## Victory over Satan

### А. Introduction

Christ’s exaltation means that He was given “the name which is above every name” (see Phil 2:9-11). Therefore, He has all authority in heaven and on earth. Before His ascension and in anticipation of His exaltation, Jesus announced to His disciples, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth” (Matt 28:18). Now, Jesus resides “at the right hand of the Majesty on high” (Heb 1:3; 8:1; 12:2).

His position at the Father’s right hand means that Christ now possesses authority over all the powers of evil. Therefore, Peter writes, “…who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him” (1 Pet 3:22). Paul echoes this thought in writing, “He is the head over all rule and authority” (Col 2:10).

Of course, since Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God, all earthly and heavenly powers must submit to Him anyway. Jesus displayed His spiritual authority during His earthly ministry by casting out demons (Mk 1:23-25). However, the authority Christ received in connection with His exaltation has importance for the Church. He was exalted in His capacity as the Head of the Body. Paul states,

… seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly {places,} far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all (Eph 1:20-23).

Therefore, since believers are positionally located in Christ, He shares with the Church His authority over the devil and all demons. Arnold comments, “Sharing with Christ in his exaltation is particularly important as we consider spiritual warfare because this entails sharing with Christ in his present authority over that realm…. We share in Jesus’ authority over the demons and unclean spirits.”[[1]](#footnote-1) Even prior to His ascension, Jesus shared His authority with His disciples: “Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing will injure you” (Lk 10:19).

Therefore, we devote this chapter to study the relationship of believers to evil spirits, particularly their authority over them in Christ. We will delve into the topic of spiritual warfare and the means by which believer can successfully engage the enemy and secure victory over him. Before we embark on our investigation, though, we must stress an important point. The believer’s victory over the powers of darkness is inseparably connected with the redemption accomplished by Christ’s sacrifice. Let us explain.

 Satan’s influence over people comes in three forms: accusation, temptation, and affliction. First, the Scriptures assert that the devil slanders and accuses (Rev 12:10). Since all people have sinned before the Lord, Satan has grounds to accuse us before Him. Yet, thanks to the blood of Jesus, Satan has lost his grounds for accusation. Forgiveness of sins through Christ delivers us from Satan’s power to accuse.

Second, Satan exercises control through temptation. When persons are enslaved to sin, it is not difficult for the devil to manipulate them through their sinful desires. In this manner, he is able to control unregenerate persons and perform his will through them. However, when Jesus suffered, He took upon Himself not only the penalty for our sins, but our sinful selves as well in order to destroy the power sin had over us (Rom 6:6). Therefore, through Christ believers obtain deliverance from the second ploy of the enemy – his control over them through temptations to sin.

Finally, Satan seeks to afflict people and inflict suffering. In response, followers of Jesus can rely on God’s promise to guard and protect His children from evil (Ps 91, 121, 27). The Most High God is more than capable to defend His own.

So then, on the one hand, the *death* of Christ delivers believers in Him from the powers of darkness. On the other hand, through the *ascension and exaltation* of the Son, as noted above, believers have authority over Satan and his demons. This chapter will examine the both of these aspects with emphasis on the latter – the authority of the believer over the enemy.

### B. Survey of Biblical and Intertestamental Data

**1. Principles of Spiritual Warfare in the Old Testament**

Before we undertake a biblical study on the topic of spiritual warfare, we will briefly mention the understanding of demons in the nations surrounding ancient Israel.[[2]](#footnote-2) Persons of the Ancient Near East, especially in Assyria and Babylon, believed in demons and in their detrimental effect on people, which included physical and psychological disease, misfortune, anti-social behavior, and even premature death. To ward off demons, they employed amulets, rituals, incantations, etc. Exorcism was used to deliver from demon possession.

The Old Testament, however, gives little attention to demon powers (see discussion in chapter 3), and gives little insight into spiritual warfare. Yet, the Old Testament narrative devotes much attention to war in a physical sense, from which we may draw certain principles for our study.

First, whenever God commanded His people to engage their enemies in war, they came forth victorious. God gave this promise on the condition of obedience, “You will chase your enemies and they will fall before you by the sword; five of you will chase a hundred, and a hundred of you will chase ten thousand, and your enemies will fall before you by the sword” (Lev 26:7-8). On the other hand, violation of the covenant would lead to defeat (Lev 26:14ff; Deut 28:15ff). Even ceremonial impurity could hinder success (Deut 23:9-14).

Yahweh so closely associated Himself with His people that He considered a battle against Israel a battle against Himself. Concerning a conflict with the Canaanites, God Himself will “drive His enemies out from before Him” (Num 32:21). Whenever Israel disembarked from their encampment in the wilderness, Moses would proclaim, “Rise up, O Yahweh! And let Your enemies be scattered, and let those who hate You flee before You” (Num 10:35). When David battled with Goliath, he acknowledged the true source of victory: “Yahweh does not deliver by sword or by spear; for the battle is Yahweh’s and He will give you into our hands” (1 Sam 17:47).

There were times when a visible sign of the Lord’s presence accompanied Israel into battle: “Moses sent… Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, to the war with them, and the holy vessels and the trumpets for the alarm in his hand” (Num 31:6). On the other hand, a visible indication of God’s presence proved useless if the Lord Himself did not accompany His people to the battle (see 1 Sam 4:1-11).

We note instances when the praises of God became a weapon in battle. When Jehoshaphat warred with Ammon and Moab, he sent out the singers first, and “they went out before the army and said, ‘Give thanks to Yahweh, for His lovingkindness is everlasting’” (2 Chr 20:21). As a result, “When they began singing and praising, Yahweh set ambushes against the sons of Ammon, Moab and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah; so they were routed (2 Chr 20:22).

Similarly, God established the following principle for Israel when they went to war:

When you go to war in your land against the adversary who attacks you, then you shall sound an alarm with the trumpets, that you may be remembered before Yahweh your God, and be saved from your enemies (Num 10:9).

The same principle is voiced in Ps 149:5-9, where success in battle in associated with worship of Yahweh:

Let the godly ones exult in glory; let them sing for joy on their beds. {Let} the high praises of God {be} in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand, to execute vengeance on the nations and punishment on the peoples, to bind their kings with chains and their nobles with fetters of iron, to execute on them the judgment written; this is an honor for all His godly ones. Praise Yahweh!

Psalm 8:2 can be puzzling: “From the mouth of infants and nursing babes You have established strength because of Your adversaries, to make the enemy and the revengeful cease.” The Septuagint here has αἶνον (*ainon*), i.е., “praise,” which differs from the Hebrew עוֹז (*oz*), “strength.” The Septuagint reading would again connect praise with victory over enemies. We generally regard the Hebrew text as more reliable. Nevertheless, when Matthew cites Jesus quoting this verse, he uses the word αἶνον (*ainon*), “praise,” instead of “strength” (Matt 21:16).

Although believers depend on the Lord for victory, in most cases their participation is required as well. It is written of David in 2 Samuel 8, for example, that he “defeated the Philistines,” “defeated Moab,” “defeated Hadadezer,” etc. In Psalm 144:1, David speaks of both the divine and the human participants in the battle: “Blessed be Yahweh, my rock, who trains my hands for war, {and} my fingers for battle.”

However, we note an instance where the Lord defeated Israel’s enemies without the latter’s involvement. When Jehoshaphat was preparing for battle against Ammon and Moab, he announced, “You {need} not fight in this {battle}; station yourselves, stand and see the salvation of Yahweh on your behalf” (2 Chr 20:17). In a similar manner, when Assyrian troops threatened Jerusalem, “Yahweh sent an angel who destroyed every mighty warrior, commander and officer in the camp of the king of Assyria” (2 Chr 32:21).

When Israel was about to go to war, they were consistently charged not to fear. We cite the following examples:

- Moses to Israel: “Hear, O Israel, you are approaching the battle against your enemies today. Do not be fainthearted. Do not be afraid, or panic, or tremble before them, for Yahweh your God is the one who goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you” (Deut 20:3-4; сf. 1:29; 7:18; 31:6).

- Joshua to Israel: “Do not fear or be dismayed! Be strong and courageous, for thus Yahweh will do to all your enemies with whom you fight” (Josh 10:25).

- Jahaziel to Jehoshaphat: “Thus says Yahweh to you, ‘Do not fear or be dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours but God's’” (2 Chr 20:15).

This injunction was applied to the point where those who were afraid to go into battle were forbidden to do so: “Who is the man that is afraid and fainthearted? Let him depart and return to his house, so that he might not make his brothers' hearts melt like his heart” (Deut 20:8). When Gideon was preparing to battle the Midianites, the fainthearted were, in fact, sent home (Judg 7:3). This indicates that faith is an indispensable ingredient to success in war. God’s warriors must enter the battle fray with confidence in victory.

However, Israel was not always immediately victorious. For example, they failed to completely conquer the Promised Land. God anticipated this result, and explained why this outcome was necessary in this case: “I will not drive them out before you in a single year, that the land may not become desolate and the beasts of the field become too numerous for you" (Ex 23:29-30).

The Old Testament gives further keys to victory. One of these is prayer. When Solomon was dedicating the temple, he requested of the Lord to hear the prayer of those going to war (1 Kin 8:44-45). We observe an interesting example when Judah was threatened by the Northern Kingdom of Israel. We read, “Then the men of Judah raised a war cry, and when the men of Judah raised the war cry, then it was that God routed Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah and Judah” (2 Chr 13:15). This war cry was an expression of the faith of Judah in God’s intervention and their determination to fight.

God’s will consists not only in giving His people victory, but also that His people would gain experience in war. In the book of Judges, it is written that because of Israel’s idolatry, Yahweh refused to further drive the Canaanites out before them (Judg 2:20). However, God worked this event into His plan for His people’s good. First, it would provide Israel with the opportunity to demonstrate their faithfulness to God in the future by rejecting the idolatrous practices of the Canaanites who remained (Judg 2:21-23). Second, it gave opportunity for future generations of His people to learn war:

Now these are the nations which Yahweh left, to test Israel by them ({that is}, all who had not experienced any of the wars of Canaan; only in order that the generations of the sons of Israel might be taught war, those who had not experienced it formerly) (Judg 3:1-2).

Also notable is that when the Lord defeated His enemies, he often did it by introducing confusion into their camp. It was so in His victory over the Philistines: “Then Saul and all the people who {were} with him rallied and came to the battle; and behold, every man's sword was against his fellow, {and there was} very great confusion” (1 Sam 14:20). The same occurred when Syrian troops surrounded Samaria: “For the Lord had caused the army of the Arameans to hear a sound of chariots and a sound of horses, {even} the sound of a great army” (2 Kin 7:6). We also recall that when Gideon blew his trumpet, “Yahweh set the sword of one against another even throughout the whole army” (Judg 7:22), and when Jehoshaphat sent the singers before the army, “the sons of Ammon and Moab rose up against the inhabitants of Mount Seir destroying {them} completely; and when they had finished with the inhabitants of Seir, they helped to destroy one another” (2 Chr 20:23).

Along with references to physical conflict in the Old Testament, we can also glean material on spiritual warfare itself. In the book of Job, we learn that Satan attacked Job physically through calamities and sickness. Yet, the devil’s primary goal was not physical destruction, but weakening Job’s faith (Job 1:11). Through his trials, Job demonstrated patience and perseverance, and in this way, he defeated the devil. Another significant observation is that before Satan assaulted Job, Yahweh “made a hedge about him and his house and all that he has” (Job 1:10).[[3]](#footnote-3) This shows that God is able to protect His own from Satanic attack.

Moreover, in the book of Zechariah Satan accused Joshua the high priest, who may well have been a symbolic representation of God’s people in general. However, the angel of Yahweh rebuked him in the name of the Lord. Redemption was the means to defeat Satan’s accusations: “See, I have taken your iniquity away from you and will clothe you with festal robes” (Zech 3:4), which reminds us of the New Testament reference to victory over the devil’s accusation through the blood of the Lamb (Rev 12:10).

Saul’s case is also interesting. When God allowed an “evil spirit” to torment him, Saul received comfort from hearing David play music (1 Sam 16:14-23). Aune sees this as the only case of exorcism in the Old Testament.[[4]](#footnote-4)

Finally, the classic Old Testament passage about spiritual warfare is in Daniel chapter 10. There, we read about a conflict between God’s angels and the “princes” of Persia and Greece. Unfortunately, this passage does not enlighten us about how exactly warfare between angels takes place.[[5]](#footnote-5) Nevertheless, we can learn somethings about spiritual warfare through this passage.

First, angels battle with demons. Second, demons can, for a time, withstand angels. Third, demons can delay, for a time, an answer to prayer or transmission of a revelation from God. Fourth, evil spirits have some type of connection to human governments and, most likely, support and direct them.

It is also significant that during the battle between God’s angel and the “prince of Persia,” Daniel was fasting. We are not specifically told, however, to what degree his fast resulted in a spiritual breakthrough. The eventual victory, in fact, was attributed to the arrival of “Michael, one of the chief princes” (Dan 10:13).

In summary, we will emphasize certain important principles. First, when God’s people are in proper relationship to Him, they always eventually triumph over their enemies. The enemies of God’s people are also God’s enemies. Second, the Lord’s assistance and aid are vital for securing victory. Sometimes the Lord wages war without human participation, and sometimes by means of human instrumentation.

Moreover, we can underscore others aspects of spiritual warfare. Sometimes praise and worship led to victory over enemies. Prayer also advanced the cause, enhanced by fasting. Violation of the covenant and fear of one’s enemies both hinder progress. Therefore, those who war for the Lord must be faithful to Him and bold in faith. In addition, God’s will is for all believers to become experienced in conflict with the powers of evil. God’s people are a people of war. Finally, perseverance (Job) and the application of redemption (Joshua the high priest) play significant roles in winning spiritual battles. We must also not neglect to mention the activity of good angels in this conflict.

**2. Survey of Intertestamental Literature**

In spite of the lack of a developed demonology or clear instruction about casting out devils in the Old Testament, we do see a more developed demonology in the intertestamental times. Weiss reports that in the intertestamental period, “exorcisms were the order of the day.”[[6]](#footnote-6) Aune feels that, in regard to exorcism, the Jews borrowed much from other peoples, especially the Assyrians, Babylonians, and Persians.[[7]](#footnote-7)

The book of Tobit gives an example of how exorcism was understood in the intertestamental period. There, it is claimed that a certain demon killed seven bridegrooms of a certain maiden on their wedding night. The angel Raphael promised her next bridegroom, Azarias, “When thou comest into the bride-chamber, take of the liver of the fish with the heart and place them upon the ashes of the incense and the smell shall go forth, and the devil shall smell it, and flee away, and never appear any more to her” (*Tobit,* 6.17-18).

Solomon was thought to possess special strength against demons. The book *Wisdom of Solomon* claims that he possessed special knowledge of “the powers of spirits” (7.20).[[8]](#footnote-8) Josephus wrote about Solomon,

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.[[9]](#footnote-9)

Josephus relates an instance where a certain exorcist,[[10]](#footnote-10) Eleazar by name, employed Solomon’s methods of exorcism:

I have seen a certain man of my own country whose name was Eleazar, releasing people that were demoniacal in the presence of Vespasian, and his sons, and his captains, and the whole multitude of his soldiers. The manner of the 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 abjured him to return into 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 a 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.[[11]](#footnote-11)

In the book *Testament of Solomon*, the author claims that with the aid of a certain device, given him by the archangel Michael, Solomon was able to control demons. It is also claimed that Solomon held conversations with demons, during which he learned their names, their special demonic “skills,” and the name of the angel that could control them.[[12]](#footnote-12) Solomon’s reputation for success in this matter allegedly spread as far as Greece and Rome, and his name is associated with some incantations used there.[[13]](#footnote-13)

Other intertestamental books also relate instances of exorcisms. In the Qumran manuscript *Genesis Apocryphon*, chapter 20, we read of an alleged exorcism in the house of Pharaoh through the prayer of Abraham. In another Qumran text, *Prayer of Nabonidus*, a Jewish exorcist by the name of Daniel forgave the sins of Nabonidus.[[14]](#footnote-14)

From the New Testament, we understand that Jewish exorcists were indeed active in the first century (see Mk 9:38-39; Matt 12:27; Acts 19:13-17).[[15]](#footnote-15) They enjoyed much respect in the ancient world. They employed the name of the God of Israel, sometimes according to the formula “The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.” At times, they used the names of angels.[[16]](#footnote-16) These formulas have been found even in Greek incantations, which testifies of the great influence Jewish exorcists had on other people groups.[[17]](#footnote-17)

The Greeks believed in the existence of demons, but show no record of practicing exorcism until the second century B.C. The following list describes in general terms their method for casting out evil spirits. One must: (1) force the demon to speak, (2) learn the demon’s name and area of demonic activity, (3) issue a command for the demon to depart, (4) use various names in the incantation, and (5) expect a violent exit by the demon.[[18]](#footnote-18) A second-century philosopher, Lucian of Samosata, describes aspects of this process:

Everyone knows about the Syrian from Palestine, the adept in it [i.e., exorcism], how many he takes in hand who fall down in the light of the moon and roll their eyes and fill their mouths with foam; nevertheless, he restores them to health and sends them away normal in mind, delivering them from their straits for a large fee. When he stands beside them as they lie there and asks: “When came you into this body?” the patient himself is silent, but the spirit answers in Greek or in the language of whatever foreign country he comes from, telling how and when he entered into the man; whereupon, by adjuring the spirit and if he does not obey, threatening him, he drives him out. Indeed, I saw one coming out, black and smokey in colour.[[19]](#footnote-19)

**3. Principles of Spiritual Warfare in the New Testament**

The Gospels present us with many examples of demon possession and casting out of demons. In this section, we will examine the phenomenon of demon possession in general terms, and in the following section, we will search out proper methodology for casting them out.

Demon possession is often expressed by the phrase ἔχω δαιμόνιον (*echo daimonion*), which literally translates, “have a demon” (see Mk 5:2; 7:25; 9:25; Lk 4:33; 8:27; Acts 8:7). Jesus’ opponents used this phrase to accuse the Lord of being possessed (Мќ́́. 3:22; Jn 7:20; 8:48-52). Another term to express this condition is δαιμονίξομαι (*daimoniksomai*). This is a verb in the passive tense that literally means “to be demonized.” The New Testament employs this word very often, especially in the form of a participle: Matt 15:22 (as a verb), Matt 4:24; 8:16, 28, 33; 9:32; 12:22; Mk 1:32; 5:15-16; Jn 10:21 (as a participle).

Next, we examine the phrase ἐνοχλούμενοι (or ὀχλουμένοι) ἀπὸ πνευμάτων ἀκαθάρτων (*enochloumenoi apo pneumaton akatharton*). The verbs ἐνοχλούμενοι(*enochloumenoi*)or ὀχλουμένοι(*ochloumenoi*) mean “to hinder/bother.” Therefore, an evil spirit will “hinder” or “bother” a possessed person. Two passages utilize this phrase (Lk 6:18; Acts 5:16).

Mark also employs the preposition ἐν (*en*) having the denotation “together with,” which in context translates “with an unclean spirit.” Finally, the fact that demons are “cast out” indicates that they are dwelling within an individual.

When we compare these expressions, we come away with the following observations. In the case of the possessed man in the synagogue (Mk 1:23; Lk 4:33-36), he both “had a demon” and was “with an unclean spirit.” In a similar way, the man with a “legion” (Matt 8:28–34; Mk5:1–17; Lk 8:26–37) both “had a demon” and “was demonized.” Therefore, these parallel expressions all point to the same experience of demon possession and do not differ in essence.

How do demon possessed persons behave? First, they display strange behavior, such as screams (Mk 1:24; 5:5; Lk 9:39), self-mutilation (Mk 5:5; 9:18), and nakedness (Lk 8:35).[[20]](#footnote-20) Such persons may possess supernatural power (Mk 5:4; сf. Acts 19:16).[[21]](#footnote-21) A person may have more than one demon (Mk 16:9; Lk 8:2, 30; 11:26). However, all the characteristic signs of possession do not necessarily need to be present in every case.

The Bible also speaks of demons causing incurable diseases, such as crippling back issues (Lk 13:11), dumbness (Mk 9:17; Lk 11:14), blindness (Matt 12:22), muteness (Mk 9:25), and epilepsy (Mk 1:26; 9:20).[[22]](#footnote-22)

The Gospels abound in examples where Jesus cast demons out of possessed individuals (for example, Matt 8:16, 28-33; 9:32; 12:22; 15:22). McClelland aptly states that one of the main goals for casting out demons in Jesus’ ministry was to demonstrate that the kingdom of God had come: “But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you” (Matt 12:28).[[23]](#footnote-23)

Furthermore, in Mark 12:43-45 Jesus warns that after a demon leaves someone, that individual must fill that “empty spot,” so that the demon may not return and find its previous habitation “unoccupied, swept, and put in order” (Matt 12:43) and return with other demons. Demons are seeking a body to indwell (Matt 12:43), even in animals (Mk 5:12).[[24]](#footnote-24) Lester Sumrall holds the opinion that demons seek to indwell a body in order to cause more harm and find greater expression in the material world.[[25]](#footnote-25)

The Gospels also deal with another important topic – temptation. Jesus Himself was tempted, but overcame (Matt 4)! In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus encouraged His disciples to “not come into temptation” (Mk 14:38) and also taught them to appeal to their heavenly Father for aid: “Do not lead us into temptation” (Matt 6:13).

In the book of Acts, the apostles were also active in casting out devils (Acts 5:16; Acts 16:16-18; Acts 19:12), to which we will turn our attention later. Acts also records the failure of Jewish exorcists to cast out demons in Jesus’ name. Aune comments here,

In Acts there is a general emphasis on miracles, exorcisms, and magic, since the author wishes to demonstrate not only that the gospel proclaimed by the apostles was confirmed by supernatural demonstrations of power, but also that Jewish and pagan magic and exorcism was impotent by comparison.[[26]](#footnote-26)

Finally, as in Jesus’ experience we also see in Acts that demons openly acknowledged Him (сf. Acts 16:18; Mk 1:24). Yet, neither Jesus nor Paul welcomed such demonstrations and forbade the demons to speak (Mk 1:34; Acts 16:18).

Moving on to the New Testament epistles, we immediately note the absence of references to demon possession. Stedman seeks to explain this by claiming that demons were more active at the time of Jesus’ ministry, and less so after its consummation.[[27]](#footnote-27) However, it is hard to image for what reason demons would become more passive. Their evil agenda never alters.

In the General Epistles, we encounter practical counsel about dealing with demons. Both Peter and James charge believers to “resist” the devil (1 Pet 5:9; Jam 4:7). They employ the same word in their exhortations –ἀνθίστημι (*anthistemi*).[[28]](#footnote-28) At the same time, Peter taught that resisting Satan does not depend totally on human will power, but “the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation” (2 Pet 2:9). That the powers of darkness are already subject to Christ is also to the believer’s advantage (1 Pet 3:22).

Paul devotes much attention to the theme of spiritual warfare. He portrays Christians as warriors (Phil 2:25; 2 Tim 2:3; Philemon 2).[[29]](#footnote-29) Consequently, they must prepare themselves for battle by putting on “the full armor of God” (Eph 6:11). The subsequent verses in Ephesians detail the elements of this spiritual armor. In general, they provide protection from Satan’s attacks. Arnold insightfully notes in this context the repetition of the word “stand.”[[30]](#footnote-30) Stedman correctly states, “We are not out to take new ground; we are to defend that which is already ours.”[[31]](#footnote-31) In other words, we hold fast to what Jesus has already accomplished for us through His redemptive work.

Arnold also directs our attention to the term in Ephesians 6:12 – πάλη (*pale*), i.е., “struggle.” This word was used in sporting competitions: “It involves strenuous effort, stamina, and, especially, proper spiritual fitness.”[[32]](#footnote-32)

It is important for us, together with Dickason, to define the righteousness with which we cloth ourselves (Eph 6:14). This is not our personal righteousness, but the righteousness of Jesus Christ: “Our righteous living is far from perfect and is the object of Satan’s attack. Only the righteousness of Christ can provide perfect protection against the thrusts of the enemy.”[[33]](#footnote-33)

Stedman shares the thought that in the description of the three initial pieces of armor, the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, and the shoes of the gospel of peace, the verb tense “aorist” is used, indicating past time. This reveals that the believer already wears these pieces. They relate to the believer’s position in Christ. One must merely remind oneself of that positional status in the Lord. However, concerning the next three pieces, the helmet of salvation, the shield of faith, and the sword of the Spirt, a verbal form in the present tense indicates that one must constantly employ these items when battling against Satan’s devices.[[34]](#footnote-34)

Furthermore, Stedman asserts that Satan’s opposition is beneficial for the believer: “We never would develop or grow properly if we were not attacked in this manner.”[[35]](#footnote-35) Arnold agrees, “Spiritual warfare is an integral part of the entire Christian experience.”[[36]](#footnote-36)

When Paul refers to the “sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God,” we affirm along with Dickason and others that what is in view here are specific Scripture texts that enable us to resist specific temptations (see Matt 4:4-10).[[37]](#footnote-37)

According to the apostle Paul, Satan’s power lies in his ability to accuse people based on the Law (Col 2:14). Аrnold comments here,

(Satan) likewise reminds believers of their shortcomings, unworthiness, and sin. By stimulating feelings of guilt, he hopes to keep Christians from feeling well-assured in their relationship to Christ and unworthy to receive his empowering grace.[[38]](#footnote-38)

However, when Jesus accomplished our redemption, He “disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him” (Col 2:15).[[39]](#footnote-39) Therefore, the death of Jesus delivers believers from the powers of darkness (Col 1:13), since His sacrifice provides for them forgiveness of sins and liberation from the power of sin. So then, the devil no longer has a place in believers, since they are in Christ Jesus (сf. Jn 14:30).[[40]](#footnote-40)

Therefore, in spite of the power and prevalence of Satan’s work, Paul could boldly claim victory over him in Christ: “For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom 8:38-39). Complete realization of this victory, though, still lies in the future: “The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet” (Rom 16:20). Nevertheless, “The Lord is faithful, and He will strengthen and protect you from the evil {one}” (2 Thes 3:3).[[41]](#footnote-41) God “will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it” (1 Cor 10:13). Paul was personally assured that “the Lord will rescue me from every evil deed, and will bring me safely to His heavenly kingdom” (2 Tim 4:18).

The apostle John reveals that the Son of God came “to destroy the works of the devil” (1 Jn 3:8). According to the Gospel of John, Jesus secured this victory through His death (Jn 12:31; 16:11). Consequently, in the book of Revelation we learn that the path to victory over the enemy and his accusations is through faith in the shed blood of the Lamb of God (Rev 12:11). Page affirms, “The verse emphasizes that Christ’s salvific work has robbed Satan of the right to bring accusations against Christians.”[[42]](#footnote-42)

John writes of our victory over Satan in other passages as well: “I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one” (1 Jn 2:13), “You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world” (1 Jn 4:4), “The evil one does not touch him” (1 Jn 5:18; сf. Jn 17:15).[[43]](#footnote-43) Unlike other Gospels, though, John’s account gives no record of casting out demons.[[44]](#footnote-44)

The book of Revelation’s use of verb νικάω (*nikao*) is most revealing. Its basic definition is “to conquer.” Sometimes it refers to triumph in a physical sense. For example, the beast “conquers” the saints through persecution (Rev 11:7; 13:7). On the other hand, when Christ returns, He will physically “conquer” the beast (Rev 17:14). Revelation uses νικάω (*nikao*) for spiritual triumph as well. For example, Jesus “conquered” temptation (Rev 5:5). In a similar way, the saints also “conquer” by not apostatizing during times of persecution (Rev 12:11; 15:2).

We come away, then, with the following startling contrast. In a physical sense, the beast conquers the saints through persecution. On the other hand, the saints conquer the beast by their perseverance in faith. They remain faithful to the Lord in spite of pressure from Antichrist to recant. Bauckham makes the same observation: “The same event – the martyrdom of Christians – is described both as the beast's victory over them and as their victory over the beast. In this way John poses the question: who are the real victors?[[45]](#footnote-45)

However, in the end the book of Revelation declares that Satan will suffer defeat not only spiritually, but his influence will also be totally negated. In Revelation 12:9 he is “cast down to the earth,” in Revelation 20:2-3 he is bound and cast into the abyss, and in Revelation 20:10 he is thrown into the lake of fire.

Let us summarize the New Testament teaching. These books describe in detail the condition of demon possession and how people in that condition conduct themselves. Aside from possession, the New Testament relates other activities of the devil, such as temptation, accusation, afflicting with disease, and persecution of Jesus-followers.

The good news, however, is that through the death of Christ for our sins, the power and authority of the devil over believers in Him is annulled. Through His ascension and exaltation, Jesus subdued the domain of darkness.[[46]](#footnote-46) So then, through Christ’s sacrifice and exaltation, believers enjoy victory over all the powers of evil. Although Satan is still not “crushed beneath our feet,” that is, he is still active in the world, believers nevertheless have power and authority over devils and can effectively resist them and cast them out.

### C. Special Topics

**1. Casting Out of Demons**

According to research conducted by Moreau, peoples of all nations and epochs have practiced exorcism. Various methods and rituals have been employed, including torture of the possessed, herbs, magic formulas, incantations, and animal sacrifice.[[47]](#footnote-47) However, as we shall see, the biblical method differs markedly.

Before we discuss casting out of devils, it will be useful to touch on the mechanism of demon possession.[[48]](#footnote-48) Dickason notes that the word most commonly used to describe possession, δαιμονιζομένος (*daimonidzomenos*), stands in the passive voice. On that basis, he concludes that possession is “demon-caused passivity,” that is, the demon indwells the individual, controls him or her, and expresses itself through that person.

There are various types of demons, indicated by their names (Acts 16:16; Lk 13:11; Mk 9:17). Demons express themselves through the individual in accordance with their designation. Hagin asserts, “When an unclean spirit controls a person or embodies him, it makes him unclean. A lying spirit makes a liar out of a person.”[[49]](#footnote-49) Sometimes a demon will express through the possessed person not only certain characteristics, but its personality as well, speaking through the voice of the possessed one.[[50]](#footnote-50) Dickason thinks that the amount of control exercised by demons depends on the number of demons involved, their rank, and the degree of their maleficence (see Matt 12:44-45).[[51]](#footnote-51) Yet, it is misguided to suppose that the possessed individual “belongs” to the evil spirit – he or she is merely under its influence and control.

How do people end up in this condition? The Bible does not say. Theologians and ministers of the gospel propose various theories, yet their views are based on personal experience. Nonetheless, we will examine several proposals.

Unger, for example, rejects the view accepted among ancient peoples that a demon can enter persons against their will. He appeals to the example of Saul, whom demons tormented because of his persistence in disobedience (see 1 Sam 13:13; 15:22-23; 16:14).[[52]](#footnote-52) Dickason (and others) ascribe some instances of demon possession to participation in the occult.[[53]](#footnote-53) Hagin teaches that the process begins when people receive a thought from the devil, which they allow to penetrate deeper and deeper into their personality. He also believes that only one demon possesses a person, but that demon can invite others to join. The “possessing” spirit always belongs to the class “world rulers of this darkness.”[[54]](#footnote-54)

Anderson holds a similar view of how possession begins. In his opinion, the path to demon possession begins in the mind – people lose control of their thinking. Then, they may start hearing voices in their heads, directing them to perform various actions. Thus, Anderson feels that absorption into the possessed state takes place progressively: “Nobody loses control to Satan overnight; it’s a gradual process of deception and yielding to his subtle influence.”[[55]](#footnote-55)

On the other hand, we see in Scripture that possession may begin from childhood (Mk 9:21; сf. Mф. 15:22; 17:14-16), which implies that it is not always the result of personal sin. In such examples, Dickason operates on the principle that the sins of the parents may affect their offspring,[[56]](#footnote-56) especially if the parents were involved in the occult.[[57]](#footnote-57)

However, it is curious that in the instances of deliverance recorded in the New Testament, it is nowhere indicated that the demon-possessed person was guilty of something that caused the possessed state. In addition, no demon-possessed person ever received a rebuke from the Lord for some past sin or exhortation to repent. Page boldly claims,

There is no biblical evidence to suggest that the demoniacs were considered responsible for their condition; in fact, the way possession is linked to illness in the Bible strongly suggests that they were not.[[58]](#footnote-58)

We also learn from Scripture that after a devil is cast out, it can return to its “host” if that individual allows it to do so (Lk 11:24-26; Matt 12:43-45).

Some consider that demonization occurs more frequently in those places where the gospel has been rarely preached or where people pray or read the Bible less. In other words, Satan enjoys more freedom in places where he receives less interference.[[59]](#footnote-59) Unger adds the thought that in modern culture, many cases of demon possession are unrecognized since the devil adopts more “culturally appropriate” manifestations.[[60]](#footnote-60)

From a biblical point of view, casting out of demons is a privilege of believers in Jesus. The Lord promised the Church authority to cast out demons, and the Church still possesses that authority today. The New Testament recorded many instances where not only Jesus, but also His disciples cast our evil spirits (Matt 10:8; Lk 10:17-20; Acts 16:18).

With rare exceptions, Jesus cast out demons with a straightforward command: “He cast out the spirits with a word” (Matt 8:16). Aune observes that unlike healing the sick, it is never recorded that Jesus ever touched a possessed person. Aune contrasts Christ’s straightforward approach with the pagan practice: “The brevity and authority of such commands and the absence of the invocation of divine or angelic names contrast with the lengthy adjurations and invocations that characterize formulas in the magical papyri.”[[61]](#footnote-61) It is also important to consider that although demons at time exit with a cry, convulsion, or the like, the New Testament does not devote much attention to such manifestations.[[62]](#footnote-62)

Once, Jesus asked the name of a demon (Mk 5:9). However, judging from the answer He received, “My name is Legion; for we are many” (Mk 5:9), this example may deal not so much with the names of the demons as with their number. “Legion” is not a name. Also notable is that when Jesus delivered this individual, He did not invoke the demons name is some formulaic way.[[63]](#footnote-63)

We also observe that the Legion did not immediately exit the possessed man. This verse employs the verbal form “imperfect,” ἔλεγεν (*elegen*), indicating a repetitive action. Dickason explains that Jesus allowed this delay either to emphasize the reality of the demon-possession, or His authority over the demons.[[64]](#footnote-64) Yet, the reality of the possessed man’s condition was already evident, and Jesus’ authority would be on greater display had the demons existed immediately.

In this connection, it is important to take into consideration that Jesus recognized different types of demon possession. After casting a devil out of a possessed boy, Jesus explained: “This kind cannot come out by anything but prayer” (Mk 9:29). Possibly, Jesus asked a question to the boy’s father to discern the “species” of demon He was dealing with: “How long has this been happening to him?” (Mk 9:21). It seems, then, that perseverance is needed to cast out certain types of demons (Mk 5), or special power obtained through prayer (Mk 9).[[65]](#footnote-65) Also significant is that in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus urged His disciples to pray “that you may not come into temptation” (Mk 14:38). Hence, we see again the efficacy of prayer in spiritual warfare.

Fasting is also an effective spiritual weapon. Here, though, we must clarify that in Mark 9:29, some translations read, “This kind cannot come out by anything but prayer *and fasting*.” Nonetheless, these words are missing in two of the most reliable Greek manuscripts (א, В).[[66]](#footnote-66) The parallel passage in Matthew 17:21 encounters the same dilemma – in these manuscripts (א, В), verse 21 is absent.[[67]](#footnote-67) On the other hand, when Satan tempted Jesus in the wilderness, He had been fasting for 40 days (Lk 4:2). Although the text does not specifically indicate that Jesus fasted in preparation for this spiritual battle, it is a safe assumption.

The account in Mark chapter 9 mentions another key to success in casting out demons – faith. When the possessed boy’s father expressed doubt in Jesus’ ability to deliver his son, the Lord replied, “All things are possible to him who believes” (Mk 9:23). The Matthian parallel gives special stress to this aspect, where Jesus answered His disciples question “Why could we not drive it out?” with the words, “Because of the littleness of your faith” (Matt 17:20).[[68]](#footnote-68) Finally, through faith the Canaanite woman received a miracle of deliverance for her daughter (Matt 15:22-28).[[69]](#footnote-69)

Of interest to note is that, although Jesus required faith from his disciples to cast out demons and sometimes from parents of those afflicted, He never required it from those possessed. The latter always assumed a passive role in the act. Page concurs, “Deliverance from possession is never granted in response to the faith of the possessed, though it is sometimes related to the faith of others.”[[70]](#footnote-70)

Moreover, when Jesus was discussing demon possession in Matthew chapter 12, He revealed this truth: “How can anyone enter the strong man's house and carry off his property, unless he first binds the strong {man}? And then he will plunder his house” (Matt 12:29). This means that someone must overpower Satan before he will release any of his prisoners. The fact that Jesus did indeed deliver victims of demon possession shows that He had bound the strong man. Many feel that Jesus accomplished this through His sacrifice on Calvary, as indicated in Jn 12:31-32.[[71]](#footnote-71) Others posit that since Jesus cast out demons before His crucifixion, He must have bound the strong man when He successfully resisted temptation in the wilderness. The first option, though, has clear biblical support.

Some final features to note in Jesus’ “methods” for deliverance are as follows. He could forbid demons to return to a liberated individual: “You deaf and mute spirit, I command you, come out of him and do not enter him again” (Mk 9:25). It appears that He also had authority to cast demons into the abyss. This would explain the demons’ request “not to command them to go away into the abyss” (Lk 8:31). Moreover, Jesus never sought out candidates for deliverance – they came to Him or were brought to Him.[[72]](#footnote-72) Finally, Jesus could cast out a demon from a distance (Matt 15:22-28).[[73]](#footnote-73)

In the book of Acts, the disciples continue the Master’s work of deliverance (Acts 5:16; 8:5-7).[[74]](#footnote-74) In imitation of the Lord, Paul cast a demon out of a servant girl by issuing a command in Jesus’ name (Acts 16:16-18). It is curious to note that at one time, demons exited individuals upon contact with Paul’s clothing (Acts 19:12), which differs from the principle earlier noted that Jesus never touched those He delivered from evil spirits.

We must add that to effectively deliver from demons, one must not only employ the name of Jesus, but also be a believer in Him. Some Jewish exorcists were unable to cast out demons in Jesus’ name (Acts 19:13-16). Dickason comments here, “When the believer utters, ‘In the name of the Lord Jesus,’ he is not using a magical or mystical formula; he is exercising His God-given authority by virtue of his union with Christ.”[[75]](#footnote-75)

Unger adds the thought that the authority to cast out demons is not in the words, “in the name of Jesus,” as if it was an incantation, but in the One to whom the words apply. We also take into consideration that the Holy Spirit is also active in this affair (Matt 12:28), which again confirms that the power is not in a formula, but in the Persons of the Son and the Spirit.[[76]](#footnote-76)

We also discover an interesting example in the Gospels where a person, who was not one of the disciples following Jesus, was casting out demons in His name (Mk 9:38-39). We must assume that this unnamed “exorcist,” even though he was not numbered among the disciples, was a true believer in Him.[[77]](#footnote-77)

To our surprise, God’s Word forbids us to revile the devil or demons. Jude decries those who “revile angelic majesties” (Jude 8). He cites the example of Michael the archangel, who refused to “pronounce against (the devil) a railing judgment” (Jude 9).

Before we come to any conclusion about this issue, we will conduct a brief survey of deliverance ministry in church history. In the second century, Justin Martyr testified of the success Christians were having in dealing with demon possession:

For numberless demoniacs throughout the whole world, and in your city, many of our Christian men exorcising them in the name of Jesus Christ, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, have healed and do heal, rendering helpless and driving the possessing devils out of the men, though they could not be cured by all the other exorcists, and those who used incantations and drugs (*2 Apology,* 6).

Similarly, Tertullian speaks of the authority believers have over demons in the name of Jesus:

Why, all the authority and power we have over them is from our naming the name of Christ, and recalling to their memory the woes with which God threatens them at the hands of Christ as Judge, and which they expect one day to overtake them. Fearing Christ in God, and God in Christ, they become subject to the servants of God and Christ. So at our touch and breathing, overwhelmed by the thought and realization of those judgment fires, they leave at our command the bodies they have entered (*Apology,* 23).

Origin also glorifies the power of Jesus’ name:

For it is not by incantations that Christians seem to prevail (over evil spirits), but by the name of Jesus, accompanied by the announcement of the narratives which relate to Him; for the repetition of these has frequently been the means of driving demons out of men, especially when those who repeated them did so in a sound and genuinely believing spirit. Such power, indeed, does the name of Jesus possess over evil spirits, that there have been instances where it was effectual, when it was pronounced even by bad men, which Jesus Himself taught (would be the case), when He said: “Many shall say to Me in that day, In Thy name we have cast out devils, and done many wonderful works” (*Against Celsus,* 1.6).

In conclusion, we cite Marcus Minucius Felix:

Thus they fly from Christians when near at hand, whom at a distance they harassed by your means in their assemblies (*Octavius,* 27)

Moreau tells of various rituals that have crept into the church over time, which have no biblical sanction, such as: use of water, oil, the cross, reading Scripture, and special formulas.[[78]](#footnote-78) Since the second century, practitioners of deliverance added to the simple command, “in the name of Jesus,” various biographical events from the Savior’s career, for example, “In the name of Jesus, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate.”[[79]](#footnote-79) However, Gross warns of the danger of using formulas for casting out demons: “When success in deliverance ministries centers on saying the right words or being in the right environment, the whole procedure dangerously approaches magic.”[[80]](#footnote-80)

In the Roman Catholic tradition, exorcism is applied at the time of water baptism. This practice traces back to the Early Church, when candidates for water baptism renounced the devil and all his works.[[81]](#footnote-81) In the case of actual demon possession, a “major exorcism” is performed by a priest in the name of Jesus by permission of the bishop.[[82]](#footnote-82) Some Catholics light candles to ward off evil powers. Unger believes that this practice traces back to “ancient modes for keeping evil spirits in check by fire.”[[83]](#footnote-83)

The Reformers responded by refraining from exorcism altogether. The Catholic Church also subsequently set limits on how exorcism was practiced. Liberal theologians went to the other extreme of denying the reality of demon possession, considering it a manifestation of psychological pathology.[[84]](#footnote-84)

In modern times, those experienced with deliverance ministry give their recommendation. Dickason, for example states that if a demon refuses to come out, one must inquire on what basis it refuses. After the possessed individual confesses and forsakes sin, the demon must depart. Confession of sin is also beneficial after the deliverance along with renunciation of occult practices by the individual or family. Such persons must also put away all objects connected with the occult (see Ex 32:20; 2 Kin 23:4-25; Acts 19:18-19). In addition, the liberated individual must maintain their position of victory that Christ accomplished for them, resisting the devil and growing spiritually.[[85]](#footnote-85)

Dickason also recommends spiritual counselling for those delivered from evil spirits so that the individual can grow in his or her personal relationship with Jesus. Counselling is done to fulfill the Great Commission of our Lord, “Make disciples of all nations” (Matt 28:19). Dickason doubts the existence of a concrete spiritual gift of delivering from demons and warns that devoting too much attention to this ministry can be detrimental to the deliverance minister.[[86]](#footnote-86)

Another gospel preacher experienced in deliverance ministry, Lester Sumrall, shares his insights.[[87]](#footnote-87) Referring to Jesus’ example, he feels that the one casting out a demon has the right to determine what the demon can or cannot do subsequently. Furthermore, he feels that demons can inhabit a dwelling, but can be expelled from there.[[88]](#footnote-88) In addition, a possessed person cannot deliver themselves.[[89]](#footnote-89) Finally, the sign that the demon has truly been cast out is that the eyes clear, the stomach relaxes, and joy is experienced.

Kenneth Hagin adds the thought that the presence of a demon in a person is discerned with the aid of the spiritual gifts “word of knowledge” or “discerning of spirits.” He also feels that knowing the name and number of demons is needed for a successful encounter. He holds that believers have authority to cast demons of lower ranks into the abyss.[[90]](#footnote-90)

Neil Anderson asserts that those casting out demons must possess certain personality characteristics, such as confidence in one’s spiritual authority, humility, and dependence on the Lord.[[91]](#footnote-91) Anderson conducts an interview with the possessed person to ascertain with certainty that possession has occurred. He inquires as to the individual’s involvement with the occult, or that of his or her family. He provides basic spiritual instruction to the candidate for deliverance, and leads the individual through: (1) renunciation of his or her involvement in the occult or that of his or her family, (2) an honest self-evaluation and confession of sin, (3) forgiveness of others, (4) submission to God and authorities, and (5) embracing humility. By this means, the possessed person actually delivers himself or herself, which is preferred since it places the delivered individual in better position to resist the devil subsequent to the experience of deliverance.[[92]](#footnote-92)

However, when we rely on someone’s personal experience in deliverance ministry without backup from the Bible, we violate the principle of the “sufficiency of Scripture,” which states that the Bible contains all that is necessary for successful Christian life and ministry (see 1 Tim 3:16-17). Therefore, although is it prudent to listen to the counsel of experienced ministers of the gospel, it is always preferable to have biblical confirmation of any teaching or practice.

On the basis of Scripture, we can say the following about demon possession:

1. Demon possession is a real phenomenon, with which the Church must be ready to deal.
2. In Christ, the Church has authority over Satan and demons.
3. Any believer in Jesus can cast out a devil in His name. At the same time, it is desirable that such individuals have confidence in their position in Christ and the authority of that position.
4. In connection with the previous point, faith is required of those performing the deliverance and is also desired of those in charge of the possessed person. The minister of deliverance must approach the encounter will full confidence in its positive outcome.
5. One must not resort to special rituals or formulas to liberate the possessed individual. A simple command in Jesus’ name is adequate.
6. The degree of possession depends on the number of demons (Mk 5:9), the “type” of demon (Mk 9:29), and their degree of wickedness (Matt 12:45).
7. In connection with the previous point, at times it is necessary to learn something about the evil spirit or its character in order to elucidate the severity of the possession. One may obtain this information from the demon (Mk 5:9), from people aware of the situation (Mk 9:21), or from the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 12:8-10).
8. In cases of more severe demonization, the minister of deliverance must be spiritually prepared through prayer and possibly fasting. Casting out demons in this context may require more perseverance.
9. It is better not to allow demons to speak (except as in № 6).
10. It is inappropriate to revile demons (Jude 9).

**2. Demon Possession of Believers?**

Many are troubled by the question whether true believers in Christ can have a demon. We will examine arguments for and against this position.

In favor of this view, we may appeal to the following proofs. Some cite Saul as an example of a backslidden believer who became possessed (1 Sam 16:14-15). On the other hand, we must keep in mind that the demon tormented Saul, but did not appear to indwell him. In addition, some would challenge the claim that Saul was a genuine believer at all. Also significant is that the Holy Spirit departed from him before the evil spirit came to him (1 Sam 16:14). Finally, the demon departed from him whenever David played his harp, which one would not expect from an indwelling demon.[[93]](#footnote-93)

Another case to consider is the woman bent over by a demon, whom Jesus called a “daughter of Abraham,” thus likely indicating a genuine faith (Lk 13:16, сf. Lk 19:9).[[94]](#footnote-94) Opponents of this view, however, claim that the designation “daughter of Abraham” may not refer to her spiritual condition, but simply her ethnicity. In addition, the demon may not have possessed her, but merely caused the physical malady.

In 1 Corinthians 5:5, Paul introduces the topic of delivering someone over to Satan. This does not involve giving someone over to demon possession, but removing God’s protection from the person being chastised. In Acts chapter 5, it is said that Satan filled the heart of Ananias. Again, no demon possession is in view here, but Ananias merely gave place to the devil’s temptation.[[95]](#footnote-95) Regarding Judas Iscariot, without doubt he was possessed, possibly by Satan himself (Jn 13:27). Yet, it is very doubtful that he was a sincere follower of Christ – Jesus once called him a “devil” (Jn 6:70).[[96]](#footnote-96)

In 2 Timothy 1:7, Paul makes reference to a “spirit of fear.” Is this a spirit that can indwell believers? Here, we must consider that in the New Testament, the term “spirit” can refer both to a personality and also to an attitude, such as a “spirit of gentleness” (1 Cor 4:21) or a “quiet spirit” (1 Pet 3:4). We affirm the following statement:

Thus, unless the context shows that an independent spirit-being is meant, it seems best to take most phrases such as a haughty spirit, a hasty spirit, a spirit of slumber, a spirit of jealousy, etc., to be sins of the disposition or lusts of the flesh (Galatians 6), and not demons.[[97]](#footnote-97)

Arnold advances the following arguments supporting the conviction of a believer’s possession.[[98]](#footnote-98) He points our attention to the word τόπος (*topos*) in Ephesians 4:27: “Do not give the devil a place (τόπος).” We encounter this term in discussions of demons in Luke 11:24 and Revelation 12:7-8 as well. In both instances, it indicates a physical location where Satan or a demon can be situated. Moreover, Ephesians 3:16-19 is interpreted to say that the Holy Spirit progressively fills the heart of believers. Does this mean that evil spirits can inhabit the places the Spirit does not yet occupy?

However, any “vacancy” left unoccupied by the Spirit will not inevitably be given over to Satan. In addition, the phrase “give place to the devil” does not necessarily refer to possession, but likely refers to giving in to temptation.

Furthermore, Arnold sees possible references to demon possession of believers in the following excerpts: “Do not let sin reign in your mortal body” (Rom 6:12); “They may come to their senses {and escape} from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will” (2 Tim 2:26); “Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour” (1 Pet 5:8); “In later times some will fall away from the faith” (1 Tim 4:1); “See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception” (Col 2:8); “How is it that you turn back again to the weak and worthless elemental things, to which you desire to be enslaved all over again?” When considering these examples, though, one must note that Satan can exert his influence in various ways, not just through possession.

Hagin defends the view that a demon cannot indwell the spirit of a Christian since he believes that the spirit of a believer is born again and has divine nature. An evil spirit can indwell the soul or body of a Christian, if the latter gives place to it.[[99]](#footnote-99) Nevertheless, Hagin’s understanding of demon possession is tainted by his incorrect anthropology, which we discussed in chapter 1.

Along with our refutations of the arguments above supporting possession of believers, other arguments count against it as well. For example, one could argue that the presence of the Holy Spirit in believers rules out the simultaneous occupation by a demon spirit (Rom 8:9). According to Luke 11:24-26, a demon spirit can enter only when the “home” is “empty.”[[100]](#footnote-100) The body of a Christian cannot be the temple of the Holy Spirit and a den of demons at the same time (2 Cor 6:15-16).[[101]](#footnote-101)

Supporters of the theory that believers can be possessed respond that the presence of a sinful nature in humans does not prevent the simultaneous indwelling of the Spirit. Why can an unclean spirit, then, not indwell a believer? They also appeal to Job chapters 1-2, where God allowed an evil spirit (Satan) into His presence.[[102]](#footnote-102) Arnold compares the heart of a believer with the Jerusalem temple. He cites times when idols would be present in the temple where God also dwelt.[[103]](#footnote-103)

Turning again to arguments opposing the teaching on possession,[[104]](#footnote-104) we note that the Bible abounds in references to Christ’s victory over the devil and the believer’s deliverance from his power (Col 1:13; 2:14-15; Heb 2:14-15; Acts 26:18). However, others object that these passages of Scripture describe the legal position believers have in Christ, not their daily experience. Satan continues to “prowl around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour” (1 Pet 5:8).

Furthermore, the Lord promises to keep His own from the evil one (1 Jn 5:18; 2 Thes 3:3; Jn 17:15; 10:28-29). The Greater One lives in us (1 Jn 4:4). On the other hand, the Bible instructs us to resist the devil, which implies that the Lord’s protection is not automatic.

The final argument refuting possession of believers is that in the New Testament epistles, the apostles never mention that a believer may have a demon.[[105]](#footnote-105) It is reasonable to assume that if demon possession was a significant problem for believers in Christ, the apostles, who were intensely invested in the spiritual growth of the Church, would have certainly addressed this issue. Yet, the New Testament epistles lack any clear reference to it.

We will glance at several excerpts from the Church Fathers to discover their views on this topic.[[106]](#footnote-106) The following writers considered possession of believers a real possibility. The book *Pastor of Hermas* claims that both the Spirit of God and an evil spirit can cohabitate in a Christian.

But if any outburst of anger take place, forthwith the Holy Spirit, who is tender, is straitened, not having a pure place, and He seeks to depart. For he is choked by the vile spirit, and cannot attend on the Lord as he wishes, for anger pollutes him. For the Lord dwells in long-suffering, but the devil in anger. The two spirits, then, when dwelling in the same habitation, are at discord with each other, and are troublesome to that man in whom they dwell (*Commandments, 5.1*).

The next passage asserts that the devil may only enter into an uncommitted Christian:

So also the devil goes to all the servants of God to try them. As many, then, as are full in the faith, resist him strongly, and he withdraws from them, having no way by which he might enter them. He goes, then, to the empty, and finding a way of entrance, into them, he produces in them whatever he wishes, and they become his servants (*Commandments, 12.5*).

Origen speaks of believers being possessed and of their deliverance:

Anyone who vanquishes a demon in himself, e.g. the demon of lewdness, puts it out of action; the demon is cast into the abyss, and cannot do any harm to anyone (*Homily on Joshua,* 15:5).[[107]](#footnote-107)

We can also cite the so-called Apostolic Constitutions, written in the fourth century, where the author comments on possession of the unbaptized.[[108]](#footnote-108)

Ye energumens, afflicted with unclean spirits, pray, and let us all earnestly pray for them, that God, the lover of mankind, will by Christ rebuke the unclean and wicked spirits, and deliver His supplicants from the dominion of the adversary (8:6).

If anyone hath a demon, let him indeed be taught piety, but not received into communion before he be cleansed (8:32).

Cyprian ascribes victory over demons to water baptism, yet demons can re-enter a backslider:

The obstinate wickedness of the devil prevails even up to the saving water, but that in baptism it loses all the poison of his wickedness…. When, however, they come to the water of salvation and to the sanctification of baptism, we ought to know and to trust that there the devil is beaten down, and the man, dedicated to God, is set free by the divine mercy (*Letters,* 75.15).

Some of those who are baptized in health, if subsequently they begin to sin, are shaken by the return of the unclean spirit, so that it is manifest that the devil is driven out in baptism by the faith of the believer, and returns if the faith afterwards shall fail (*Letters,* 75.16).

In addition, Eusebius twice mentions the ministry of exorcism in the Church (*Church History*, 6.43.11; 8.6). Yet, we also note that the office of an exorcist is not mentioned until the third century, although the practice of exorcism dates back to the second century.[[109]](#footnote-109)

Not a few modern commentators, who have experience with casting out demons, insist that believers can be possessed if they are walking according to the flesh.[[110]](#footnote-110) Gross objects, though, that such people may not actually be true Christians at all.[[111]](#footnote-111)

Church history also records those who rejected the idea of a possessed Christian. Calvin, for example, penned the following:

God thus turning the unclean spirits hither and thither at his pleasure, employs them in exercising believers by warring against them, assailing them with wiles, urging them with solicitations, pressing close upon them, disturbing, alarming, and occasionally wounding, but never conquering or oppressing them…. I deny that believers can ever be oppressed or vanquished by him…. God, therefore, does not allow Satan to have dominion over the souls of believers.[[112]](#footnote-112)

Stedman concurs, asserting that Satan can discourage, frighten, or weaken believers, but not control them.[[113]](#footnote-113) Unger, author of *Biblical Demonology*, initially taught that believers can be subject to “pressure, suggestion, (and) temptation,” but not possession.[[114]](#footnote-114) However, according to Arnold, Unger later rethought his position and conceded that believers could indeed be possessed.[[115]](#footnote-115)

Finally, some take an agnostic stance toward the question. In Dickason’s words, “A rather thorough examination of the biblical evidence leads us to conclude that it neither clearly affirms nor denies the reality of demonization of believers.”[[116]](#footnote-116)

Of all the arguments presented above, the most convincing is the fact that the epistle writers, who were intensely interested in the sanctification of believers and their victory over Satan, never mention deliverance from demon possession as an asset to spiritual growth. This fact, supplemented by other proofs already mentioned, convince us that a sincere Christian will not have a demon.

What about the fact that demon possession was so common in first-century Israel? Here, we must note that the spiritual condition of those possessed is unknown. We might concede that the woman that Jesus called a “daughter of Abraham” had genuine saving faith (cf. Lk 19:9). It is written of her that she had a “sickness caused by a spirit,” or literally πνεῦμα ἀσθενείας, “a spirit of infirmity” (Lk 13:11). However, a careful reading of this passage reveals several important nuances. First, Jesus did not cast a demon out of the woman, but rather said, “Woman, you are freed *from your sickness*.” Second, Jesus laid hands on her, which is something He never did in cases of possession by evil spirits. So then, although this woman had a “sickness caused by a spirit,” this does not appear to be a classic case of demon possession. We may allow that a believer can have a sickness caused by a demon.

Nonetheless, even if Christians cannot be possessed, they are subject to attacks from the devil. Jesus-followers must resist him, in Dickason’s opinion, with a rebuke directed to the demon itself[[117]](#footnote-117). Believers must also rely on their position of authority in Christ, as Gross notes, “When Christians claim their status as God’s children, through the person and work of Christ, Satan’s influence over them is immediately vanquished.”[[118]](#footnote-118)

**3. “Binding” and “Loosing”**

Many apply the words of Jesus, that the Church has authority to “bind and loose,” to dealing with devils. It is thought that a proclamation to bind Satan prevents him from carrying out his evil intentions. The following passages are pertinent to our discussion: Matthew 12:29; Matthew 16:19; Matthew 18:18.

Examining the context of Matthew 18:18, though, we discover that “binding and loosing” here refers to church discipline. Matthew 16:19 is a more open question. Nevertheless, the mention of the “keys of the kingdom of God,” which most likely refer to the preaching of the gospel, leads us to understand “binding and loosing” as proclaiming the conditions for receiving salvation.

Only Matthew 12:29, then, directly deals with our struggle with the powers of darkness: “How can anyone enter the strong man's house and carry off his property, unless he first binds the strong {man}? And then he will plunder his house.” In our previous discussion of this verse, we concluded that Jesus is the one who bound Satan through either His sacrificial death or His victory over temptation in the wilderness. Only in virtue of Jesus *already* having bound the devil can His followers approach casting out demons with confidence.

Nonetheless, the biblical injunction to “resist” the devil remains applicable for believers (Jam 4:7; 1 Pet 5:9). It is not so important what words we use to resist him, as it is the fact that we are resisting. In addition, the fact that during His earthly ministry, Jesus spoke directly to Satan gives us grounds to address evil spirits directly in the name of the Lord, resisting their evil actions against us.

**4. Territorial Spirits**

We recall our discussion from chapter 3 on the existence of a hierarchy of demons that support various national governments and direct them. We found sufficient evidence to conclude that a demonic hierarchy in some relation to human governments likely exists. Yet, the question remains as to the appropriate response to this phenomenon.

A main figure in the move to actively engage in spiritual warfare against these so-called “territorial spirits” was C. Peter Wagner.[[119]](#footnote-119) He defines the concept of territorial spirits as follows:

These enemy forces are frequently called “territorial spirits” because they attempt to keep large numbers of humans networked through cities, nations, neighborhoods, people groups, religious allegiance, industries or any other form of human society in spiritual captivity.[[120]](#footnote-120)

The goal of this engagement with territorial spirits is to remove the hindering influence of these demons, which is described in 2 Corinthians 4:3-4. This goal is reached through prayer: “Our number one spiritual weapon is prayer.”[[121]](#footnote-121)

However, the type of prayer practiced in this movement has its own unique character. Operating on the example of Joshua 1:3, “Every place on which the sole of your foot treads, I have given it to you,” prayer walks are organized, especially on site at the “target” areas, to conduct “strategic prayer.” In addition, “spiritual maps” are drawn up indicating the location, names, character and activity of the main demonic powers in the target area.[[122]](#footnote-122) These maps are prepared with the aid of prophetic revelation. It is thought that such information makes possible more accurate and effective prayer.

Moreover, based on 2 Samuel chapter 21, exponents of this theory practice “identification repentance,” which consists of an act of repentance by the intercessor on behalf of those who live in the target area and are caught up in a certain type of transgression. The prevailing vice for which identification repentance is performed is also discovered by prophetic revelation. If identification repentance is not done, the demons may return to their positions of authority.[[123]](#footnote-123)

Another weapon in use is “binding and loosing.” Again, prophetic insight makes known exactly what needs to be bound or loosed. The demonic forces are addressed by name and given orders and demands. Jesus already won the victory over evil, but the Church must enforce His authority. In this way, the words of Paul are fulfilled, “that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly {places}” (Eph 3:10).

Although the Bible does not detail all these aspects of spiritual warfare, Wagner and his followers feel that the Bible is not the only source of truth. They rely on experience as well. They observe what God is doing in practice and form their theology correspondingly. They feel the positive results that they obtain confirms their convictions. Supporters of this approach also feel that animism offers some helpful insights into spiritual truths and are ready, with caution, to learn from it.

Finally, exponents of this method conduct interviews with demons (in possessed people seeking deliverance), who allegedly give insight into the spirit-world. They justify this practice by noting that in the biblical narrative, demons always answer truthfully to questions asked of them. However, Gross correctly states that in light of Jesus’ instruction in 8:44, information obtained from demons is not reliable. In fact, Jesus often forbade demons to speak (Mk 1:34; Lk 4:41).[[124]](#footnote-124)

Wagner also appeals to church history for examples of warfare with territorial spirits. Gregory the Miracle Worker cast a demon out of the temple of Apollos resulting in the conversion of the pagan priest serving there. Consequently, 83 percent of the inhabitants of that region became Christians. Martin of Tours resisted the main demon in a certain region, who was worshiped under the figure of a pine tree. This act also resulted in people coming to Christ. Other saints, like Benedict of Nursia and Boniface, destroyed idols, thereby bringing down the corresponding demonic powers.

Arnold makes mention of several Church Fathers who taught on territorial spirits.[[125]](#footnote-125) Justin Martyr spoke of an “evil demon that dwelt in Damascus” (*Dialogue,* 78) and that “evil angels have dwelt and do dwell in Tanis, in Egypt” (*Dialogue,* 79). Furthermore, Tertullian and Marcus Minucius Felix associated idols with pagan gods. Lactantius taught that God appointed angels to oversee people, yet they became evil and aspired to deity.

Wagner also takes an example from the ministry of our Lord Jesus. He began His ministry by defeating Satan in the wilderness. Therefore, all successful ministries begin with a struggle against Satan. Wagner also draws on the book of Acts for examples:

- When Peter rebuked Simon of Samaria, he tore down the local territorial spirit, which led to the outpouring of the Spirit on Samaria (Acts 8).

- Herod was the instrument of a territorial spirit, yet prayer in the home of Mary nullified it (Acts 12).

- Paul drove out a territorial spirit in Pathos when he resisted Elymas (Acts 13).

- In Acts 16, Paul cast a spirit of divination out of a slave girl. Literally, the phrase is πνεῦμα πύθωνα (spirit Puthona), which is the name of a territorial spirit.

- The expression “wild beasts in Ephesus” (1 Cor 15:32) refers to Paul warring with territorial spirits through strategic prayer.

Lowe cites other arguments used by adherents to “strategic prayer.”[[126]](#footnote-126) Hebrews 2:5 is interpreted to say that God submitted to the angels not the world to come, but this present world. In addition, when the Legion requested Jesus “not to send them out of the country” (Mk 5:10), they were desiring to stay in their native “territory.”

However, we discover several weaknesses in this position. Concerning the citations from Acts, we note the following. The revival in Samaria began not with Peter’s rebuke of Simon, but with Phillip’s preaching. In addition, Peter addressed Simon directly, not some controlling spirit. At Mary’s house, it is safe to assume that they prayed for Peter’s release, not against dominating evil powers. The deliverance of Acts 16 led not to a revival, but to persecution. Finally, the narrative of Paul’s ministry in Ephesus in no way hints of his warring with territorial spirits through strategic prayer.

Arnold makes the following criticisms of this teaching.[[127]](#footnote-127) First, if territorial spirits control various nations, then why do they war between themselves? Second, we never read about this practice in the New Testament. Third, the evidence for spiritual warfare with territorial spirits from church history is unconvincing. The Council of Nicaea, in fact, rejected the practice.

Furthermore, even though the prophet Daniel learned about demonic princes, he nowhere prayed against them. Instances of revival attributed to strategic prayer could be explained by other causative factors. In addition, Arnold fears that learning demon’s names to control them smacks of animism. He also expresses doubts, as do we, that the principle of “binding and loosing” in Matthew 16:19, relates to warring against demonic principalities.

Lowe offers his criticisms as well.[[128]](#footnote-128) He holds the view that our position toward Satan is not offense, but rather defensive. According to Ephesians 1:20-21, the domain of darkness is already subject to Christ. Believers in Him are already delivered from Satan’s control (Eph 2:1-9; Col 1:13; 2:15). Therefore, as stated in Ephesians 6:13, our task is to “stand” against the powers of evil, i.е., stand in the victory that Christ already attained: “Christ has won the battle; we are to stand firm in the face of Satanic counter-attack.”[[129]](#footnote-129)

Lowe observes some significant features about Paul’s description of “the full armor of God.” It consists not only of defense gear, but also one offensive weapon – the sword of the Spirit. Yet, Lowe qualifies that during Jesus’ temptation in the wilderness, He used the Word for defense. Moreover, the mention of prayer in connection with the full armor of God does not lend credence to the practice of strategic prayer. This call to prayer is not grammatically connected to the previous context. In addition, Paul does not summon the saints to pray against demonic strongholds, but to pray for him and all the saints.

Lowe notes the same points in the book of Revelation. Although the Apocalypse makes numerous mentions of demonic powers, it never instructs the saints to engage in strategic prayer. The saints overcome, rather, through perseverance in trials. From a historical point of view, Lowe adds that, although Christians of the Middle Ages conducted prayer walks for expulsion of demons, the Reformers rejected this practice and considered it magical. It is said that Luther resisted the devil with “Scripture and sacraments.”[[130]](#footnote-130)

Lowe continues his critique by noting that revival broke out not only in Argentina, where strategic prayer was employed, but also in other South American countries, where it was not practiced. Thus, the revival in Argentina may have arisen from factors other than battle with territorial spirits. Lowe is also concerned about the overlap between strategic prayer and animism. He warns, “When the key to ministry success depends of a particular type, pattern or formula of prayer, then animism is not far behind. When effectiveness depends on identifying and using spirit names, magic is at work.”[[131]](#footnote-131)

Page comments that, on the one hand, this approach makes several correct assertions: (1) one must take the spiritual realm and its influence on us seriously, and (2) one should be active in intercession.[[132]](#footnote-132) Arnold also sees value in confessing the sins of a people group (see Dan 9 and Neh 1).[[133]](#footnote-133)

On the other hand, we concur with Page, “That the Bible attests to the existence and activity of territorial spirits does not constitute grounds for thinking that Christians can or should attempt to identify them and the areas they control.”[[134]](#footnote-134) We conclude, then, that the practice of strategic prayer against territorial spirits lacks sufficient biblical support to be an acceptable practice for the Church.

1. Arnold C. E. Three Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare. – Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1997. – P. 40. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Aune D. E. Exorcism // Bromiley G. W. The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia. – Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1988. – V. 2. – P. 242. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Page S. H. T. Powers of Evil: A Biblical Study on Satan and Demons. – Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1995. – P. 27. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Aune, Exorcism, p. 242. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. It is curious to note that not a few Christian writers thought that the princes of Daniel chapter 10 were, in fact, good angels: Theodoret, Pseudo-Dionysius, Gregory I, and Jerome (Lowe C. Territorial Spirits and World Evangelization. – Geanies House, Great Britain: OMF, 1998. – P. 86-87). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Weiss J. Demoniac // The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, 1909. – V. 3. – P. 402; in Unger M. F. Biblical Demonology. – Wheaton, IL: Scripture Press, 1952. – P. 80 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Aune, Exorcism, p. 243. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Charles R. H. Apocrypha of the Old Testament. – Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2004. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 8.2.5. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Moreau correctly observes that the New Testament never uses the word ἐξορκιστής (*exorkistes*), i.е., “exorcist,” for Jesus or His disciples. The only use of this word in the New Testament is in Acts 19:13 for some Jewish exorcists (Moreau A. S. Exorcism // Elwell W. A. Evangelical Dictionary of Theology. – 2nd ed. – Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001. – P. 427). [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 8.2.5. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Aune, Exorcism, p. 243. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Aune D. E. Demonology // Bromiley G. W. The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia. – Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1988. – V. 1. – P. 922. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. See Josephus, *Antiquites of the Jews*, 2.12.4; 8.2.5; Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, 2.4.6; Origen, *Against Celsus*, 1.22; 4.33-34; 5.45; Justin Martyr, *Dialogue*, 85.135 (Aune, Exorcism, p. 243). [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Ibid. Aune also mentions the use of Jesus’ name in Gentile exorcisms (Aune, Demonology, p. 923). [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Aune, Exorcism, p. 243-244. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. See *Philopseudes,* 16 (Aune, Exorcism, p. 243-244). [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Aune, Demonology, p. 922. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. McClelland S. E. Demons, Demonization // Elwell W. A. Evangelical Dictionary of Theology. – 2nd ed. – Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001. – P. 332. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Aune, Demonology, p. 922. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. McClelland, p. 332. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Page defends the view that Jesus allowed the demons to enter the swine in order either to show that they actually came out of the possessed man, or to show the destructive nature of evil spirits (Page, p. 155). [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Sumrall L. F. 101 Questions and Answers on Demon Powers. – Tulsa, OK: Harrison House, 1983. – P. 28-30. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Aune, Exorcism, p. 244-245. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Stedman R. Spiritual Warfare. – Waco, TX: Word Books, 1975. – P. 46. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Ibid., p. 207. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. In Philippians 2:25 and Philemon 2, the term “fellow-soldier” is a translation of the Greek συστρατιώτης (*sustratiotes*), which consists of two parts: συ = together with, and στρατιώτης = soldier. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Arnold, p. 43. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Stedman, p. 139. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Arnold, p. 38. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Dickason C. F. Demon Possession and the Christian. – Westchester, IL: Crossway Books, 1987. – P. 253. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Stedman, p. 69-77. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Ibid., p. 82. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Arnold, p. 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Dickason, p. 107. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Arnold, p. 99. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Ibid., p. 252-253. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Anderson N. T. The Bondage Breaker. – Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 1990. – P. 79. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Ibid., p. 197. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Page, p. 215. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Ibid., p. 207. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Page, p. 173 [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Bauckham R. Тhe Тheology of the Book of Revelation. – Cambridge University Press, 1993. – P. 90. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Piggin F. S. Principalities and Powers // Elwell W. A. Evangelical Dictionary of Theology. – 2nd ed. – Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001. – P. 956. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Moreau, p. 427-428. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Dickason, p. 37-44. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Hagin K. E. Demons and How to Deal with Them – Broken Arrow, OK: Rhema Bible Church, 1987. – P. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Stedman, p. 44. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Dickason, p. 44. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Unger, p. 27-28. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Dickason, p. 217. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Hagin K. E. Ministering To the Oppressed. – Broken Arrow, OK: Rhema Bible Church, 1987. – P. 6, 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Anderson, p. 107. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. He cites 1 Kings 14:9-10; 16:1-3; Jeremiah 16:10-13; Nehemiah 9:33-37; Matthew 23:32-36. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Dickason, p. 219-220. Arnold also comments on this (p. 116-120). [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Page, p. 178-179. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Sumrall, p. 40-41 [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Unger, p. 82-83. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. Aune, Exorcism, p. 244. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. General Council of the Assemblies of God. Can Born-Again Believers Be Demon Possessed?

http://ag.org/top/Beliefs/Position\_Papers/pp\_downloads/pp\_4176\_possessed.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. Page, p. 152. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. Dickason, p. 258-259. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. Page suggests that the one performing the deliverance must ask God for the power to perform it (Page, p. 164). [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. Metzger B. M. A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament. – 2nd ed. – London; New York: United Bible Societies, 1994. – P. 85 [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. Ibid., p. 35. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. Page thinks that because of the disciples’ earlier success in casting out evil spirits, they began to rely on their own ability and not on the name of Jesus. See Page, p. 163. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. Ibid., p. 158. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. Ibid., p. 179. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. Arnold, p. 50; Page, p. 129. [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. Possibly, the case with the legion of demons may be an exception. It is very likely that Jesus crossed the sea with the intention of meeting the man. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. Page, p. 158, 165. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. Ibid., p. 174. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. Dickason, p. 248. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. Unger, p. 103ff. [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. Unger so teaches (see Unger, p. 106). [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. Moreau, p. 427. [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. See Justin Martyr, *Dialog,* 30.3; 76.6; 85.2; *Apology* 2.6; Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, 2.49.3. From Aune, Demonology, p. 923. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. Gross E. N. Miracles, Demons, and Spiritual Warfare: An Urgent Call for Discernment. – Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1990. – P. 119. [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. Aune, Demonology, p. 923; McClelland, p 333. [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. Catechism of the Catholic Church, № 1673. https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/\_INDEX.HTM [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. Unger, p. 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. McClelland, p. 333. [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. Dickason, p. 251, 335-337. [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. Ibid., p. 257, 266. [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. Sumrall, p. 54, 74, 121-135. [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. Also see Anderson, p. 222. [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. Unger holds to the opposite view (see Unger, p. 96). [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. Hagin, Ministering to the Oppressed, p. 2, 14-15. [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. Anderson, p. 68-71 [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. Ibid., p. 187-219. [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
93. Dickason, p. 121-123. [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
94. Ibid., p. 125. [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
95. Ryrie C. C. Basic Theology. – Victor Books, 1984. – P. 167. [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
96. Dickason, p. 125. [↑](#footnote-ref-96)
97. General Council of the Assemblies of God. Can Born-Again Believers Be Demon Possessed? http://ag.org/top/Beliefs/Position\_Papers/pp\_downloads/pp\_4176\_possessed.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-97)
98. Arnold, p. 76-97. [↑](#footnote-ref-98)
99. Hagin, Demons and How to Deal with Them, p. 5-17. [↑](#footnote-ref-99)
100. General Council of the Assemblies of God. Can Born-Again Believers Be Demon Possessed? [↑](#footnote-ref-100)
101. Gross, p. 166. [↑](#footnote-ref-101)
102. Dickason, p. 132. [↑](#footnote-ref-102)
103. Arnold, p. 76-97. [↑](#footnote-ref-103)
104. Dickason, p. 81-99; General Council of the Assemblies of God. Can Born-Again Believers Be Demon Possessed? [↑](#footnote-ref-104)
105. Ibid. Also see Page, p. 260. [↑](#footnote-ref-105)
106. Burgess S. M. The Holy Spirit: Ancient Christian Traditions. – Peabody, MS: Hendrickson, 1984. – P. 23; Arnold, p. 110-112. [↑](#footnote-ref-106)
107. From Arnold, p. 110. [↑](#footnote-ref-107)
108. Roberts A., Donaldson J., Coxe A. C. The Ante-Nicene Fathers. – Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Company. [↑](#footnote-ref-108)
109. Schaff Р., Wace Н. A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church. – New York, NY: Christian Literature Company, 1890. [↑](#footnote-ref-109)
110. Sumrall, p. 104-105. [↑](#footnote-ref-110)
111. Gross, p. 164. [↑](#footnote-ref-111)
112. *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 1.14.18, Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 1997. [↑](#footnote-ref-112)
113. Stedman, p. 53. [↑](#footnote-ref-113)
114. Unger, p. 100. [↑](#footnote-ref-114)
115. Arnold, p. 76. [↑](#footnote-ref-115)
116. Dickason, p. 340. [↑](#footnote-ref-116)
117. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-117)
118. Gross, p. 114. [↑](#footnote-ref-118)
119. Wagner C. P. Confronting the Powers. – Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1996. – 262 p. [↑](#footnote-ref-119)
120. Ibid., p. 22. [↑](#footnote-ref-120)
121. Ibid., p. 25. [↑](#footnote-ref-121)
122. In Wagner’s opinion, the main demonic powers include Beelzebub, Abaddon, and Wormwood (Wagner, p. 146-147). It is sometimes felt that (1) the names of pagan gods corresponds to territorial spirits, such as Baal, Chemosh, Milkom, and El, (2) the territorial spirit of Rome is represented in Revelation 17:8, (3) possibly, in Revelation 2-3, the “angels of the churches” are good territorial spirits (4) Satan was once the territorial spirit over Tyre, and (5) in Revelation 17:15, the harlot is a territorial spirit over many people groups (noted in Arnold, p. 153, 157; Lowe, p. 32, 48). [↑](#footnote-ref-122)
123. Arnold, p. 149. [↑](#footnote-ref-123)
124. Gross, p. 121. [↑](#footnote-ref-124)
125. Arnold, p. 157-159. [↑](#footnote-ref-125)
126. Lowe, p. 38. [↑](#footnote-ref-126)
127. Arnold, p. 161-183. [↑](#footnote-ref-127)
128. Lowe, p. 55-120. [↑](#footnote-ref-128)
129. Ibid., p. 61. [↑](#footnote-ref-129)
130. Ibid., p. 92, 96. [↑](#footnote-ref-130)
131. Ibid., p. 111. [↑](#footnote-ref-131)
132. Page, p. 65. [↑](#footnote-ref-132)
133. Arnold, p. 183. [↑](#footnote-ref-133)
134. Page, p. 65. [↑](#footnote-ref-134)