beliefs. Paul in his exorcism did not. He simply used the name of Jesus. We do not have to play the demon's games.

This is a real problem in current deliverance. The demons set the agenda and zealous Christians play the game. The demons want us to play the name game, the deliverance formula game, the confession of intimate details game, the hierarchy game, etc. They will demand whatever their audience will give them and it

seems that many Christians will give whatever they demand.

From the text, it is possible to assume that while Paul spoke only the one sentence, the ensuing deliverance happened gradually over a short period of time. The Greek says it came out in "the same hour." This leaves open the possibility that all deliverances are not instantaneous.

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#### 1 Cor. 10:14-22

*Therefore, my beloved, shun the worship of idols. 15) I speak as to sensible men; judge for yourselves what I say. 16) The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? 17) Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread. 18) Consider the people of Israel, are not those who eat the sacrifices partners in the altar? 19) What do I imply then? That food offered to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything? 20) No, I imply that what pagans sacrifice they offer to demons and not to God. I do not want you to be partners with demons. 21) You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons. 22) Shall we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than He?*

The scripture here is occasioned by the fact that many Christians continued in their old pagan beliefs while proclaiming to belong to Jesus. This is most evidently seen today in nations which practice voodoo and witchcraft. Converts still participate in the satanic rituals without hesitation.

In the United States, similar problems arise with participation in the satanic holy day of Halloween. Christians think nothing of participating in the celebration and talk of it openly.

Paul was concerned about participation in such ritual. Specifically here, he was concerned about food sacrificed to

idols. Where the Christians weren't directly involved in the ritual, they frequently accepted the invitations of pagan friends to their home, to partake of a feast of food offered to idols.

Just the knowledge of the association with the idols should be offensive to Christians. The Old Testament law forbade any association with idols. In fact God required that all idols and high places be destroyed.<sup>43</sup>

We know that idols themselves are nothing (1 Cor. 8:4). They have no real existence. "Paul teaches that the gods mentioned under different names are imaginary and non-existent; but that, behind and in connection with these gods, there are demons who make use of idolatry to draw men away from God; and is to these that the heathen are unconsciously rendering obedience and service."<sup>44</sup>

Verse 20 implies that demons appear as local deities or deceive people into believing in a non-existent god. This is another evidence that demons employ deception and accommodation.

We have already seen that the Old Testament even understood the operations of demons behind the idols.<sup>45</sup> Justin, Tatian and Tertullian also emphasized that demon forces were at work behind the idols.<sup>46</sup>

These demons seemed to have such extensive control over so many of the idolaters that those who had been delivered were a powerful visible witness to Jesus. This, says Green, was a major factor in winning idolatrists to Jesus.<sup>47</sup> Such evidence could not be denied.

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<sup>43</sup>Num. 33:52.

<sup>44</sup>Nevius, DEMON POSSESSION, p. 294.

<sup>45</sup>Lev. 17:7, Deut. 32:17, Ps. 106:37-38.

<sup>46</sup>Green, Evangelism, p. 131.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., p. 164, 189.

That participation in idolatry brought bondage and left the participants open to being demonized is not clear in this passage. Paul uses the word (KOIVOUOUS) meaning companion, partner, sharer.<sup>48</sup> His concern is for the relationship even more than the possible effects of that relationship.

There should be no question in our mind that participation in the things of Satan leaves us open to becoming demonized. Putting ourselves in that situation is rebellion and sin enough to leave us open to such bondage. That is why the Old Testament is so strong in its demand that we stay away from these things.

Staying away, is Paul's point. Idols are nothing but they represent something that opposes our God.

How casually Christians display pagan artifacts as trophies or souvenirs. Buddhas, totem poles, books on the occult all hold aesthetic or collector's values. Some are made of jade or are gold plated and have monetary value. You "treasure" them.

But the Old Testament strongly forbids this and the New Testament demonstrates the proper Christian response to such objects.

*18) Many also of those who were now believers came, confessing and divulging their practices. 19) And a number of those who practiced magic arts brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all; and they counted the value of them and found it came to fifty thousand pieces of silver. 20) So the word of the Lord grew and prevailed mightily. (Acts 19:18-20)*

While the argument could be raised that these people were personally involved in magic practices and we are only collectors of artifacts, we must counter by questioning a desire to collect or display anything which is obnoxious in God's sight.

Better to be zealous for our God than affectionate towards artifacts of His enemy!

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<sup>48</sup>Bauer, LEXICON, p. 440.

*Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. 11) Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12) For we are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. 13) Therefore take the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. 14) Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, 15) and having shod your feet with the equipment of the gospel of peace; 16) besides all these, taking the shield of faith, with which you can quench all the flaming darts of the evil one. 17) And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is in the word of God. 18) Pray at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints.*

This scripture is the classic exposition of the real battle that the Christian must fight. When the Israelites came into the Promised Land to receive their inheritance, they had to fight to take it. In the same way the promise is ours. Yet, as we enter the kingdom as a child of God we enter a battlefield. The promises are ours. The battle is already won. The weapons are God's weapons. Still, we are required to fight the battle.

We are told to be strong (verse 10). Yet it is not our strength. The word (ENDUNAMOUSTHE) carries the idea "to be strengthened."<sup>49</sup> It is God's strength which we must allow Him to give to us, in order that we might stand against the wiles of the devil.

Wiles they are, because "Satan disguises himself as an angel of light."<sup>50</sup> He uses lies and deceit to entrap and ensnare us. Yet

<sup>49</sup>IBID., p. 266.

<sup>50</sup>2 Cor. 11:14.

God's promise is to deliver us from the "snare of the fowler."<sup>51</sup> We are told to "resist the devil and he will flee."<sup>52</sup>

Satan is not alone in his deceitful assault on us. Our enemy is not the people around us that give us so much trouble but against principalities and powers (verse 12). Paul uses a number of words here which are almost interchangeable: ARXAI, EZOUSIAI, DUNAMEIS KURIOTETES, ONOMATA, THRONOI. They essentially refer to one and the same phenomenon.

We are seeing here definite evidence of a shift in emphasis from the operation of individual demons to the view that they formed part of the kingdom of Satan; each individual demon being a minute functionary of that kingdom.

Exorcisms are no longer to be seen as isolated victories over a series of autonomous demons, but as part of Jesus' messianic assault on the powers of evil. This is significant in realizing that the authority of Jesus' name is limitless in dealing with the complete host of hell.

We have been given both defensive and offensive weapons with which to fight this battle. It is important to understand these and make sure that they are active in our daily life. Some Christians believe that putting on this armor means praying this passage as a prayer. This is useless. We must live these armaments. They must be present and active and real in our lives.

In verse 14 we are to "gird our loins with truth." Clarke agrees with many that this truth actually refers to sincerity.<sup>53</sup> Unless we sincerely stand for Christ we will fall for anything Satan throws at us. There is no substitute for complete commitment.

Next comes "the breast plate of righteousness." There has always been the question of which righteousness this means,

<sup>51</sup>Ps. 91:3.

<sup>52</sup>James 4:7.

<sup>53</sup>Clarke, COMMENTARY, Vol. VI, p. 470.



Christ's or ours. Another perspective on the same question asks if this is a theological positional righteousness, or a practical, right-living righteousness.

It must be both. "For our sake He made Him to be sin who knew no sin so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God." (2 Cor. 5:21) Theologically and positionally, our faith is counted to us as righteousness.<sup>54</sup> It is not of our own doing at all, though we must receive it by faith.

The second area is right living, or obedience to God's word. It stands to reason that even if we are the righteousness of God and we transgress His will or His principles, we become vulnerable to the evil one. Nowhere is this clearer than in the area of the satanic supernatural.

God forbids us to have anything to do with the things of Satan.

9) "When you come into the land which the Lord your God gives you, you shall not learn to follow the abominable practices of those nations. 10) There shall not be found among you any one who burns his son or his daughter as an offering, any one who practices divination, a soothsayer, or an augur, or a sorcerer, 11) or a charmer, or a medium, or a wizard, or a necromancer. 12) For whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord; and because of these abominable practices the Lord your God is driving them out before you. 13) You shall be blameless before the Lord your God. 14) For these nations, which you are about to dispossess, give heed to soothsayers and to diviners; but as for you, the Lord your God has not allowed you so to do. (Deut. 18:9-14)

The law on these things was harsh, repetitious, and clear.<sup>55</sup> We also have harsh judgments against the devoted things or idols.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>54</sup>See Heb. 11.

<sup>55</sup>See also: Ex. 22:18; Lev. 19:26, 28, 31; Lev. 20:6-8, 27. etc.

<sup>56</sup>See Lev. 26:1.

By participating in the things of Satan we make ourselves open to the bondage of Satan. Satanic games, though games, still glorify Satan and make us open to his control. Seeking any source of supernatural power other than God makes us vulnerable. Whether viewed as entertainment or done with a power-lust in our heart, we cannot escape the fact that Satan is lord over all that belongs to him.

Sins of the flesh seem to hold the same forboding.

*Now the works of the flesh are plain: fornication, impurity, licentiousness, 20) idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, selfishness, dissension, party spirit, 21) envy, drunkenness, carousing, and the like. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. (Gal. 5:19-21)*

There has always been an assumed relationship between such sin and "unclean spirits." Continued involvement in such sin is rebellion. "Rebellion is as the sin of divination" (1 Sam. 15:23). Thus we make ourselves open to bondage. Little by little our defenses are torn down until one day the enemy is free to walk in and take up residence.

So righteousness, or right living on our part is essential, as a protection against the evil one. We make ourselves vulnerable by taking off this part of our armor.

Verse 15 has left many questioning its meaning. The wording is similar to Isa. 52:7 and Rom. 10:15. However, the real meaning seems to be linked to acknowledging Jesus before men, Matt. 10:32, and giving account of the hope that is in us, 1 Pet. 3:15.

In any event, we are told that "They have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony . . .," Rev. 12:11. A witnessing Christian is an advancing Christian. Since these scriptures offer us no protection for our back, there can be no retreat or withdrawal; only advancement.

Next we take the shield of faith, verse 16, to quench the

flaming darts of the evil one. Because the darts are undefined, we may be talking about thoughts, oppression, persecution, physical illness, etc. All of these through the agency of the demonic and powered by fear.

We are all familiar with the way that faith shields us, "for we walk by faith, not by sight," 2 Cor. 5:7. We meet Satan's lies with God's truth, his symptoms with God's promises and his despair with God's victory.

*No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. 38) For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, 39) nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Rom. 8:37-39)*

In any confrontations with Satan, without faith in God and in His promises we are totally vulnerable. There is no substitute for faith in the atoning blood of Jesus Christ.

The helmet of salvation, verse 17, in 1 Thess. 5:8 is "the hope of salvation." Without hope, even faith is useless. Faith believes God can do it, and hope expects Him to do it for you.

(SOTERIOU) The word salvation itself offers us further insight. Its primary use meaning saved for eternal life is not its most frequent biblical usage. It means things like "to save from illness," "to cure," "to snatch others by force from serious peril," "to keep," "to protect."<sup>57</sup> The root is actually translated "deliver" (Acts 7:25), strength or health (Acts 27:34), salvation from destruction (Heb. 11:7), etc.

Our faith and our salvation is not just for tomorrow but for our salvation from the enemy today.

The final piece of armament is the "sword of the Spirit which is the word of God," verse 17. The major weapon that

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<sup>57</sup>Kittel, DICTIONARY OF N.T., Vol. VII, p. 966.

Jesus used against Satan during His temptation was to quote the word of God. Satan lies, and we counter with the truth. He threatens and we advance a reminder of God's promise and provision. "If you continue in my word, . . . you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free," John 8:31-32.

"Praying at all times in the Spirit" (verse 18) will mean something different depending from what theological perspective you come. Some would see this as praying in accord with the will of God. Others see praying in the spirit as praying in tongues, which makes it a weapon in itself. This would truly be a spiritual weapon since apart from the gift of interpretation of tongues, we have no understanding of what is being said.

The purpose of all this armor and the goal of this warfare is that we "might be able to resist (ANTISTENAI) in the evil day and having done all to stand (STENAI)," verse 13. Resisting means "stand your ground" or stand firm.<sup>58</sup> It offers the idea of:

- 1) an attempt to sway us from our faith to agnosticism or some false belief,<sup>59</sup> or denial due to fear of suffering,<sup>60</sup> and
- 2) an attempt to draw us into sin through temptation.<sup>61</sup>

We are to resist all onslaughts to our faith and stand firm, the goal being to be found faithful at our Lord's coming.

In every modern war we hear phrases like "How can you fight an enemy you can't see?", and "Psychological warfare is the hardest to fight against." The warfare we are in is no different. The key is to know your enemy. Know him factually, not believing what he wants you to believe through his propaganda.

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<sup>58</sup>Bauer, LEXICON, p. 66. (ANTHISTHEMI) 3.

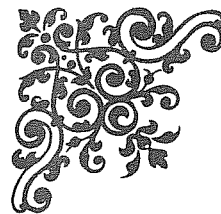
<sup>59</sup>Gal. 4:9.

<sup>60</sup>1 Pet. 5:8-10.

<sup>61</sup>1 Cor. 10:12-13.

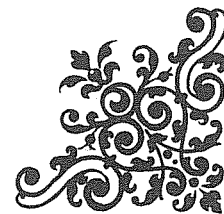
Know him, but don't become obsessed with him. Soldiers go battle crazy and become obsessed with the enemy. At that point, they are of no value to anyone. Seeing a demon in every picture or pronouncing a curse on an entire house because mildew is spotted around a bathroom tub, seeing demonic forces behind a puppet theater because it's make-believe, are current examples of the battle-crazed Christians who have lost their effectiveness.

It is of utmost importance in this warfare that we maintain a true biblical perspective, using the weapons supplied to us by God and using them according to His instructions. Therein lies the key to victory.



## Part III

### APPLICATION



## QUESTIONS ARISING FROM THE POPULAR DEMONOLOGY OF OUR TIME

### CAN A CHRISTIAN HAVE A DEMON?

This is probably the most heavily debated issue in demonology. It has become in some quarters a volatile question. I believe the reason for the intensity of feeling surrounding this issue rests not with the idea of demonic affliction but with the word "possession." No Christian could possibly be possessed by a demon! We have proven that possession should not even be discussed when talking about the activity of demons. So the question is, can a Christian be harrassed or demonized?

Christians get sick. Sickness is from Satan. Some sickness and infirmity is shown to be caused by a spirit of infirmity! Who could prove that any given sickness is not demonically initiated? What difference is there between the influence of sickness and the presence of the demonic? If Satan can do the one, why not the other? No one would ever argue that Christians can't get sick.

Paul warned Christians to ward off attacks from evil spirits (Eph. 6:11-12 and 1 Tim. 4:1). If there is no possibility of a Christian being demonized, why would he warn us of the battle?

The gift of "discerning of spirits" (1 Cor. 12:10) was for the "common good" (verse 7). This whole section appears to be for the upbuilding of the body. There seems to have been a need for discernment of spirits within the body or it would not have been listed here.

It is said to be possible for Christians to be led astray from the truth by receiving a "different spirit from the one you received" (2 Cor. 11:3-4). We can also choose to turn back to the "elemental spirits whose slaves you want to be once more," (Gal. 4:3, 8-9).

While other arguments can be made, it appears to be compatible with the Word to believe that a Christian can by choice or by carelessness become demonized. It is also possible that before becoming a Christian one might have previously been demonized. As sickness does not automatically depart because of conversion, we must also assume that demons do not automatically depart. They must be confronted in faith in the name of the Lord.

The majority of American Christians will probably never be demonized, but some of us have had to face the personality of another being within us. If we have been taught that it is impossible for this presence to be a demon because we are Christians, that very theology will keep us bound forever.

Satan's greatest tool is deception. If we believe the lie that no demon can enter us, we fall for his most powerful tool.

The force behind this lie is fear. Again, the mistaken idea of "possession" has awesome power. The force behind the truth is the name of Jesus. In His name there is no room for fear of being demonized. After all, it's easier to get rid of a whole host of demons than it is to get rid of a common cold.

When a person's problem leads to the diagnosis that he is demonized, I rejoice, because the cure is instantaneous.



## STRONGHOLDS

One of the rationales used by modern exorcists to explain a lack of success in deliverance or extended lengthy battles in deliverance is 2 Cor. 10:1-6. They claim that in order to be successful you must define and destroy the "stronghold."

*I, Paul, myself entreat you, by the meekness and gentleness of Christ - I who am humble when face to face with you, but bold to you when I am away! 2) I beg of you that when I am present I may not have to show boldness with such confidence as I count on showing against some who suspect us of acting in worldly fashion. 3) For though we live in the world we are not carrying on a worldly war, 4) for the weapons of our warfare are not worldly but have divine power to destroy strongholds. 5) We destroy arguments and every proud obstacle to the knowledge of Christ. 6) being ready to punish every disobedience, when your obedience is complete.*

From the context, it would appear that strongholds refer not to demonic powers so much as to human opposition to the Good News of Jesus. Paul uses his spiritual power and success at preaching the Gospel to heathens as evidence in his defense against those who accuse him of not being of God.

The word stronghold(s) is used only this one time in the New Testament. In the Old Testament, it is used primarily to refer to God. (2 Sam. 22:3; Ps. 9:9; Ps. 18:2; Ps. 27:1; Ps. 94:22; Ps. 144:2; Prov. 10:29; Isa. 25:4) etc.

Secondarily, the word refers to strongholds of men or nations (Prov. 21:22; 1 Sam. 24:22; Judges 9:49; Jer. 48:41; Num. 13:19).

There is no scriptural usage which supports the idea of demonic strongholds in an individual. The only thing that allows demons not to go is lack of faith. No demon can withstand where faith is exercised in the authority of the name of Jesus.

There is no other major way of looking at this passage which demands our attention. The idea is that demonic forces that do

battle for the heathen, also do battle for our thought life to set up strongholds in our minds. In an excellent ministry piece from this approach, Osteen capsulizes it this way:

This speaks of THOUGHTS!

These thoughts are STRONGHOLDS!

They produce IMAGINATIONS!

Then come fear and torment, sickness and defeat!

The battlefield is the THOUGHT LIFE.<sup>62</sup>

He says:

Many of you who now read these words are held captive by a thought!

That thought brings fear!

Here are some of the thoughts Satan drops into people's minds: "You are no good." "You are a homosexual." "You are are not saved." "You are not going to make heaven." "You are going to be lost forever." "Your children are going to hell." "You are going to have a wreck." "No one appreciates you. Your wife doesn't love you any more. Your husband doesn't love you anymore." "You have cancer. You have a tumor of the brain. You will never get well. You would be better off dead." "It's just as bad to think a thing as to do it, so go ahead and do it."<sup>63</sup>

The cure for this is to "take every thought captive" and "renew the mind" (Rom. 12:2). It is our responsibility to renew our own minds. We must replace Satan's logic with God's truth. We must battle demonic thought processes.

This understanding of 2 Cor. 10 is vital to Christian growth. If we are honest, we all know that our minds are a battlefield.

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<sup>62</sup>John H. Osteen, PULLING DOWN STRONGHOLDS (Humble, Texas: by the author, 1610 Mustang Trail, 1972), p. 24.

<sup>63</sup>IBID., pp. 17-18.

Every wicked sinful thought must be taken captive before it flourishes and has reign in our lives. Every thought of defeat or despair carries with it its own self-fulfilling prophecy.

The instruments of our warfare are spiritual - the sword of the spirit which is the word of God (Eph. 6:17), and the name of Jesus.

We use His name for authority and the Word to correct each errant thought. The key is to do it. Ignore the battle, suffer the defeat. Fight the battle, and the victory is already won.



## RULER DEMONS, DEMON GROUPINGS, AND DEMON NAMES

### RULER DEMONS

Many believe in a hierarchy of demons which has a ruler demon, superior in power over lesser demons. They believe that this ruler must be identified and cast out before the lesser demons can be exorcised. This teaching is said to come from a passage in Dan. 10:10-21.

*And behold, a hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees. 11) And he said to me, "O Daniel, man greatly beloved, give heed to the words that I speak to you, and stand upright, for now I have been sent to you." While he was speaking this word to me, I stood up trembling. 12) Then he said to me, "Fear not, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your mind to understand and humbled yourself before your God, your words have been heard, and I have come because of your words. 13) The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; but Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, so I left him here with the prince of the kingdom of Persia 14) and came to make you understand what is to befall your people in the latter days. For the vision is for days yet to come."*

*15) When he had spoken to me according to these words, I turned my face toward the ground and was dumb. 16) And behold, one in the likeness of the sons of men touched my lips; then I opened my mouth and spoke. I said to him who stood before me, "O my lord, by reason of the vision pains have come upon me, and I retain no strength. 17) How can my lord's servant talk with my lord? For now no strength remains in me, and no breath is left in me."*

*18) Again one having the appearance of a man touched me and strengthened me. 19) And he said, "O man greatly beloved, fear not, peace be with you; be strong and of good courage." And when he spoke to me, I was strengthened and said, "Let*

*my lord speak, for you have strengthened me.” 20) Then he said, “Do you know why I have come to you? But now I will return to fight against the prince of Persia; and when I am through with him, lo, the prince of Greece will come. 21) But I will tell you what is inscribed in the book of truth: there is none who contends by my side against these except Michael, your prince.”*

There is no further scriptural enlightenment on this issue. Notice in the scripture reference that it is the angel of God who does this warfare in verse 13. Daniel’s part was to pray and fast (verse 12). Daniel did no personal warfare.

The pagans and the rabbis believed in a hierarchy of demons. This belief apparently originated in Persia. (Note that it is Persia that this scripture talks about.) It is reflected in the New Testament in Matt. 12:24 where the belief was that Beelzebul had authority over other demons.

There is no hint in the New Testament that a hierarchy plays any part in deliverance, or even in spiritual warfare. The name of Jesus rules over all spirits equally. All go at the same time. None can withstand that Name spoken in faith.

We also are introduced here to the idea of a demon ruling over a city or a country. Other biblical support for this is found in Isa. 14:12:

*“How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn!  
How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low!*

and in Rev. 18:1-3:

*After this I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority; and the earth was made bright with his splendor. 2) And he called out with a mighty voice, “Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! It has become a dwelling place of demons, a haunt of every foul spirit, a haunt of every foul and hateful bird; 3) for all nations have drunk the wine of her impure passion, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication*

*with her, and the merchants of the earth have grown rich with the wealth of her wantonness.”*

In addition to this, some apply the scripture that says that Satan is the god of this world (2 Cor. 4:4), others apply Eph. 6:12.

*For we are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.*

There is no unified or clear teaching to base a doctrine on here although it is in line with Satan’s plan for us to control our society. This interpretation is possible.

Another teaching on the Dan. 10 passage asserts that the prince of the kingdom of Persia was a satanic angel. As we have already seen, this is impossible because Satan’s angels are bound and inoperative (2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6).

The majority of commentators hold that the prince of Persia only refers to a man. Clarke believes that this man was Cyrus. The “withstanding” that held God’s angel back was that Cyrus refused to deliver his people as God had directed due to some unknown reason. The angel had to attend to Cyrus and deal with his resistance.<sup>64</sup>

Henry agrees that it is a man but believes him to be Cambyses, king of Persia. His rendering of this scene is worth viewing.

*He gave him a general account of the adversaries of the church’s cause, from whom it might be expected that troubles would arise, and of its patrons, under whose protection it might be assured of safety and victory at last. (1.) The kings of the earth are and will be its adversaries; for they set themselves against the Lord, and against his Anointed, Ps. 2:2. The angel told Daniel that he was to have come to him with a gracious answer*

<sup>64</sup>Clarke, COMMENTARY, vol. IV, p. 606.

to his prayers, but that the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood him one and twenty days, just the three weeks that Daniel had been fasting and praying. Cambyses king of Persia had been very busy to embarrass the affairs of the Jews, and to do them all the mischief he could, and the angel had been all that time employed to counter-work him; so that he had been constrained to defer his visit to Daniel till now, for angels can be but in one place at a time. Or, as Dr. Lightfoot says, This new king of Persia, by hindering the temple, had hindered those good tidings which otherwise he should have brought him. The kings and kingdoms of the world were indeed sometimes helpful to the church, but more often they were injurious to it. "When I have gone forth from the kings of Persia, when their monarchy is brought down for their unkindness to the Jews, then the prince of Grecia shall come," v. 20. The Grecian monarchy, though favourable to the Jews at first, as the Persian was, will yet come to be vexatious to them. Such is the state of the church-militant; when it has got clear of one enemy it has another to encounter; and such a hydra's head is that of the old serpent; when one storm has blown over it is not long before another rises. (2.) The God of heaven is, and will be, its protector, and, under him, the angels of heaven are its patrons and guardians. (1.) Here is the angel Gabriel busy in the service of the church, making his part good in defence of it twenty-one days, against the prince of Persia, and remaining there with the kings of Persia, as consul, or liege-ambassador, to take care of the affairs of the Jews in that court, and to do them service, v. 13. And though much was done against them by the kings of Persia (God permitting it), it is probable that much more mischief would have been done them, and they would have been quite ruined (witness Haman's plot) if God had not prevented it by the ministration of angels. Gabriel resolves, when he has dispatched this errand to Daniel, that he will return to fight with the prince of Persia, will continue to oppose him, and will at length humble and bring down that proud monarchy (v. 20), though he knows that another as mischievous, even that of Grecia, will rise instead of it. (2.) Here is Michael our prince, the great protector of the church, and the patron

of its just but injured cause: The first of the chief princes, v. 13. Some understand it of a created angel, but an archangel of the highest order, 1 Thess. 4:16; Jude 9. Others think that Michael the archangel is no other than Christ himself, the angel of the covenant, and the Lord of the angels, he whom Daniel saw in vision, v. 5. He came to help me (vs. 13); and there is none but he that holds with me in these things, v. 21. Christ is the church's prince; angels are not, Heb. 2:5. He presides in the affairs of the church and effectually provides for its good. He is said to hold with the angels, for it is he that makes them serviceable to the heirs of salvation; and, if he were not on the church's side, its case were bad. But, says David, and so says the church, The Lord takes my part with those that help me, Ps. 118:7. The Lord is with those that uphold my soul, Ps. 54:4.<sup>65</sup>

While it may seem to some to be unspiritual, the most practical explanation of this passage falls on humans demanding the attention of the angels of God who are at work to fulfill His purposes.<sup>66</sup>

If your understanding demands the idea of demon spirits over a city or country, the power of God is not diminished. The name of Jesus is still the authority and the power.



<sup>65</sup>Henry, COMMENTARY, Vol. IV, pps. 1100-1101.

<sup>66</sup>Heb. 1:14.



## DEMON GROUPINGS

Incorporated in the teaching on ruler demons there is current demon cult teaching that there are groupings of demons which work together. It is thought that these groups must be identified and each demon in that group exorcised. The Greeks held to demon groupings and to popular names as in Acts 16:16,<sup>67</sup> but again we have no evidence of multiple name calling in New Testament deliverance. In fact, frequently a demon name was not even used.<sup>68</sup> The whole grouping system enhances and amplifies Satan's position and is inappropriate to biblical demonology. Investigation to identify these groups leads us into a tangled web of introspection and public confession of things which should not be spoken of in the light, and of dredging up things covered by the blood. These sessions make soap operas look like church choir picnics!



## DEMON NAMES

The idea of seeking specific names has no place either. Some teach that knowing the name of a demon gives one power over it.

This concept is well-known to students of folklore and of the history of religion. The scripture refutes this in two ways. First, Jesus was not interested in the name of the demon and second, even knowledge of Jesus' name, without authority to use it, proved useless, Acts 19:13-15.

Because of these beliefs in folklore, deliverance ministers spend much time finding the name of the troubling demon. Where

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<sup>67</sup>Kittel, DICTIONARY OF N.T., Vol. II, p. 7.

<sup>68</sup>See: Appendix

supposed discernment fails and the demons refuse to identify themselves, names are recited from memory or read from lists.

This leads to a real theological conflict of naming spirits of everything. One author lists two and a half pages of names of demons. Using this as a basis, a local pastor who studied under that author tried to cast out a spirit of puppetry from a member of our children's ministry who teaches scripture with puppets in our Sunday School!

Groups such as this decide for themselves what is sin and then name a demon to blame it on. Much of what they see as demonic is not even sin according to the Word. Even where the Word calls some of these things sin, it in no way relates it to demonic control.

I have heard people address demons of Valium, pierced ears, baldness, and masculinity for a woman in a pants suit! Where was the demon of Valium for the centuries before Valium was developed? Where is the scriptural evidence for any of this?

The English Bible has a very limited range of demon names.

Evil spirit (Acts 19:15)

Unclean spirit (Zech. 13:2; Matt. 12:43; Mark 1:23; Mark 5:2; Luke 4:33)

Slavery (Rom. 8:15)

Of the world (1 Cor. 2:12)

Timidity/fear (2 Tim. 1:7)

Antichrist (1 John 4:3)

Error (1 John 4:6)

Harlotry (Hos. 4:12 to worship other gods)

Infirmity (Luke 13:11)

Divination (Acts 16:16)

Deaf and Dumb (Mark 9:25, also called an unclean spirit)

Jealousy (Num. 5:14)

Deceit (1 Tim. 4:1)

This is an exhaustive list of Satan's demons from the scripture. All other names are man-made and, therefore, either wrong or simply unnecessary. The only name we really need to know is the name of Jesus.



### CONVERSING WITH DEMONS

Especially in trying to ascertain the name of a demon, modern exorcists carry on extensive conversation with demons. They also seek information such as how the demon entered, when it entered, what right it has to stay there, etc. As we examined the scripture, we saw limited conversation with demons. It was never invited, nor was it used in any way to aid the deliverance.

Satan is a liar and the father of lies. Demons rely heavily on the art of deception. It is deception alone which suggests that there might be any possible reason why they might stay, other than a lack of faith or the personal desire of the host. To willingly seek conversation with demons is "... to invite the guile of lying spirits who would gladly divert the interest of men from its proper object to themselves."<sup>69</sup>

Demons will play any game we permit them. They will accommodate their deception to our fancy. Therefore, questioning of demons should be strictly avoided.



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<sup>69</sup>Nevius, DEMON POSSESSION, p. 392.

### THE POWER OF THE BLOOD AND OTHER FORMULAS

In some circles, an incantation of "the blood, the blood, the blood of Jesus" is used during deliverance. I am familiar with this since I once used it myself. Others teach set prayers to be prayed. Yet, in biblical deliverance the blood is never mentioned and each deliverance event varied in the words spoken, thus disallowing any set biblical formula or prayer.

The only thing necessary was the authority of the name of Jesus. Nevius even stated of his experience in China that "... in the name of Christ there has been no failure."<sup>70</sup> This, in itself, is a real witness to the person of Jesus. To digress to formulas or incantations in itself tells the demons that we believe that we have to fight the battle personally. It signals our lack of assurance in authority; a lack of faith in the name and power of Jesus.



### THE POWER AND PROVINCE OF DEMONS

Today, as in Jesus' time, demons are thought by the superstitious and Christian cultists alike to be responsible for every harmful, troublesome event, illness, catastrophe and rebellion against God. The rabbis had specific listings of what demons could do and how and when they could do it.

The scripture has by no means given us a total understanding of their power and province, but to some extent, the gospels do confirm the popular belief that it was evil spirits who brought torment, malady, and ill-fortune to people.

We have seen infirmity (Luke 13:11); divination (Acts 16:16); suicidal and self-destructive tendencies (Mark 9:22 and Mark 5:5);

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<sup>70</sup>Nevius, DEMON POSSESSION, p. 258.

deafness, the inability to talk, blindness, epilepsy (Mark 9 and Matt. 12:22); immense supernatural strength and anti-social behavior (Mark 5); hostility and desire for murder (1 Sam. 19:9-10); unclean spirits (Mark 5), fear (2 Tim. 1:7); lying or deception, even to lead astray the elect (1 Tim. 4:1); etc.

The manifestation least evident in our biblical study and most emphasized currently is moral lapse or rebellion through sin.

It has been supposed that the life that Mary was brought out of was prostitution. However, there is absolutely no scriptural evidence for this belief! As we can see, the scripture says nothing of her sin life at all.

Mark 16:9 - *"Now when He rose early on the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, from whom He had cast out seven demons."*

Luke 8:2 - *"And also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene from whom seven demons had gone out . . ."*

The fact that this is the major proof used to support the theory that demons cause us to sin or more appropriately, keep us in the bondage of sin, should cause us to question further. Experientially we see adulterers, fornicators, kleptomaniacs, alcoholics, dope addicts, etc. as being demonized. Experientially, many of these people seem to be set free by the authority of the name of Jesus and casting out of a demon usually addressed with the name of the sin. Not all sin is thought to be caused by demons. But, many who are bound in sin seem to be set free through deliverance, when they found no help in prayer, confession, and commitment.

Where is our scriptural support for this? Jesus is never shown to have ministered deliverance to one who was bound in moral or fleshly sin. He merely said, "I do not condemn you; go, and do not sin again" (John 8:11).

As we have already seen, the word (AKATHARTON)

unclean, which is used frequently to refer to demons, includes in its definition the possibilities of the impurities of vice, or immorality. The discussion of this word in The Theological Dictionary of The New Testament vividly describes the usage of this word to include or portray cultic or moral impurity and licentiousness.<sup>71</sup>

The word unclean so heavily connotes immorality or sin that the possibility that unclean spirits can cause this particular kind of bondage seems great. We would be happier if scripture were clearer on this point. It may be silent here because of our great tendency to want to blame all of our moral ills on Satan or demons.

The possibility that demons can keep us in the bondage of moral sin is real (2 Pet. 2:19-21). This, however, is not an escape from our responsibility.

Where do we draw the line between what is a sin of the flesh and what is a demon? We have heard demons named for every sin of the flesh. Yet the scripture would point us in another direction.

*Now the works of the flesh are plain: fornication, impurity, licentiousness, 20) idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, selfishness, dissension, party spirit, 21) envy, drunkenness, carousing, and the like. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. (Gal. 5:19-21)*

Here even Satan's highest art of witchcraft or sorcery is seen as an act of sin worked by the flesh rather than an act of demons controlling the flesh. Even the most vile sin can exist in our lives without our being demonized.

So, if our sin is demon influenced all we need to do is take authority over it in Jesus' name. Then, once again, it is our responsibility to "go and sin no more." If it is not caused by

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<sup>71</sup>Kittel, DICTIONARY OF THE N.T., Vol. III, p. 427-428.

demons, we must repent, and change our action through prayer and involvement in the Word.

While we may have difficulty scripturally proving that demons cause sin bondage, scripture clearly proves that demons can cause antisocial behavior such as rape, murder, suicide, etc.<sup>72</sup>

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Another question we must ask will draw opposition from traditionalists. We must question if "fear" is really a spirit. While this is commonly held by almost everyone, the question arises because of the one scripture always used to support this idea.

2 Tim. 1:7 says "God did not give us a spirit of timidity but a spirit of power and love and self control." Even this RSV rendering translates the word (DEILIAS) as timidity instead of fear. This is not the word usually used for any kind of fear that we could relate to, such as a phobia. This word (DEILIAS) means cowardice or timidity.<sup>73</sup> The context supports this meaning and renders this scripture useless in supporting the idea of a "spirit" of fear being a demon.

In fact, the context goes on to say the answer or treatment of this particular (fear) timidity is to "stir up the gift within you."

The word we derive phobia from is PHOBEO or PHOBEOMAI. PHOBEOMAI is used to tell us "not to be afraid" or "fear not," Luke 1:13, Mark 6:50, etc. It is also used to speak of the "fear of God" (Acts 10:22, etc.)

Thankfully, PHOBEO offers more hope.

Luke 1:12-13 PHOBEO "fell" on Zechariah. He was told "do not be afraid."

Luke 5:26	They were "filled" with PHOBEO.
Luke 7:16	and there "came" a PHOBEO on all.
Acts 2:43	great PHOBEO "came upon" every soul.
Acts 19:17	PHOBEO "fell."

This word for fear is used in a way which describes it as an outside entity which comes upon, falls upon, grips and fills people. There is no scripture which speaks of a spirit of PHOBEO. Further, this word is also used for the fear of God, Eph. 5:21, etc.

If fear is not a spirit, then what is it? Why does it respond to an authoritative command in the name of Jesus?

Whatever it is, it is clearly the major tool that Satan uses on us. Fear appears to be the biggest thing that opens us up to the demonic.

We do know that when we fear, we are not walking in faith. Whatever does not proceed from faith is sin, Rom. 14:23. We also know that we are always directed not to fear. Also, "There is no fear (PHOBEO) in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and he who fears is not perfected in love," 1 John 4:18.

It almost appears that fear is a supernatural weapon which renders us open to the demonic. We are directed to fight it, reject it, and cast it out by loving God and having confidence in Him.

One way to reject it is to take authority over it. So, practically speaking, it does us no harm if we view fear as a spirit or spiritual entity. However, to be biblically correct, we should not use 2 Tim. 1:7 to prove our belief that fear is a spirit.

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All in all, it would seem that demons can cause anything we permit them to. They can have whatever control we attribute to them. They are free where we believe they have a right to be free.

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<sup>72</sup>See Appendix

<sup>73</sup>Bauer, LEXICON, p. 172.

Yet, with all of this, faith in the name of Jesus removes any fear or concern. At the appearance of the demonic, faith prevails. At the name of Jesus spoken with faith, demons flee. Real faith in the name of Jesus brings complete victory.



### DELIVERANCE BY THE NUMBERS

Many authors, in an attempt to capsulize and clarify, have presented step-by-step procedures for deliverance. While they differ in number and content, they all attempt to offer a “by the numbers” deliverance procedure.

These procedures, in themselves, offer no problems. They are usually consistent with Christian piety. However, when they are compared to biblical deliverance situations, they do not relate at all.

The difference is far more evident when we consider some of the prerequisites which they believe to be required for a successful deliverance. These prerequisites can translate into hours of counseling and exhaustive investigation and interrogation before they ever get to dealing with the demons.

Rote prayers are prescribed renouncing everything imaginable in a person's past. Confession of every sin ever committed is required. This is done even if the counselee knows these sins to be covered by the blood of Jesus and forgotten by the Lord. They are then encouraged to forgive anyone by name whoever looked askance at them. Even the slightest contact with the occult is individually confessed and renounced.

While all of this is totally inconsistent with the biblical pattern, it is not noticeably harmful. In fact, it can be helpful

for Christians to sincerely take such stands. However, it leads us to believe that these things are necessary to achieve deliverance and that is not the case!

What if you miss something, or forget someone you need to forgive? What if you didn't know the prayer to say? Satan would like us to believe that he has a right to resist the name of Jesus. He has no such right as he is totally subject to Jesus, (1 Pet. 3:22). All he has is power; power to resist our lack of faith.<sup>74</sup>

Certainly we need to clean house, but as in salvation, that can be a response to the act rather than a precondition for deliverance. Jesus never told anyone he ministered to, to clean up their act or renounce or forgive. Neither did Paul with the slave girl.<sup>75</sup>

The unfortunate effect of these step-by-step procedures seem to be that Satan is now able to give us excuses for not letting go. Even if there are no real excuses, all he has to do is to make us think that there is a valid reason. All he has to do is tell us we skipped a step or missed a prayer.

The Word simply tells us to tell him to go, believe he must go, expect it to happen, and see the deliverance.

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<sup>74</sup>See discussion in Mark 9:14-29.

<sup>75</sup>Acts 16:16-18.

## SUMMARY

We are warned that in the "later times some will depart from the faith by giving heed to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons" (1 Tim. 4:1). Having viewed the scripture concerning demons, we find no distinct "deliverance ministry." We find only a small amount of material on the subject. We find little attention paid to demons or time spent in dealing with them.

There is a real concern about the time and energy invested in dealing with the demonic today. Much of the material written or taught currently is cultic, superstitious, erroneous or just not biblical. Man's doctrines of demons abound. Satan and his demons receive far too much attention and have far too much power attributed to them.

Demons exist. They are agents of Satan. They are bodiless spirits. They harass, occupy and disturb. They speak, portray their own personality through the demonized party, and possess supernatural powers. They are cast out in the name of Jesus only, by authority given to us by Jesus. Scripture gives us only one method of exorcism, and that is that through faith a demon may be cast out by an authoritative word in the name of Jesus. Where the exorcism takes any other form, we must conclude either that we are dealing with something other than a demonized person, or that we are dealing with either a pagan exorcism or one which is accommodating Satan's lies.

The only way to avoid deception is to remain clearly within the limits of the Word of God.



Scripture	Affliction	Supernatural Manifestation	Names	Command	Manifestation	Evidence of Cure
Mt. 8:16-17				cast out with a word		
Mk. 5:1-20 Mt. 8:28-34 Lk. 8:26-39	oppressed, self-destructive maniac	supernatural strength, knowledge of Jesus	unclean spirit	"come out, you unclean spirit"	entered swine	clothed, in right mind
Mt. 12:22-37 Mt. 3:20-30 Lk. 11:14-23	blind, dumb			healed		spoke and saw
Mt. 15:21-28 Mk. 7:24-30	sickness?					healed
Mk. 9:14-29 Mt. 17:14-21 Lk. 9:37-43	dashes him, foams grinds teeth, rigidity, convulsions, self-destructive, deaf and dumb, epileptic	spirit saw Jesus	dumb spirit unclean spirit deaf and dumb spirit	rebuke: "come out you dumb and deaf spirit, I command you, and never enter him again."	crying, convulsing, left death-like	he arose, cured instantly
Lk. 4:31-37 Mk. 1:21-28		recognition of Jesus	unclean demon	rebuke: "be silent, and come out of him!"	threw him down	
Lk. 13:10-13	bent over		spirit of infirmity	"you are free" laid on hands		made straight
Acts 16:16-18		sooth-saying	spirit of divination	"I charge you in the name of Jesus to come out of her."		stopped soothsaying
Mt. 9:32-33*	dumb					spoke
Mk. 3:11*		recognition of Jesus	unclean spirit		falling down before Him	
Acts 8:7*			unclean spirit			came out crying with a loud voice

\*notes not discussed in text.

APPENDIX

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