

SPIRITUAL WARFARE IN THE BIBLE

Advanced Spiritual Warfare Training From a Biblical, Evangelical Perspective

"He (Christ) will crush your head, and you (Satan) will strike His heel" (Gen. 3:15)

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Rev. Dr. Jerry Schmoyer

jerry@ChristianTrainingOrganization.org

<https://www.christiantrainingonline.org/>

BIOGRAPHY OF THE AUTHOR

Rev. Dr. Jerry Schmoyer is a graduate of Dallas Theological Seminary where he received his ThM in 1975 and DMin in 2006. He served as a church pastor in the USA for 35 years until 2016. He is founder of Christian Training Organization where he leads marriage, family, and youth conferences, and is active in counseling and mentoring pastors. He has been involved in spiritual warfare ministry since 1984 and training pastors in India since 2006.

He has been married to Nancy, a nurse, since 1979. They enjoy their very large family and many grandchildren.

He can be reached at Jerry@ChristianTrainingOrganization.org

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SPIRITUAL WARFARE IN THE BIBLE

Rev. Dr. Jerry Schmoyer
jerry@ChristianTrainingOrganization.org
<https://www.christiantrainingonline.org/>

Warfare. Who wants it? Very few seek out and enjoy a battle. Those who do are usually considered a bit strange. Yet that's what the Christian life is all about. When we join God's army and desert Satan's forces we better be ready to fight to retain our freedom. Salvation is secure, but triumph in daily life only comes through warfare, spiritual warfare. It's nothing new, its always been around, even before Adam and Eve were created. It's always been with us and will be until Jesus returns. We battle the world, the flesh and Satan and his forces.

Since Adam and Eve allowed sin to enter Satan has been the ruler of this world system (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; Ephesians 6:10-13). The coming of Jesus was the invasion of the kingdom of Satan by the kingdom of God in the person of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, Jesus Christ (Matthew 12:28-29). But it was a subtle invasion, and infiltration behind enemy lines which brought the powers of evil to attack Him. Jesus is gone but His people now continue this work. We are bringing light to a dark world, and the darkness does all it can to resist the light. The world we live in is still under the control of Satan (1 John 5:19). We are implanted here to disrupt enemy operations and rescue as many as we can who are chained in bondage to darkness. That's what our warfare is all about. It doesn't get easier as the last days approach and the end is near.

Yet often God's people are unaware of this battle and are taken by surprise when they realize the warfare they are in. Often we are ignorant and unprepared to defend ourselves, much less rescue others (2 Corinthians 2:5-11). The purpose of this book is to help God's people better understand the battle and how to have victory. My Spiritual Warfare Handbook covers this subject topically, but there is a need for a resource that traces this battle through Scripture. The Bible is our textbook for life and victory. We need to know what it says to be equipped to fight and win. How else can we defend ourselves, much less reach out to free others?

INTRODUCTION TO SPIRITUAL WARFARE IN THE BIBLE

The book, "Spiritual Warfare in the Bible," is a follow-up to my earlier book, "Spiritual Warfare Handbook." The former is a basic treatment of spiritual warfare. It is for beginners who are starting to learn about the subject.

This companion book is a more in-depth treatment of the subject. It goes through the Bible and history, chronologically, from creation to the present, explaining and applying all the verses and teachings in the Bible about spiritual warfare. It can be read instead my "Spiritual Warfare Handbook" but because much more detail is given it will be harder for the beginner to glean the foundation principles needed to get started in spiritual warfare.

You can download a free copy of "Spiritual Warfare Handbook" at <https://www.christiantrainingonline.org/our-ministries/spiritual-warfare/learning-more/> or email me at jerry@ChristianTrainingOrganization.org. Please feel free to share either of these with anyone who may benefit from them.

I. OLD TESTAMENT

Spiritual warfare. It's always been with us. It didn't just start when Jesus came to earth. It started as soon as Satan rebelled and was sent out of heaven. As soon as they were created, Adam and Eve were attacked by Satan. It's been going on ever since. If we are in a battle with an enemy sworn to destroy us, we must know how he works and what we can do to defeat him and not be defeated by him. That's why we have the Bible. Spiritual warfare is one of the main themes in the Bible, the theme we will trace in this book. We'll start in the very beginning and trace spiritual warfare up to today.

A. CREATED BEINGS

1. GOD'S PLAN TO CREATE (Ephesians 1:4)

Some time before He created human beings, God created angels. He chose to create angels, and then human beings, with free will. He didn't want them or us to follow Him because we had no choice and were like robots. God wanted His created beings to follow Him because we choose to.

When I was a young boy I had a wooden dog that I pulled with a string. That dog followed me everywhere when I pulled it along. It did whatever I made it do. It never disobeyed, never rebelled, never caused me any problems. Years later I got a real, live dog. Sometimes this dog would follow me, lick me and want to be with me, but other times it would disobey and cause difficulties and problems. The real dog wasn't nearly as well behaved as the wooden dog. But guess which dog I loved best? Yes, there's something special about a dog choosing to want to be with me, not 'having' to follow. God wanted those who followed Him to do so because they made that choice, not because there was no alternative. God chose to make the beings He created have a free will choice to follow or not.

However, God knew that creating us with a free will choice would lead to a problem. Humans would use that choice to sin and rebel. Then, because God is holy and nothing sinful can be near Him, He would not be able to allow us in His presence. Creating us with a will to choose would mean that He would have to condemn us to hell when we used that free will to sin. That would cause Him to lose our fellowship and presence with Him.

God had the perfect solution. He Himself would come to earth to die on the cross for our sins. He would become a man and be our substitute, thus enabling all who received His free gift to be with God forever. Now man could have a free will choice, and still have fellowship with God.

The only way of salvation to have both is through Jesus Christ's sacrifice on the cross. This great gift is available for any who will receive it by putting their faith in Jesus Christ as Savior. This was a great plan, made before the creation of the world (Ephesians 1:4). But it would lead to an ongoing battle. We would constantly have to struggle against the tendency in us to sin and disobey.

2. CREATION OF ANGELS (Job 38:6-7)

Before mankind even entered this battle, however, warfare among created angelic beings began. God created angels before the world was created (Job 38:6-7). He created an "innumerable" number of angels (Hebrews 12:22; Revelation 5:11). No angels have been created or destroyed since then. The original number has remained the same. People who die do NOT become angels.

In eternity we have a position greater than the angels will have (1 Corinthians 6:3). These created beings are like us in that we both were created in God's image with personality (mind, will, and emotions). Angels have no physical body as we have, however. They are spirit beings.

3. CREATION OF HUMAN BEINGS (Genesis 1:27 – 2:7)

Later God also created human beings. In many ways we are similar to angels, but He created us with a different role and purpose in mind. We, too, were created with a free will to decide if we wanted to follow God or not. While human and angelic beings were both created with a free will so they can willingly serve God and His Kingdom, humans were created to have a deeper love relationship with God (John 3:16) while angelic beings main purpose is to worship and serve Him (Hebrews 1:14). In fact, angels were created to minister to humans and assist us in our daily battles (Hebrews 1:14).

B. SIN ENTERS

1. ANGELIC BEINGS SIN (Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:15-17)

After creating angels, before human beings were created, God gave angels an opportunity to exercise their free will choice. Up to this point all had voluntarily served God, but then Lucifer used his free will to choose not to follow God. About one third of the angelic beings rebelled against God's authority (Revelation 12:4). It seems they followed one of God's top-ranking angels (Ezekiel 28:12-15). Known as Lucifer, he was the highest angelic creation, the closest to the throne of God. However, he didn't want to serve God but wanted to be worshipped in place of God (2 Thessalonians 2:4). His sin was pride and self-centeredness (Isaiah 14:12-15). God threw him out of heaven (Isaiah 14:12; Ezekiel 28:15-17; Luke 10:18). He lost all his position and privilege. With that rebellion, sin entered the universe. Lucifer is now called Satan and the angels who rebelled with him are called demons. They had a one-time choice which set their destiny for all eternity. As created beings they are limited in their knowledge and abilities. They do not have all knowledge or power as God does.

2. SIN ENTERS THE HUMAN RACE (Genesis 3:1-7)

Very shortly after Adam and Eve were created, their free will was tested as well. Satan twisted God's words and put doubt of God's goodness in Eve (Genesis 3:1). The battle started in their minds, and continues so today (2 Corinthians 10:3-5). He implied God was withholding something good from them, a lie he continues to use with good success even today.

While tracing the theme of spiritual warfare throughout the Bible, practical applications will be drawn showing how these truths apply to us today.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Sin has been described as "meeting a legitimate need in an illegitimate way." When we look for ways to meet our needs for peace, pleasure, comfort, support and satisfaction outside the plan and will of God, we sin. Instead of waiting for God to provide for our needs in His way and time, we try to find a way to do that ourselves. Satan's lie that God won't do it, or that God is withholding something good from us, still is successful today. He puts doubts into our mind about why, if He loves us, God would allow pain, suffering, injustice, poverty, rejection, lack of mate or children, lack of job, etc. When we face trials or painful situations, He tempts us to doubt God's goodness.

But God has proven His goodness by leaving heaven and going to the cross so we can spend eternity with Him. His goodness is no longer in question. We may not understand His plan or His timing, but we must trust that a God so good He would literally die for us certainly has our best interests in mind, whether we understand all His workings or not (Matthew 7:10).

Thank God for the free will He gave you to choose to follow Him. Make choices today that would please Him. Choose to obey Him and love Him. You have a free will, and the only thing you can ever give God is your choice to serve Him. It's the best gift we can give. It's the only gift He wants from us!

Adam chose to believe Satan's lie and act on it, and thus sin entered into the human race (Romans 5:12). Humans, too, used their God-given free will choice to opt for sin. Immediately there were consequences: shame (Genesis 3:7) replaces innocence (Genesis 2:25). Guilt and separation from God (Genesis 3:8, 22-24) resulted. Deception and lies (Genesis 3:10) as well as blaming each other (Genesis 3:12) instead of admitting our guilt and the consequences of sin in daily life continue today (Genesis 3:16-24).

LESSON FOR TODAY: Angels had a one-time free will choice and that decision is now locked for all eternity. They cannot change their choice. As human beings we have a chance to choose God throughout our lives on earth, but then when we die our choices are locked in, too, and cannot change. While alive God allows grace to give mankind another chance. Demons have no such alternative.

LESSON FOR TODAY: When Satan challenged Eve she responded by getting into a debate. The trap was set (Genesis 3:1-6). Jesus, however, only responded to Satan's temptations by stating "it is written" (Matthew 4:10). When a demon puts a temptation or thought in your mind, or gives you an opportunity to sin, never discuss your options, think about it, try to talk yourself out of it, etc. Always respond with the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God (Ephesians 6:17). (See suggested verses with Ephesians 6:17, Sword of the Spirit.)

LESSON FOR TODAY: Eve should never have conversed with Satan. When involved in deliverance with someone who is demonized, never allow the demon to speak out loud through the person. Never get into a debate or argument with a demon. Never have any communication with them. For more details see under JESUS' FIRST DELIVERANCE (Mark 1:21-28; Luke 4:31-37).

LESSON FOR TODAY: Having gotten her to dialogue with him and having planted doubts about God's goodness in Eve's mind, Satan then denies the truth of God's Word (Genesis 3:4). Eve misquoted God, saying they couldn't even touch the fruit, when all God said was that they could not eat it (Genesis 3:3). Satan took advantage of her lack of correct understanding of the Word of God. From this we learn that knowing and believing God's Word is totally essential for our victorious living today (Ephesians 4:12; 2 Timothy 3:16-17). Also, we must believe it, especially the part about God's holiness and hatred of sin. Satan is a liar and deceiver (John 8:44). Unless a thought lines up with God's Word it is wrong.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Sin, and demonizing, all start in the mind, in our thoughts. Actions result from mental choices we make. The majority of demonizing consists of demons putting thoughts into a person's mind or snatching thoughts out of a person's mind (Mark 4:15). While they don't have access to our minds and thoughts to the same extent that God does, the Bible makes it clear that there is some access. Jesus said this in the Parable of the Sower and the Seed: "Satan comes and takes away the word that was sown." (Mark 4:15). David's thought to take a census was demonic (1 Chronicles 21:1ff; 2 Samuel 24:1ff). So was Ananias & Sapphira's greed (Acts 5:3) and Saul's jealousy/anger (1 Samuel 16:14-23). That's why, when talking about spiritual warfare, Paul says we are to "bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ." (2 Corinthians 10:4-5).

LESSON FOR TODAY: Eve was deceived by Satan because she acted according to her feelings and emotions, putting them over the truth of what God had clearly said (Titus 2:13-15; 2 Corinthians 11:3). Feelings and emotions are fine, important and necessary. They are icing on the cake of life, adding color and enjoyment, and indeed God created them for this purpose, but He didn't create them to be the source of our decision-making. Our feelings should depend on our rational thought. When feelings aren't founded on truth they go wrong. We must let our mind explain reality to our emotions. When we place feelings over fact, we are open to deception.

LESSON FOR TODAY: How can God's people, who have His truth in the Bible, be so deceived by Satan and his demons? Do you remember the children's story about the emperor's new clothes? Some thieves convinced him they were making fine garments which only the enlightened could see so the king pretended to see them. Everyone else pretended also. Then in a parade, a little boy spoke the truth and everyone realized they had been believing a lie and deceiving themselves. Satan deceives us into believing a lie. But how can we be deceived if we know the truth? We always have a free will choice and are never forced to believe a lie.

- 1. We can be demonized. Like a drunk is influenced by alcohol, so can we be influenced by demons. For more details about, this see under JESUS' FIRST DELIVERANCE (Mark 1:21-28; Luke 4:31-37).*
- 2. We can prefer to be deceived because we don't want to face the truth or don't like the truth, so we convince ourselves that a lie is true. We start to really believe it because we want to.*
- 3. We let ourselves be controlled by our emotions instead of our mind.*
- 4. Our mind can be deceived, too, when we use it as the final determining factor and think absolute truth comes from within us. Without the anchor of God's Word to form our mind and correct our errors we can truly believe something based on the facts as we interpret them. But we may not be interpreting them correctly. Only God has all the facts and perfect knowledge of the past and future.*
- 5. Satan and demons try to get us to believe their deceptions. Of course, they don't 'sell' their product as a black lie, but make it look as appealing and good as possible. We sometimes fall for the bait because the black appeals to us. They show the immediate benefits, not long-term consequences of the sin.*
- 6. Even aside from the enemy, our own natural tendency is to sin (this is called our "sin nature"). Our 'flesh' desires instant gratification and we can 'want' something so much that we leave all reason and balance behind.*

Sin entered with Adam and Eve and therefore spiritual warfare entered the human arena. While the ultimate Victor is clearly known, the battle that started in Eden continues even though today.

3. THE BATTLE BEGINS (Genesis 3:8-15)

With the arrival of sin came the start of spiritual warfare. "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers" (Genesis 3:15a) God told Satan. The battle had begun. God also foretold that there would ultimately be victory over Satan by Jesus: "He will crush your head and you will strike His heel" (Genesis 3:15b). The battle will continue throughout time. There will be an ongoing conflict between God and His angels against Satan with his demons. Mankind will be caught in the middle of this conflict. Satan will have limited victory ("strike His heel" – a painful but not fatal wound on the cross) but ultimately be defeated ("He will crush your head" – a decisive overthrow of Satan and his kingdom – Luke 10:18; Romans 16:20; Revelation 20:2, 10) by the descendant of the woman – Jesus Christ. In Romans 16:20 the same term, "crush" is used showing the same event is being referred to.

The “seed of the woman” (Genesis 3:15) is, of course, the Messiah (Hebrews 2:14; Romans 16:20). Jesus would come through a woman, not a man and woman, and the virgin birth fulfills the prophecy (Luke 126-38; Galatians 4:4; Revelation 12:1-6, 13-17).

LESSON FOR TODAY: This battle that has started will continue between God’s kingdom and Satan’s kingdom until the Messiah crush Satan’s work at His Second Coming. Remember that when you follow God you will be in a battle against Satan and his forces. He never promised life will be easy, but that He will be with us (John 17:15-19). Do not be surprised when conflicts come, for they will. Satan cannot attack God directly so he attacks His children instead. God allows it to give us an opportunity to grow spiritually as we learn how to have victory through Jesus.

C. ADAM TO ABRAHAM

Once begun, the battle continued through Adam’s lifetime and each of his descendants.

1. CAIN & ABEL (Genesis 4:1-8)

Soon after leaving Eden, the warfare which had been foretold between God and Satan (Genesis 3:15) broke into an all-out conflict. The seed of the ultimately victorious Messiah was prophesied to come through the human family, so Satan tried to do everything possible to stop that line from continuing. Cain who was incited by Satan to kill his brother Abel (Genesis 4:1-8).

This action is the first sin mentioned in the battle since the fall in Eden. The word for ‘sin’ (Genesis 4:7) is revealing. “Sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you but you must master it” God said to Cain (Genesis 4:7). Sin is personified as a wild beast, perhaps a serpent as in Eden, who is waiting to spring upon Cain. The Hebrew word for sin used here is closely connected to a word used for “demon” (‘rabisum,’ an Akkadian word). In Mesopotamian beliefs the ‘rabisum’ (demon) lurked at the entrance of a building, either to do good and protect the person or to do harm and threaten them. Whatever it was that led to Cain’s sin, we know Satan was involved for 1 John 3:12 says Cain “belonged to the evil one.” We don’t know if Cain was demonized (or Satanized) but we know he was deeply involved in this event. (For more details about the definition of ‘demonized’ see under JESUS’ FIRST DELIVERANCE Mark 1:21-28; Luke 4:31-37.)

LESSON FOR TODAY: Outwardly both Cain and Abel were the same in that they brought offerings to God. But in their hearts they were very different. Abel did what he did out of love for God, Cain out of duty. The battle must be won or lost in our mind first of all. Before the murder God warned Cain clearly that sin was trying to slip into his life and destroy him (Genesis 4:6-7) but he did not heed the warning. “Sin is crouching at your door, it desires to have you, but you must master it” (Genesis 4:7). Sin is pictured as a demon hiding, ever alert, looking for a way to attack and defeat us. We, like Cain, have a free will choice to make if we will follow or not. Think of the demon(s) assigned to bring you down as hiding and watching you, looking for any opportunity to defeat you. Where have their attacks against you been most successful? What can you do to have victory over them?

2. TIME OF NOAH (Genesis 6:1-8)

After Abel died Satan’s plan was thwarted by the birth of Seth. But the conflict continued. By the time of Noah, seventeen hundred years later, we see the battle between God and Satan has not only continued but greatly expanded. It appears that human females (“daughters of men”) were mating with demons (“sons of God”) (Genesis 6:1-8).

Some have speculated that demons were mating with human females and a hybrid race was being formed. We can't be sure of this, but it certainly is a possible interpretation of Genesis 6:1-8. Whatever it was, it does seem certain that what happened between these groups was of a sexual nature and was something clearly forbidden. Today there are some demons who specialize in attacking a person, male or female, in sexual ways. Sometimes they are referred to as incubi (those acting like men sexually) or succubae (those acting like women sexually). All demons, like angels, are males, but seem to be able to manifest as male or female at times. They try to sexually stimulate a human being in order to control and torment the person. There have been many accounts of this throughout history.

What happened in Noah's day created a race who are called 'Nephilim' (Genesis 6:4). This word means 'fallen' in the plural form and perhaps refers to some kind of unusual people, perhaps larger than human beings. We know that after the flood, giants (also called 'Nephilim') were born but these were 100% human beings who were physically larger than other people (Numbers 13:31-33; Goliath, etc.).

We can't know for sure what happened, but clearly there is a major battle going on here. This is perhaps the most demonized generation so far and won't be equalled or surpassed until the Tribulation. Only Noah and his wife followed God, and raised their sons to do the same. Thus everyone but Noah and his family were destroyed. Clearly God judges sin, Satan and evil.

LESSON FOR TODAY: In our world where sexuality and sexual sin seems to be rampant, remember unbiblical sex is a tool of Satan to defeat and destroy us. God created sex to be a beautiful picture of our oneness with God (Ephesians 5:23), so Satan attacks it to dishonor that picture and defeat us. God's strict limits on sex are not to restrict our pleasure but to protect and ensure it. Sexual temptation can be very enticing, but remember it is an attack of the enemy to capture and enslave a person in bondage.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Demons who have sex with human beings, both male and female, are unfortunately common even today. If you, or someone you are ministering to (male or female), tells you they are being sexually attacked in their bed at night, or at other times, make sure you believe them! It does happen.

LESSON FOR TODAY: There is no such thing as 'casual' sex. Any time there is sexual involvement, demons who have access to one person can claim the other (1 Corinthians 6:16)

LESSON FOR TODAY: By the time of Noah mankind was fully involved in a multidimensional sin war. People battled the world, the flesh and also the forces of evil (1 John 2:16). "The Lord saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time" (Genesis 6:5).

3. NIMROD & BABEL (Genesis 11:1-9)

After the flood Noah and his family were told to repopulate the earth. They were to move to various geographical areas and reproduce until the earth was once again fully inhabited. But they didn't spread out geographically. Instead they stayed together so that they could depend on each other and wouldn't need God. The battle between serving God's Kingdom or Satan's kingdom continued. So 400 years after the flood God again has to bring judgment on sinful, disobedient mankind (Genesis 11:1-9).

Nimrod (Genesis 10:8-9) appeared to be the instigating force behind the Tower of Babel that was built. He is a picture of the Antichrist used by Satan to oppose God. Like the Antichrist, he may even have been indwelt by Satan for he was a murderous, evil person who elevated himself as god-

man and was worshipped as such (Genesis 10:8-9). Statues have been found showing him being worshipped as a baby in his mother's arms, then later being killed and coming back to life (for more information see "The Two Babylons" by Hyslop). This was the foundation for the mystery religions which spread to Europe and continue today in various forms and in several prominent world religions. Nimrod was a counterfeit of Jesus, someone used by Satan to take glory and attention from God the son.

The tower he built was probably like one of the many ziggurats discovered in the area of ancient Babylon. It was a symbol of religious humanism, idolatry, polythiesm and defiance of God. It was built with its top "until the heavens" (literal transliteration). They weren't trying to physically build a structure so high it would touch heaven, but rather to connect with the heavens through the religion that centered around the tower. Some scholars feel the temple on top contained a perverted chart of the stars, the beginning of astrology, and was used as an early means of predicting the future. While many details are unclear, we do know this was definitely part of Satan building his world empire in opposition to God. It was a continuing of the battle against God and His kingdom. Man, in his pride and self-centeredness, used his free will to follow Nimrod and oppose God. The same will happen in the Tribulation when the Antichrist (pictured by Nimrod) leads 'Babylon' (Revelation 17 and 18) against God's Kingdom. Ultimately that kingdom, too, will be destroyed and God's kingdom victorious, but not until much warfare takes place.

LESSON FOR TODAY: There are many today who proclaim the same message as Nimrod and the Antichrist: "Life without God is better. We don't need Him. Christianity just holds us back from total fulfillment." Humanism, New Age thought, 'tolerance' and "openmindedness" to any and all belief systems can seem appealing. Many rally around them. But they are all lies of the enemy (John 8:44) and we must be very careful to not get swayed into believing them. These can be very dangerous for they are subtle, camouflaged in seemingly good terms.

4. JOB (Job 1:6-12; 2:1-7)

Satan not only attacked God's kingdom on a world-wide scale, but he opposed individuals who were part of that kingdom as well. Job is a prime example of this. He lived around the same time as Abraham, but not much is known about where he fits in historically or geographically. He is a picture of a righteous man, following God, facing his own warfare because he is faithful to God (Job 1:6-12; 2:1-7).

One of the ways Satan attacks God's kingdom and people is by bringing accusations of sin against believers (Zechariah 3:1-4; Revelation 12:10). Because God is holy and must judge sin, Satan tries to point out the sins of believers in order to bring God's wrath upon them. However we are safe from condemnation because Jesus paid the price for our sins on the cross (Romans 8:1). Still, Satan is forever tattling on us to God.

We don't know how Satan is allowed in God's presence, but in some way or form this must happen for he accuses Job to God (Job 1:1-6; 2:1-7). God allows Satan to attack Job, but with certain limits which God imposes (Job 1:12; 2:6).

LESSON FOR TODAY: All Satan's attacks against us are 'Father filtered,' allowed by God for His glory and our good (Romans 8:28). This painful suffering of Job's served as an example of faithfulness to all heavenly beings, and to the millions who have read of Job in the Bible.

One other item of interest in this account is the way Satan was able to attack Job and his family. He used evil men (Job 1:13-15), nature (lightning, Job 1:16), hostile men (steal animals, kill servants, Job 1:17), natural disaster (wind to destroy a house and kill Job's children, Job 1:18-19), and sickness and pain against Job himself (Job 2:6). While we aren't to fear Satan or give him

credit for more power than he has, still he clearly has more ability to use nature, people and sickness than we often recognize. He has many weapons in his warfare against us.

LESSON FOR TODAY: While not every natural disaster, attack by evil people or physical sickness is from Satan, this probably does happen more often than we imagine. We aren't to fear him for God is greater (1 John 4:4), but we are to recognize the attacks of our enemy so we can properly fight against them (2 Corinthians 2:5-11). If you are facing some of these right now, follow Job's example of not sinning by accusing God of wrongdoing (Job 1:22; 2:9-10). Stay faithful to God and keep your trust in Him no matter what (Job 1:21).

LESSON FOR TODAY: Why does God allow people to suffer and struggle? How can a God of love allow so much evil to continue? God doesn't defend Himself or explain what He allows. He gives us a free will choice as to whose kingdom we will pursue. Sin and the resulting evil are the natural consequences of turning from Him.

The fact of pain in the world is not a reason to see God as less than loving. Still, innocent people suffer. We can't try to evaluate God's person and character by these things for He has proven His character and love by leaving heaven, becoming a man, living on earth, then going to the cross to take on the punishment for every sin we would ever commit. That proves His love for us beyond a shadow of a doubt. If it weren't for that we would all spend eternity in hell. So, anything less than hell from now on is because of His grace and mercy. Why He seems to show more love and mercy to some than others is not up to us to judge. God isn't accountable to us. We cannot stand in judgment of Him until we know all the facts as He knows them and see everything as He sees it. Many things seem unfair to little children but they must trust their parents. Getting an injection from a doctor or having a pretty shiny knife taken away seem to a child that a parent doesn't love them. But a child doesn't have the perspective to truly understand all that is involved and we don't either. We do know that facing things we don't understand gives us an opportunity to trust. Our faith is stretched and we grow. God is glorified as we see Him deliver and as others watch us continually trust Him no matter what happens. Spiritual warfare itself is often very painful. It is just one of many forms of suffering God uses for our good and for His glory. Often deliverance isn't a sudden, complete act. God allows the struggle to go on for it teaches us to fight and to trust Him.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Another important lesson from this passage is that Satan can only do what God allows. Satan had to have permission to attack Job, and even then God limited what he could do (Job 1-2; 1 Kings 22:19-23). God actually used his evil plan for good (Romans 8:28; Genesis 50:20). He used the lies the demons gave the false prophets to bring about the destruction God wanted (1 Kings 22:19-23). He used Satan's afflictions on Job to be a faithful witness and example to Satan and his forces then, and to untold millions of believers since. He used all that Joseph went through to save the nation of Israel (Genesis 50:20). He uses what you and I go through for our growth and for His glory as well. When you look at nature you see God is a God who never wastes anything, but makes multiple good uses of everything. He does the same with our pain and suffering as well. Not one tear, not the slightest struggle is wasted but is used for His plan in our lives (Romans 8:28).

LESSON FOR TODAY: A related question is why God would allow Satan to attack us at all when He could prevent it. If He is a God of love why not deny Satan and demons any opportunity to attack? Then we wouldn't have to resist or learn to fight. Life would be much simpler and easier. But that isn't God's purpose, nor is it how He works. Why didn't God just kill all the Canaanites and not have the Jews have to go through warfare against them? The Jews had a free will to follow God or not, and if they followed they needed to learn to obey and to fight as God would have them. Perseverance, faith, teamwork, patience, obedience and many lessons were tied up in this. God used it to stretch their faith, to give them opportunities to grow and see Him work through them and to show others His glory by what He could do through His people. The same is true of us today.

SPIRITUAL WARFARE TRAINING. At the end of each major section in this paper you will find questions to help you remember and apply what you have learned. You can look back through what you have read for the answers if need be. You need a Bible, a notebook and a pen to do these questions.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION: Answer the following questions.

1. Explain in your own words why God allowed man to have a free will.
2. What difference has it made in the world today that man has a free will?
3. What difference has it made in your life that you have a free will? Are you glad you have a free will? Why or why not?
4. Why does God allow Satan and demons to attack His people? Why doesn't He just stop them?
5. What lessons can you learn from Job about how and why Satan attacks us today?
6. What lessons can you learn from Job about having victory over Satan's attacks?

D. FORMATION OF ISRAEL

From the dispersal of man at Babel through the period of the Judges, warfare continued. These approximately 600 years show a change from Satan and his demons attacking mankind to a more direct attack on Israel, God's people. With the rest of mankind firmly under his control, Satan attacks God's kingdom by attacking His chosen people.

1. ABRAHAM (Genesis 11 – 24)

Because man had continually disobeyed God and did not respond to Him in faith and obedience, God's plan was to establish one nation as His chosen people. Through them the world would learn about God, receive His written Word and give the world the much needed Savior. Since all mankind would not follow God, one people group could be His representatives and lead the way. God chose Abraham to be the first in that line of people, now called the Jews.

About two thousand years after Adam and Eve sinned God called Abraham to leave Ur, a thriving civilization where the moon was worshipped, and go to a new land where God would bless him and start a new nation through his descendants (Genesis 11:27 – 12:5). This brought attack after attack on Abraham, for Satan knew if he could destroy this nation there would be no written Word and no Savior. Stopping these new people before they could get established was important to ultimate victory for Satan.

When we look at Abraham's life we see a series of tests. Satan used them to try to defeat and destroy Abraham but God allowed them as opportunities for Abraham's faith to grow and his obedience to be shown (James 1:13-15). God used these tests to teach Abraham to remain faithful despite his fear, attacks by others, unfavorable circumstances and physical difficulties. Satan tried to defeat or discredit Abraham, to dilute the line of the seed by trying to have Sarah have a baby by Pharaoh instead of by Abraham as God has said and by trying to delay or destroy the next in line, Isaac. But God was faithful even when Abraham was not and His plan prevailed and His kingdom continued.

LESSON FOR TODAY: If we learn to view the events in our lives as tests, opportunities to trust God, we will have a more Biblical view of what is happening and why it is happening. When we blame God, feel sorry for ourselves, try to solve them with our own limited resources, or get discouraged and want to quit, we are losing the battle. We must learn to view every obstacle in life, from the least to the greatest, as an attack against our faith and therefore an opportunity to grow stronger as we stay faithful no matter what. Don't blame God. Trust Him through it all.

2. ISAAC, JACOB, JOSEPH (Genesis 25 - 50)

After Abraham's time Satan's attacks continued against his descendants, Isaac and Jacob. They failed many of their tests of faithfulness and drifted from God's perfect plan for them. Sin, disobedience and eventually intermarriage among the grandchildren of Jacob caused God to take a hard but necessary step to assure the racial purity of the Jewish race so the Messiah could one day come and defeat Satan and His kingdom. God used Satan's attacks for His good. Satan attacked Joseph for his faithfulness. But God used a famine to move the small Jewish nation into Egypt where they would not be able to intermarry because the Egyptians looked down on them and rejected intermarriage with them. For the next 400 years God used Egypt to grow them into a larger, more faithful nation. Outwardly it was their sin and disobedience that brought this about, but God used even that for their own good and His ultimate purpose (Romans 8:28; Genesis 50:20)

3. MOSES (Exodus - Deuteronomy)

Deliverance from Egypt During the time of Moses we see the greatest series of power encounters between God and Satan recorded in the Old Testament. It is a time of miracles (burning bush, 10 plagues, Red Sea opening) and direct conflict with the forces of darkness in the form of Jannes and Jambrees (2 Timothy 3:8; Exodus 7 & 8). These demonized magicians were able to perform counterfeit miracles in order to blind Pharaoh to God's superior power. God put a limit on their ability to counter His works (Exodus 8:18), but still Pharaoh allowed himself to be blinded to the truth (Exodus 8:19).

God used a series of 10 plagues to battle the gods of Egypt and defeat each of them in their areas of strength (Exodus 7 through 11). The idols the Egyptians served were powerless to protect themselves or the people who worshipped them. It was a time of great spiritual warfare. Not only were the plagues physically painful, but God allowed Satan's demons to attack those who weren't following Him. He used these demons to inflict fear, pain and destruction (Psalm 78:49). This is one of many examples in the Bible where God uses the destruction caused by Satan and demons for His ultimate plan and purpose.

LESSON FOR TODAY: God does not prevent the battles we have with Satan, but He does give us victory through them. God protected and provided, but the Jews had to learn to fight their battles in His strength. God delivered them, but after deliverance (salvation) they had to learn to fight, as must we. We are not exempt from warfare and never will be, but we have His promises of ultimate victory when we trust Him and follow Him. Don't waste energy and prayer time asking for the battle to be milder so you can manage, instead ask for greater strength so you can fight and win. Don't try avoiding the battle, face it right on. And most of all, don't compromise or give in. Surrendering to your enemies will NOT make your life any easier!

While these battles seemed to be between Pharaoh and Moses, the Egyptians and the Jews, what was happening on earth was really just a reflection of the battle going on in the heavenlies between God and Satan, angels and demons. Pharaoh is a picture of Satan who holds God's people in bondage and tries to destroy them. This began when he tried to destroy the male Jewish babies,

thus hoping to end the line of the Messiah who would one day crush his head. It continued through slavery and culminated with his army attacking the unarmed Jews at the Red Sea. Each time God victoriously protected His people and the line of the Messiah. Egypt is a picture of the world and of Satan's power while the Jews are a picture God's people in bondage. God is the victor.

Deliverance came through innocent blood being shed to cover the sins of the guilty. Passover was, and still is, a picture of salvation in Jesus. The Red Sea deliverance was God's victory over Satan and the world in freeing His people from bondage. God delivers by blood (Passover lamb, Jesus the Lamb of God on the cross) and power (opening Red Sea showing His power over all, opening the grave Jesus was in showing He was alive). Deliverance is available for God's people, but death and judgment for those who use their free will to turn from Him (Exodus 12:12).

LESSON FOR TODAY: What we face in this life is a refelction, a reverberation of the battle going on in the heavenlies between God's forces and Satan's forces. It is often acted out on earth as each person aligns themselves with one force or the other. By our faithfulness and perseverance, Christians show the enemy that God is greater than these attacks and ultimately will bring Him glory through it.

Traveling to Mount Sinai God's miraculous provision did not end when the Jews left Egypt. He provided manna, kept them from getting sick, prevented clothing and shoes from wearing out and provided water when needed (Exodus 15-17). He led them by the cloud of fire, by His very Shekinah Presence. God protected and provided, but the Jews had to learn to fight their battles in His strength.

In their travel from Egypt to Mount Sinai the Jews traveled near the land of the Amalekites. The Amalekites followed them, picking off the weak and sickly who weren't part separated themselves from the main body of Israel (Deuteronomy 25:17-18).

LESSON FOR TODAY: Satan as a roaring lion looks for weak and sick sheep, those who aren't with the main flock, and easily picks them off (1 Peter 5:8). We can't fight alone; we must be close to the whole army. Be part of a sound Bible-believing church. Be involved in its ministry. Surround yourself with good Christian friends. When you notice one of them drifting do all you can to bring them back to the fellowship. When you are being attacked let others know what they can do to help you. Stragglers and the weak are easy targets for the enemy.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Amalek is a picture of the flesh. The flesh is always here to battle us. Demons don't always attack directly, they use our flesh (sin nature, to self-centeredness and sin) as well. In fact, many times they don't have to do anything, they just let our sin nature defeat us. We, like the Jews, must learn to have victory over the flesh by prayer and fighting. God gave the Jews victory as Moses lifted up his hands in rayer and Joshua led the soldeirs (Exodus 17:8-15). It takes both persevering prayer and fighting behind Jesus our commander for us to have victory.

God allowed Amalek to continually attack so the Jews would stop and fight. They had to learn to fight. They were armed by God after the Egyptian army drowned (Exodus 14:30) but had to learn to use their weapons.

LESSON FOR TODAY: God provides armor for us (Ephesians 6:10-20) but we must learn to use it as well. (See Ephesians 6 about the Armor of God for much more information about the weapons and equipment God provides for us.)

LESSON FOR TODAY: For us to have victory means we must pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17) for it is part of the weaponry God gives us (Ephesians 6:18). We must also fight using the armor He has provided (Ephesians 6:10-17). Prayer without doing our best in life's battles isn't enough; neither is doing our best but neglecting to pray. It takes both faith and works for victory. Our warfare with the flesh will never end. Like the Jews with the Amalekites, battles will continue as long as we are on this earth.

At Mount Sinai God's people need God's truth to live and serve Him. At Mt. Sinai God revealed His law to the Jews, along with directions for the tabernacle and priesthood. Knowledge of and obedience to God's revealed truth is the key to victory (Psalm 119:9-11).

LESSON FOR TODAY: We cannot have victory in our own lives, nor can we properly minister to those who are struggling, if there is sin in our lives and we aren't living in obedience to God's commands (2 Timothy 2:5; Exodus 23:21; Deuteronomy 27:10; 30:20; Exodus 24:7; Jeremiah 7:23; 1 Samuel 15:22; Hebrews 11:8; Joshua 24:24; John 14:15). Sin grieves (Ephesians 4:30) and quenches (1 Thessalonians 5:19) the Holy Spirit. God stands ready to help us and give us victory, but we cannot allow any sin in our lives. We must confess it (1 John 1:7-10) and live in total obedience in order to have victory.

A part of the law God gave them directly forbid any involvement with anything occult, anything demonic. "When you enter the land the Lord your God is giving you, do not learn to imitate the detestable ways of the nations there. 10 Let no one be found among you who sacrifices his son or daughter in the fire, who practices divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft, 11 or casts spells, or who is a medium or spiritist or who consults the dead. 12 Anyone who does these things is detestable to the Lord, and because of these detestable practices the Lord your God will drive out those nations before you. 13 You must be blameless before the Lord your God." (Deuteronomy 18:9-13)

The death penalty was the consequence of being involved in any of these activities (Leviticus 20:2; Deuteronomy 13:10). *Child sacrifice* to the demon gods heads the list (Deuteronomy 18:10; 2 Kings 2:1-17). Worship of the stars, sorcery and divination were part of the worship of Molech. *Divination* was foretelling the future by hidden knowledge through supernatural powers (Ezekiel 21:21). *Sorcery* was used to predict the future based on the movement of the planets (Acts 8:9-24). Use of hallucinogenic drugs accompanied this (Galatians 5:20 'pharmakeia'). *Omens* were supposedly discovered by inspecting the entrails of animals, following the flights of birds or the motions of snakes. *Witchcraft* was a means of calling on demons for information, often through use of drugs or perfumes. It is strongly forbidden (2 Kings 9:22; 2 Chronicles 33:6; Micah 5:12; Nahum 3:4) and any who were involved in this were put to death (Exodus 22:18; Leviticus 20:27).

The list of forbidden occult practices continues with *casting spells*, something done by charms, spells or curses (Acts 16:16-18). A *medium* is someone through whom a demon speaks (Isaiah 8:19; Leviticus 19:31; 20:27). A *spiritist* is similar. The term usually referred to a male witch who would contact demons to try to get information from them. Necromancy, *consulting the dead*, was also done by contact with demons who impersonated the person who had died. This is strongly forbidden by God (Leviticus 19:31; 20:6, 27; 2 Kings 23:24; 1 Chronicles 10:13-14) and is what Saul did at the end of his life (1 Samuel 28:7-25).

LESSON FOR TODAY: There are many similar ways of contacting demons today as well, but every way of contacting demons is strictly forbidden. Usually, demons camouflage who they are so as to make the practice more acceptable. Contact with any power other than God is strictly forbidden. Even if the person isn't aware it is a demon, when they open themselves up to a power that is not God then the demon(s) can and will use that to claim control over them. These include consulting a spiritist, using a Ouija board, participating in occult or Satanic worship, taking part in a séance or any number of forbidden practices. If someone has been involved in these things it's power can be broken by confession and putting the sin under the blood of Jesus (1 John 1:9). Also pray to take back any access the sin had given to demons.

The Ten Commandments Another significant passage about our warfare with demons is in the Ten Commandments, Exodus 20:4-5. After the commandment to not make any idols God gives the reason: He is a jealous God "punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate Me" (Exodus 20:4-5). God does not hold us accountable for the sins of

our ancestors (Deuteronomy 24:16) but the consequences of their sins does pass on from generation to generation (Ezekiel 18:2). There is a big difference between 'sins' (individual acts of sin) and 'sin' (general term for the culmination of all sin together).

One of the main ways sin passes from generation to generation is through demonic control. When a person opens themselves to demonizing, that demon claims them and all they have. When they have children, the demon then claims the child as well (Exodus 34:6-7; Deuteronomy 5:8-9). There are many examples of this in Scripture (Nehemiah 1:4-9; Jeremiah 14:20; Daniel 1:1-19). This goes on from generation to generation until broken by prayer in Jesus' name. As believers we have authority to break this in Jesus' name (1 Corinthians 7:14).

LESSON FOR TODAY: When one person opens themselves up to demonic influence, that person's descendants are also at risk of demonizing. When a demon has access to a person, he also claims right to all that person has, including their children. The Bible says these sins pass on down to the third or fourth generation (Exodus 20:4-5; Deuteronomy 5:8-9; Exodus 34:6-7). Ancestral, or generational access is one of the most common openings for demonizing.

This is especially true of first born males. Satan seeks to claim them because God says they belong to Him (Exodus 34:20). This is by no means limited to firstborn males, or even to males. Any child is open to this. If you notice some of the same problems in your life as in your siblings, parents, aunts, uncles, or grandparents it could very well be ancestral demonizing. The same demons have access to those in the family and do the same work in various members (not all members, that would be too obvious). They claim the blood line or family name and use that as access. If you see some patterns in the symptoms or characteristics of demonizing in others in your family that could show ancestral access. That is why so often a boy who hates his father for beating his mother grows up to beat his own wife, or a child of an alcoholic becomes an alcoholic themselves. It is not uncommon to observe generations of abuse, addiction, hatred, superstition and fear, pride, control and manipulation, rejection, sexual sins and perversions, aberrant religious beliefs, witchcraft, etc.

Generational bondage can be broken by personally recognizing and acknowledging the sins of past generations. Confess your involvement in these sins and ask God to close any access the sins have given to Satan. Claim the blood of Christ as stronger than your blood line and put that access under the blood of Jesus (Romans 5:15). Claim that you are a "new creation, old things have passed away, all things have become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17). State that you are "born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God" (John 1:13). Then ask God to turn that curse into a blessing (Deuteronomy 23:5).

LESSON FOR TODAY: When counseling someone who you feel may be demonized be sure to start by asking questions about similar sins and problems in other members of the family. This is especially true if the person struggled with the issue since they were quite young. Generational bondage can be broken by putting the sins of past generations under the blood of Jesus and forbid any of Satan's forces to make any claim against you through them (Romans 5:15). Claim that you are a "new creation, old things have passed away, all things have become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17). The person must not allow himself to participate in that sin any more or the access will again be open. "Go and sin no more" (John 8:11).

Failure to enter the land Despite all God's show of power and provision, the Jews failed to enter the land because of their fear of the giants who were already living there. But God promised this to His people. Instead of trusting Him they let their fear control them. Therefore, God set the generation who left Egypt aside, causing them to wander for 40 years until all those over 20 had died.

LESSON FOR TODAY: The Jews in Moses' day never went into the land God had promised them. They never attained spiritual victory or maturity because their fear and lack of faith defeated them. Today fear is still one of Satan's greatest weapons, something that keeps many believers from

growing to maturity and attaining spiritual victory. If you struggle with fear this is where your battle must be won. Maybe you don't call it 'fear' but rather refer to it as worry, concern, anxiety, nervousness, fretfulness, apprehension or some similar term. But it is still fear. Believe God's promises and move forward in faith, not fear (Proverbs 3:25; Isaiah 14:3; Psalm 34:4; Joshua 1:9; 10:8; 23:9-11; Leviticus 26:8; Exodus 14:13; 1 Samuel 17:45-47; 2 Samuel 22:33-35,40-41; Philippians 4:6-7; 4:13; 2 Timothy 1:7 Exodus 14:13). Write some of these verses down, memorize them, and quote them whenever your faith struggles.

Possessing our inheritance The generation of Jews who left Egypt did not enter the land, but the next generation did. Numbers 32:18-22 describes their key to victory. "We will not return to our homes until every Israelite has received his inheritance." (Numbers 32:18-22) They determined to possess the land (Numbers 32:18) and armed themselves for battle (Numbers 32:20). They then moved ahead in faith in God, trusting and following Him (Numbers 32:21) and God gave them victory (Numbers 32:22).

LESSON FOR US: The physical warfare of the Jews over their enemies in the Old Testament pictures our spiritual warfare against our enemies (the flesh and Satan) in the New Testament. We can learn many spiritual lessons from their physical battles. Numbers 32:18-22 gives the key for our victory in spiritual warfare. First of all, we must be totally committed to having victory (Numbers 32:18) and willing to pay whatever price is necessary (Matthew 16:24; Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23). How badly do you want to experience all God has for you? How willing are you to fight for it no matter the cost?

LESSON FOR US: Arm yourself. Make sure you understand and use the armor that is ours (Ephesians 6:10-20). Put on your armor daily and keep it on (see Ephesians 6 for more information). Then move out in faith. Attack the enemy, whatever is challenging you (Numbers 32:21), but do it in God's power (Luke 10:17-20). Don't sit back, don't avoid confrontation, seek out your weaknesses and areas of temptation and defeat them. Then God promises ultimate victory (Numbers 32:22). The Jews challenge was to conquer the Promised Land. 'Self' is our land to be subdued, to be tamed and brought under control. It is ours for the taking, although it requires lifelong warfare to gain and keep victory.

SPIRITUAL WARFARE TRAINING: Answer the following questions. Send the answers to me if you want and I'll offer comments and suggestions.

1. Abraham's life was a series of tests, opportunities to trust God in faith or to fail to do so. Write a list of some of the main tests you've faced in life and behind each one write if you passed or failed and why.
2. What test(s) are you going through right now? What opportunities is God giving you to trust Him? Are you passing or failing right now?
3. Amalek (the flesh) attacks all of us. Where are you most attacked by your sin nature? What are your weaknesses?
4. What must you do to have victory over these sins of the flesh?
5. Are you aware of any 'generational' sin's that seem to reoccur in your family? Is there anything you struggle with which others in your family also struggle with, especially parents or grandparents? If so, what are these things?
6. If you sense any of these things in your life use the following prayer:

"Gracious Father over all, I acknowledge before you the sins of my parents and ancestors. I know that they have sinned because all men and women are sinners. And so, I openly confess the sins of my parents and ancestors. I am sorry for their sins against you and I ask that you cover their sins

with the blood of Jesus and not hold their consequences against me or my descendants. I claim the finished work of Jesus Christ, Who bore all my sin upon Himself. I now command every demonic spirit that works against me to leave and never to return. I now ask You, heavenly Father, to fill me with Your Holy Spirit. I submit my body as an instrument of righteousness, a living sacrifice, that I may glorify You. All this I do in the name & authority of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen."

4. JOSHUA (Joshua)

The book of Joshua is one of the most detailed books on spiritual warfare in the Bible. 1 Corinthians 10:1-13 tells us that the things that happened to the Jews who left Egypt and eventually settled the Promised Land happened as examples for us. Physical events in the Old Testament teach spiritual truths in the New Testament. That is true of the book of Joshua.

In Genesis we see the need of salvation – man is sinful. The book starts in Eden in God's presence and ends with the Jews in captivity in Egypt. Exodus brings deliverance by innocent blood being shed (Passover) and by power (Red Sea open and close). Then in Leviticus instruction is given as to how to live for God now that they are delivered. In Numbers they start learning to apply what God has taught them about winning battles they face in life. Deuteronomy reviews lessons from the past about obeying God. God's people must learn from the past so they can move ahead in the future. Then comes Joshua, entering the Promised Land (God's perfect will for them) and conquering through warfare. That's where we are in our Christian life: God has redeemed us and taught us His Word. Now we pursue His perfect will for our lives but find we must fight to achieve what He has for us.

LESSON FOR TODAY: The same happens today – God freely gives us salvation. Peace, rest and victory available as we live in His perfect will, but there is a battle involved for us to experience and enjoy those blessings. We fight our sinful nature and we fight Satan's demons who try to do all they can to keep us from experiencing all God has for us. It's available, it's ours, but we must battle to attain it. We are living in enemy-occupied territory seeking to overthrow the prince of this world and release as many of his prisoners as possible. Of course, he will oppose all we do!

The generation of Jews who left Egypt died in unbelief, not attaining all the blessings God had for them in this life. They lacked faith and obedience. Their children took over – each generation must pick up where the last generation stopped or failed. They needed faith to face the giants their parents feared. They couldn't do this in their own strength, only in God's.

Crossing the Jordan River First they would have to cross the Jordan River which was at flood stage (Joshua 3:15). Humanly speaking it was the worst time to try to cross. Human wisdom said to not try, but God chose this time to show His power. God's ways are not our ways (Isaiah 55:8-9). By following God, the Jews found there was no opposition during the crossing because the residents of Canaan were not expecting them to cross at that time. It was also a time when much food was available in the land and the morale of the Canaanites had been undermined by word of God's work through the Jews (Joshua 5:1). God miraculously opened the Jordan, as He had the Red Sea for the previous generation (Exodus 4:3). But now He expected them to step into the water first (Joshua 3:14-17), not stand on dry ground and watch. As our faith grows God expects more and more of us. So, they entered, but it was a commitment for there was no way to return!

LESSON FOR TODAY: The conquest of the land and settling on the ground God gave them required battle after battle. Joshua prepared to enter by meditating on God's Word (Joshua 1:8) and by following Jesus (Joshua 5:13-14). We, too, are to meditate on God's Word (Psalm 1:1-3) and follow Jesus as well (Mark 1:17; 2:14). We cannot coast on the faith of our parents or those who have gone before us.

The Battle of Jericho The first battle was at **Jericho** (Joshua 5:13 – 6:27). It is important to note that no two battles, then or now, are exactly alike. At the Red Sea the Jews were to stand still and see God deliver (Exodus 14:3), but against Amalek the men were to take up weapons and fight (Exodus 17:9). Now at Jericho they were told to march around the walls in faith and God would take care of the walls (Joshua 6:1-3). The Jews followed the Ark of the Covenant which symbolized the seat of God's presence.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Each battle we fight will be different than the battles others fight, and even different than past battles we were involved in. We must follow God's lead each time. There is no one way or 'best' way – be sensitive and follow God. Don't look for a magic formula or easy way out – obedience to God brings victory, disobedience brings defeat.

Despite victory over great Jericho, the Jews were soundly defeated in their next battle against a small outpost called **Ai** because there was sin in the camp (Joshua 6:18-19; 7:13). Achan tried to keep that which belonged to God. This sin was confessed and removed from the camp, and then there was victory at Ai. We, too, must make sure there is no sin in our lives or we won't have victory but will live in defeat.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Note that the sin of one affects others in the family, church or nation. Innocent suffer along with guilty. That is true of Christians living in the USA today as well.

LESSON FOR TODAY: An entirely new strategy was used for victory at Ai – an ambush from behind the town. There is no magic formula, no one human leader, and no ritual that guarantees victory. Sensitivity to God's leading and following His Spirit is the only sure way to win. God leads others differently than He leads you, and He will not lead you the same way each time either.

After these victories the Jews paused to regroup and refocus. By this time the tribes in the north and south had started unifying to better stand against the Jews.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Satan's opposition grows stronger in time. The enemy does not give up and surrender. He gathers more demons and even motivates unbelieving human beings in opposition against God's people. Big victories on our part often bring bigger opposition from Satan and his demons.

Defeating The Southern Tribes First, the Jews faced the southern tribes (Joshua 9:1-2; 10:5). Their biggest danger wasn't their enemy without, but the enemy within – fear. That is one of the demon's best tools to defeat us, but God clearly commands us to have faith, not fear (Joshua 10:8). When the Jews fought as directed by God, He brought victory (Joshua 10:11). He even miraculously caused the sun to stand still so there was extended daylight to finish the victory (Joshua 10:12-14).

One of the tribes in the south, the Gibeonites, tried an entirely different but vastly more successful strategy – deception. They sent representatives who pretended to come from far away so as to not seem to be a threat to the Jews, even going so far as to encourage the Jews to make a treaty with them (Joshua 9:3-14). This was clear disobedience to God's command.

LESSON FOR TODAY: When the enemy can't win by direct conflict he often resorts to something more subtle and often more effective – deceitfulness. As in Eden, Satan is most dangerous when using deception and lies. We must make sure we know and apply the truth, for while deception brings bondage, but truth brings freedom (John 8:32).

Defeating the Northern Tribes During this time the northern tribes had time to unify and prepare (Joshua 11:1-5). Victory in the north did not come in one quick, short battle as we would often like to see happen, but was a slow and gradual process. The enemy just doesn't quit. Again, the greatest problem the Jews faced was fear. The same is true today. God encouraged them in their faith (Joshua 11:6) and brought the victory as they fought (Joshua 11:8). We must fight but it is God who brings victory.

The last great battle to claim and settle the Promised Land, the place of God's blessing, was against the giants (Anakim, Numbers 13:28; Joshua 11:21). It was fear of them that kept the Jews out of the land in Moses' day.

LESSON FOR TODAY: This was a retest. When we are defeated God allows us to face the same enemy time and time again until we learn to have victory. This final series of battles were the hardest, for it was Satan's last great stand and he did all he could to hold on to his territory. Joshua and Caleb were old by this time, but they still battled and God gave victory. As long as we are alive we will face battles, we never grow too old to keep growing and serving.

LESSON FOR TODAY: There are numerous lessons we can learn from Joshua, and an extended personal study of the book will reap rich benefits, so become very familiar with this book. One of the clearest lessons is that fear is a main tool of the enemy and something we need to recognize and defeat by faith (1 John 5:4-5). Also, knowing that each battle is different and God has no one way for victory is important. As always, the importance of perseverance is clear throughout. Depend on God alone for victory (Jeremiah 10:23; Proverbs 3:5-6; Romans 8:28).

LESSON FOR TODAY: God equips us with the weapon we will need to win our battles. The sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, is our offensive weapon (Matthew 4:4; Ephesians 6:17). Read, study, memorize and use God's Word. The more proficient you are in God's Word the more powerful you will be in battle.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Another very important lesson to learn about warfare from the book of Joshua is that warfare never ends. God's plan was for the Jews to gradually win over the land, bit by bit (Exodus 22:27-30; Deuteronomy 7:21-22). While the last great battle was with the giants, there were always mop-up operations, pockets of resistance and rebellion which would break out in various places. Were the Jews to conquer the whole land in Joshua's time they wouldn't have been able to settle and cultivate all of it, so some would return to a wild state. Instead, God let them conquer some land and settle, then move ahead to conquer a little more. We, too, are to learn and grow from each conflict we face. This also was how God taught them to fight: by continual practice. They were to teach their children who would continue the battles, and pass it on to their children.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Fortunately, though, the warfare isn't continual. It comes in cycles. The Jews had times of intense warfare, then times of consolidating and applying their gains. There wasn't constant battle every minute of every day. God interspersed times of rest, times to grow and mature and times to solidify what was won in the previous battle before they had to move ahead again. God does that today as well. We have times of great stretching and challenge, then times of peace and rest during which we gather our strength and apply what we have learned. Then another battle comes. Don't expect the battles to ever end, but don't become discouraged thinking the current battle will last forever. Battles come and go in cycles. We grow spiritually in spurts just as plants and animals. Even a child's body grows in spurts.

Joshua's Conclusion Joshua concludes his book with a heartfelt plea to the Jews, asking them to turn from their foreign gods and serve the Lord only (Joshua 24:14-15). The worship of the Canaanite gods was very evil and demonic. Baal, for example, was the number one god. His name means lord, master or owner. He was the god of weather and fertility and his worship was grossly immoral and extremely bloody. The highest-ranking goddess was his mate, Ashtoreth (Judges 2:13; 3:7) She is also involved with fertility. Her name has been corrupted to 'Easter' and her fertility worship included rabbits, eggs and focus on the spring solstice. God decreed the death penalty for those who served these gods because of their evil, immoral, demon-inspired worship.

LESSON FOR TODAY: The battle for Palestine was not just between the Jews and Canaanites. It was really between God and Satan, the kingdom of light and the kingdom of darkness. The gods of the Canaanites were very evil and demonic and involved in many sexually immoral

activities. There was much fear involved in these animistic beliefs. These fleshly, sensual forms of worship appealed to the Jews. God was very strict about forbidding His people to have anything to do with them and to destroy them and their possessions (Joshua 24:14-15).

For the next thousand years this battle will continue. Satan will use these false religions to tempt and mislead God's people, turning them from the One true God and putting them under His judgment. When they worshipped these false idols they were really worshipping and giving power to the demons behind them (1 Corinthians 10:20). Eventually the Jews were removed from their land because of this sin, so this plan of Satan's ultimately succeeded. Thus, we see that the conflicts between God's people and those who represent the enemy are more than just human clashes; they mirror the warfare going on in the heavenlies between God and Satan.

5. JUDGES (Judges)

After Joshua died, the nation of Israel was ruled by Judges. The time period when the Judges ruled covered roughly 300 years from the time of Joshua to the first king, Saul. It, too, was a time of warfare. However, while the Jews followed God to victory in Joshua's time, during the time of the judges they lived in defeat and bondage because of their disobedience and sin. The book contains seven downward spirals of sin and repentance. Their refusal to serve God kept them from having any sustained victory over their enemies.

The book of Judges shows that God left some of the Canaanites living in the land so following generations of Jews could sharpen their fighting skills and learn how to win their battles with God's help. However, they didn't follow God but lived in their own strength. Without God's help they were unable to achieve victory, it was only when they obeyed and followed Him that they had success. Samson is a perfect example of that (Judges 14-16). So is the defeat of the Jews by the Philistines and other Canaanite tribes when they fought in the energy of the flesh (Judges 4:1-2). One time they put the Ark of the Covenant in front as they went into battle to use God as a good luck charm (Judged 4:3). They were defeated and lost possession of the Ark for 40 years.

LESSON FOR TODAY: We must take our spiritual combat seriously. We have a formidable enemy; one we can't beat on our own. God is no lucky charm to pull out when things get too bad and use as a magic genie to cure our problems and make life nice for us again. We must be focused in our commitment to be obedient to God in all actions and keep Him foremost in all thoughts and decision. Faith in Him, not in rituals, persons or procedures brings victory.

E. UNITED KINGDOM

As the nation of Israel turned from God, and as life during the time of the judges continued to bring defeat after defeat, the people turned to the world for an answer to their problems. Rejecting God as their King and defender, they insisted on a human king like the other nations around them. They thought this human solution would bring peace and happiness, but they were wrong. For the next 120 years they were ruled by 3 kings: Saul, David and Solomon.

1. SAUL (1 Samuel 1-15)

Saul was the first king over Israel. He was chosen by God because he was what the people wanted. He was tall and good looking (1 Samuel 10:23-24) – external traits being all the Jews cared

about. He didn't follow God. Pride and insecurity turned him from a shy, humble man to a self-centered tyrant. His insecurity and fear opened him up to demonic oppression.

Stage 1 Demonizing The first stage of his demonic oppression was mild. When he was tormented, David's music brought relief (1 Samuel 16:14-23). He opened himself to the influence of demons by his sins of fear, jealousy and pride. When he allowed his fear to manifest itself in anger and rage, demons fed on his hate and injected more fear and anger into him (1 Samuel 18:10-22; 19:9-10; 20:30-33). He only found relief when David played and sang to him.

LESSON FOR TODAY: God assigns angels to protect us, and He does it in an organized way, not haphazardly. So, too, Satan is methodical in assigning demons to attack us as well. Certain ones are assigned to focus on defeating us, and perhaps other family members as well. They get to know us and our weaknesses so that they are better able to find chinks in our armor and attack us either head on or in new subtle ways, which often are more successful. They have had thousands of years of experience doing this so we are no match for them. God alone knows us better than they do and only He can help us have victory.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Sin opens the door to demons. Sinful desire is like a prayer, a request which demons are more than willing to fill. It brings our thoughts to life. Anger especially leads to demonizing (Ephesians 4:26-27; Matthew 18:34; 2 Corinthians 2:10-11). We voluntarily lose self-control and the anger becomes like a prayer, a seeking for something ungodly to empower us. Demons are only too glad to increase our anger and rage. Confess any anger as sin and take back any access you have given to Satan through it.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Christian music is a good way to have victory over demonic oppression (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16). Not only does it reset our mind and thoughts with God's truth, but demons hate hearing Jesus praised and avoid places where that is happening. Playing music that lifts up Jesus when you are attacked is a good way to help win the battle. It is also a profitable practice at night for those who have thoughts and dreams that aren't from God. Let Christian music play quietly in your room or home. If a certain part of your home or property seems to be especially under attack, leave some music playing there all day and night. Leaving a light on can have the same affect because demons love darkness and hate the light.

Stage 2 Demonizing The second stage then followed. Saul became more violent, even trying to kill David while he played music (1 Samuel 18:10-11; 19:7-17; 20:30-33). Demons hate music that praises God and will do anything to silence it if possible. As the demons gathered more control over Saul by his continual sin, they were able to incite him to seek to kill David. Those in this stage start acting out in their sin area – in violence, greed, lust or whatever area they have opened in their life.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Violence and rage are common effects of demonic presence. That is not to say that Saul, or anyone who has rages, is not responsible for their actions - they are. But at this point it takes more than just "trying harder" to have victory; it takes confessing the sin and rebuking the work of the demons in your life. Then ask God to fill that void with His presence. The battle will then begin for they will seek to retake the control they had in your life. Using God's word by focusing on His promises is the only way to have sustained victory.

Third Stage Demonizing The third and final stage of demonizing is then evident in Saul's life. Deeply destructive and totally ungodly behavior begins as Saul goes to a witch at Endor for advice (1 Samuel 28:8-15). Despite the fact that he knows God forbids this (Deuteronomy 18:9-13) he wants the witch to call up the spirit of Samuel so he can find out information about the future. Assuming a demonic manifestation would appear counterfeiting Samuel, they were both shocked when God allowed Samuel himself to manifest to them. Samuel foretold his future as he wanted, but it was one of death for disobedience.

LESSON FOR TODAY: While God has a plan for our lives that includes life, joy and peace, Satan also has a plan but it includes misery, destruction and death. He can only do what God allows. If he had his own way all Christians would be dead. He can only do what God allows (Job). Demons try to convince us that they to bring that which is good for us, but like Satan's deception in Eden it is really for our destruction (John 8:44

2. DAVID (1 Samuel 16 – 1 Kings 2)

David was a man after God's own heart (1 Samuel 13:13-14). He killed a bear and lion by God's power. He defeated Goliath the same way (1 Samuel 17:45-47). His downfall was his sin with Bathsheba and the subsequent attempted cover-up. That was the result of a pattern of deception and lies that started earlier in his life. Another thread of sin woven throughout his life was lust. Unfortunately, David had married several wives. Women appealed to him. Satan had been patiently setting up this snare for years. The trap was set and David was caught in his sin with Bathsheba. He was victorious over open frontal attacks, but Satan had been developing this trap patiently for quite a while. That's why we must always be alert to the smallest sin and get rid of it immediately.

There is another time when Satan deceived and defeated David as well. "Satan rose up against Israel and incited David to take a census of Israel." (1 Chronicles 21:1) David, in pride which was encouraged by Satan, took a census of his soldiers against Joab's advice and God's warning (1 Chronicles 21: 2-7). God severely punished Israel with a plague because of it (1 Chronicles 21: 8-29). God allowed an "angel" to bring death to many (1 Chronicles 21:14-27). Was this "angel" who caused death in the plague a demon or an angel of God? Either way, we see Satan putting thoughts of pride into David's mind which led to death for many.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Demons will work for years setting a Christian up for a fall. We think we can get away with a certain sin, or it isn't a big deal, but gradually it grows until we are captured and defeated by it. Demons are smart and they are patient. Without God's wisdom and help we are sure to fall. Don't give in one inch. Don't allow one sin, however small, to remain and grow. Demons are working on a way to trap you at this very moment so be very alert or you will be defeated. We may be ready for the large battles and faithfully fight them, then fall into a cleverly laid trap of the enemy using a 'small' sin (1 Timothy 3:7; 2 Timothy 2:26).

3. SOLOMON (1 Kings 2 – 11)

Solomon, too, is an example of someone who was brought down by deception and trickery. Despite all his wisdom and riches, he followed his father's example and married many women (1 Kings 11:3). He went way beyond David in this, though, and these women led him into idolatry and paganism (1 Kings 11:4). He had everything but lost it.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Those closest to us can be used to mislead us and tempt us into sin, as Eve did with Adam (Genesis 3:6), Sarah & Abraham (son by Hagar) and perhaps Job's wife when she told him to curse God and die (Job 2:9). If those closest to you tempt you to stray from the truth even the littlest bit avoid that trap of Satan's and do what you know God wants.

SPIRITUAL WARFARE TRAINING: Answer the following questions. Send the answers to me if you want and I'll offer comments and suggestions.

1. In your own words summarize several of the most important lessons learned about spiritual warfare from the physical warfare recorded in the book of Joshua.

2. What are some of the greatest spiritual battles which you are facing now? What can you learn from Joshua to help you fight them?
3. Why were the Jews able to have victory during the time of Joshua but were defeated during the rule of the Judges? What were the differences in these two times?
4. Demons had a plan to attack Saul and a different plan to attack David. Summarize each plan and explain why it worked.
5. What kind of a plan does Satan use to try to defeat you?

F. DIVIDED KINGDOM

That which is done outside of God's will always ultimately fail. Having a king didn't solve Israel's woes, it just added more to them – as God had told them it would. They failed to put God first and replaced Him with greed and self-centeredness. Before long the nation divided into two – Israel (northern 10 tribes) and Judah (southern 2 tribes). Two hundred years later the north went into captivity and a hundred and fifty years after that the south followed. This didn't happen without many warnings from God, though. Elijah was just one of many, many men God sent to try to turn the Jews back to faithfully serving Him alone.

1. ISRAEL & JUDAH (1 Kings 12 – 2 Kings 24)

Elijah and the priests of Baal Satan and his demons love blood, pain, suffering and death. This is the opposite of God who loves life, light, peace and joy. Destruction and misery characterize the work of Satan and his demons. The demonically empowered pagan religions in Israel were full of blood, suffering and death. The priests of Baal cut themselves to call on their gods to start their altar on fire when Elijah challenged them to a power encounter to see whose god was the greatest (1 Kings 18:28). They shed the blood of innocent victims to their gods as well. Sacrificing children to their detestable, blood-thirsty gods was common (Jeremiah 32:35; 2 Kings 16:3; 17:17; 21:6; Ezekiel 20:31). Demons demand sacrifice; they thrive on pain and love to cause suffering and misery, even death. They use wars, epidemics, terrorism, suicide, abuse and similar activities to increase pain and suffering.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Satan and his demons still love blood, darkness, misery and suffering. They feed off of the music, movies, dress and lifestyles that focus on darkness. They go wild for human blood and are behind cutting and suicide (Mark 5:5). They love to cause pain of any sort, including physical pain (Matthew 17:15). Perhaps that is one of the reasons for the rise of interest in tattoos today despite the pain of getting them. The Bible clearly forbids tattoos (Leviticus 19:28).

Victory over Moab A clear example of this is when Israel defeated the Moabites and drove them back into their own walled cities. The Jew's power from their God was greater than that of Satan and those who called on him. But the Moabite king sacrificed his own firstborn son before everyone on the city wall (2 Kings 3:25-27) and the tide of the battle turned. They now had power to drive back the Jews and defeat them. What made the difference? Where did that power come from? By appealing to demons in this way they received their help in battle. If the Jews had understood the spiritual warfare that was behind the physical battle they could have called on their God and He would have given them the power they needed to have victory (1 John 4:4). But they fought in their own strength and lost the battle.

LESSON FOR TODAY: We, too, need to know and practice spiritual warfare so we have victory. Many of God's people live in defeat because they do not understand the way the enemy works or the principles of spiritual warfare and how to have victory (2 Corinthians 2:5-11).

While we see Satan and his forces at work throughout the pages of the Old Testament, we also see God's greater power through those who are obedient to Him. God's power through Moses in Egypt was greater than Satan's power through the magicians. Elijah's victory over the prophets of Baal and Ashtoreth in the time of Ahab and Jezebel is another example (1 Kings 18:16-46). God takes on the gods behind the false religions, the ones empowering the pagan idols and clearly defeats each and every one of them.

The False Prophets God allowed demons to mislead the false prophets. As with all things, He brought good out of it for His people (Romans 8:28). He allowed it because they couldn't do it without His permission (1 Kings 22:19-23) in order to use the results for His purpose. When a king followed the Satan-inspired dictator of his prophets, he was sealing his doom (1 Kings 22:1-28).

LESSON FOR TODAY: When we look behind the scenes we learn that God is using Satan's evil for His good (Romans 8:28). He allowed a demon of lying and deception to cause false prophets to give a wrong message to Ahab, thus luring him to God's judgment of death on him (1 Kings 22:19-23). God uses all things for His plan and purpose (Romans 8:28). (See notes with Job for more about this.) Sometimes it is hard to understand why God doesn't answer or deliver, but God is totally in control. He allows man a free will choice but ultimately uses all that happens for His purpose.

God blessed faithfulness Hezekiah tried to bribe King Sennacherib of Assyria when he attacked them to defeat them (2 Kings 18:14-16). He took the money but attacked the Jews anyway (2 Kings 18:17).

Jehosaphat, in a similar situation, turned to God instead of trying to make a deal with his enemy. God delivered him (2 Chronicles 20:17) and the nation responded in praise and thanksgiving to God (2 Chronicles 20:12). When God didn't deliver right away, the prophets stayed faithful to God even though they were greatly persecuted and often killed (Hebrews 11:32-38).

LESSON FOR TODAY: Often we are tempted to compromise with sin, to back off when the battle gets intense, to fade a bit in our commitment to God – and when we do the pressure from the enemy seems to let up. We back off a bit more from our obedience to God and enjoy the rest from battle. What is happening, though, is that we are trying to buy off the enemy. He'll take what we give him, but he'll soon be back stronger than ever and then we will be in worse shape than before. Surrender to the enemy is certainly one way to find relief from conflict, but then there is no spiritual growth, no fruit of the spirit, no reward in eternity and no peace in this life. The only way for victory is to trust God and continue to stand against the enemy (Ephesians 6:11-14).

Angels protect believers Throughout all the Jews' battles, God was with His people and helping those who turned to Him. He used angels to protect His people and bring judgment on His enemies (2 Kings 6:15-17; 19:35; 2:11; Psalm 34:7; 68:17; 91:11; Zechariah 1:8; 6:1-7; Revelation 19:11).

LESSON FOR TODAY: God's angels today fight for us as they did for God's people in times past. They protect us at times and in ways we aren't aware of (Hebrews 1:14; Matthew 26:53). We don't see them or if we do they appear as human beings (Hebrews 13:2). We aren't to pray to them, for we are fellow warriors in the fight to advance God's kingdom against the kingdom of darkness. It's good to know we aren't the only ones battling both Satan and his demons.

Prophets foretell Satan's defeat Even though it seemed like Satan's kingdom was advancing and defeating God's kingdom, God foretold their ultimate defeat several times (Genesis 3:15). First, God decreed through Isaiah that Satan would be brought down to the grave, to the depths of the pit (Isaiah 14:12-20). Next, God says Satan and his forces will be bound in a dungeon, shut up in prison for

many days (consigned to hades for the Millennium, Isaiah 24:21-23). Third, God promises (Isaiah 27:1) that the serpent or dragon (Satan, Revelation 12:7-12) will be defeated by the sword of God's Word (Revelation 19:15). Through Ezekiel God says Satan will be cast from heaven to earth by God's power (Ezekiel 28:11-19).

LESSON FOR US: While Satan is aware of the fate that awaits him, it just causes him to act with more fury as the end comes closer. He even has deceived many of his demons into thinking their cause will one day be victorious. A good way of defeating them when attacked is to read these passages and others in Revelation (Revelation 20:1-3, 7-10; etc.) about their coming defeat, about God's power over them (1 John 4:4). Use God's Word to make sure they know they are defeated by God's power and must submit to His authority. Remember that God is the most powerful One and ultimate victor in our daily battles as well.

2. CAPTIVITY (2 Kings 25, Jeremiah, Daniel)

Israel and Judah are taken into captivity Because of their sin, the north and then the southern nations of Israel and Judah went into captivity. They gave in to the forces of Satan and, instead of battling him, joined his army. They worshipped the demonic gods of the Canaanites as well as the stars in the sky, sacrificed their children to these idols and became involved in occult practices (2 Kings 17:16-18). A holy God cannot allow sin, even in His own people – especially in His own people (1 Peter 4:17).

LESSON FOR TODAY: Child sacrifice was common in all the Canaanite religions. It shows the horrible dark hold Satan had on these people. Satan and demons love pain, suffering and death, and would reward people who sacrificed children (1 Kings 18:28, Mark 5:5, Matthew 17:15). We see this hideous practice resurfacing today in Satanism, satanic cults and in many witchcraft cults around the world. We have a more 'civilized' form of child sacrifice today - abortion. Children are sacrificed for the convenience of adults. The innocent still die terrible, painful deaths.

For 70 years the Jews were in captivity to other nations who took them from their homeland. Daniel was one of those taken to Babylon as a young boy. Throughout all of his life he was involved in spiritual warfare. We gain valuable insight into the battle in the heavenlies from an event in his life (Daniel 10:2-14). Towards the end of his life, he was fasting and praying for wisdom from God. After 24 days without an answer an angel appeared to him and told him that the first day he started praying God sent a messenger (literally "angel") to answer Daniel's prayer. However, for 3 weeks the demon who was the territorial ruler of Persia fought against this messenger angel to keep him from getting to Daniel. Michael came to join in the battle so the heavenly courier from God was able to defeat the demonic oppression. He was then able to come to Daniel and complete his mission. While this sounds like a strange event, it sheds much light on the spiritual battles we fight. These kinds of things probably happen around us all the time but we aren't aware of them.

LESSON FOR TODAY: There are several lessons for us in this account. First, we gain insight into the organization of Satan's forces. Satan arranges his demons in the same manner God has angels organized - in a military-like structure. These are similar to soldiers in an army: generals, colonels, majors, lieutenants, sergeants, corporals, privates, etc. (Ephesians 6:12). Usually a "strong man" (or ruler) is assigned to a task, and he has lesser demons under his command to help in the work (Matthew 12:25-29; Daniel 10:2-6, 12-14). The names of these demons usually refer to what they do: "Fear," "Anger," "Lust," "Pride," "Deception," etc.. Satan assigns powerful demons as leaders to oversee the work against various people groups and geographical areas as well. Persia was controlled by demons who were organized under the command of a very powerful demon who took the role as the "prince of Persia". All countries, people groups and major movements among mankind have a structure of demons assigned to defeat and control them. So do churches, Christian

ministries, families and of course individuals as well. No one gets overlooked, and those doing the Lord's work receive special attention! Understanding these things is important for us to know what we are fighting against and how to pray for God's power and protection.

LESSON FOR TODAY: We also see the importance of prayer, and that God answers it. Even if it seems to take a while, persevere and await God's answer. It has been correctly said that prayer is not preliminary to the battle, prayer is the battle. So, persevere in your prayer and warfare.

LESSON FOR TODAY: The warfare we go through here is just a small reflection of what is taking place in the heavenlies. You are not alone in your battles. All God's people are attacked, and angels and demons are constantly in conflict in the unseen world around us. If it seems you are alone, or something must be wrong because you face these things more than others, remember that all who seek to serve and advance God's kingdom will be attacked.

The influence of Babylon on the Jews While in captivity in Babylon the Jews picked up many of the beliefs of the Babylonians. The Babylonians were very superstitious and their religion was based on fear. They believed the gods sent demons to cause illness and problems when these gods were offended by something someone did. Their goal was to find which god was upset and appease him by ritualistic formulas, incantations, rites, amulets, charms or sacrifices.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Fear is still one of Satan's very best tools and often the name of the ruling demon of many who are demonized. "Fear" and "Death" are common, powerful demons, and often work together to bring the destruction of their host. Demons commonly instill fear in those they attack and use it to control the person (Romans 8:15). Demons put fear of David into Saul (1 Samuel 18:10-15) and put terror into Eliaphaz by gliding by his face (Job 4:15). Anything not of faith is sin (Romans 14:23). God does not give us fear (2 Timothy 1:7; Romans 8:15), so if you experience fear realize it is not from God but from Satan. Not all fear comes from demons, but when we allow fear in our lives demons jump on it like rats on garbage.

Fear takes root when we choose to focus on circumstances instead of God. Peter walking on water is a good example. When his eyes were on Jesus his faith was strong, but when he looked focused on the waves they grew in his mind to be greater than Jesus' power and he started sinking. He did the right thing, though, and put his eyes back on Jesus. Trust is the antidote to fear. God is our Father; we are His children. Jesus says we are to be like little children in order to learn faith and trust.

When you notice fear attacking you, defeat it by quoting scripture. When Jesus was tempted He quoted Scripture to have victory over Satan's temptations. Paul says our only offensive weapon is the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God. Psalm 119:9,11 tell us that it's through God's Word that we have victory. When you have these thoughts and attacks use Scripture to have victory. Ask God to give you some verses that will help against these things, write them down and memorize them. Say them over and over when these thoughts attack you. That is the way to victory, and God guarantees it will work! Here are some verses to use: Proverbs 3:25; Isaiah 14:3; Psalm 34:4; Joshua 1:9; 10:8; 23:9-11; Leviticus 26:8; Exodus 14:13; 1 Samuel 17:45-47; 2 Samuel 22:33-35,40-41; Philippians 4:6-7; 4:13; 2 Timothy 1:7.

3. RESTORATION (Ezra, Nehemiah)

After 70 years in foreign captivity, the Jews were allowed to return to their home land and rebuilt Jerusalem. Several small groups made the journey home, but most stayed in Babylon where they were financially prosperous. Those who returned, like Nehemiah and Ezra, were attacked from without and within. Externally they faced ridicule, criticism, mockery and threats of violence from

neighboring nations who didn't want the Jews returning to their land. Internally they faced discouragement, gossip and criticism from fellow Jews. It was a battle with two fronts.

LESSON FOR TODAY: We, too, face a two-pronged attack from our enemy. He hits us head on with external problems and painful circumstances, criticism and rejection from others puts obstacles in our way. Internally we fight against fear, anger, greed, lust, pride, self-centeredness, laziness and many more. It's hard enough to battle on one front, but to fight both battles well at the same time is extra difficult

For five hundred more years the Jews lived in Palestine, their home land. They rebuilt their civilization but never attained the freedom or the prosperity they once had. Greece took over from Babylon and Persia, but their religion was similar to Babylon's, for they got much of it from the Babylonians. Greece adopted many Babylonian beliefs and practices and included them in their own religious system. They used concoctions, incantations, invocations (spoken or written on paper and hung around the neck), amulets, recipes (mixing oils, burning roots, sprinkling water, etc.) and blowing upon the person to remove demons. Many of these practices eventually became part of the Jews rituals at that time. To most Jews of the period, as indeed to most men of that time, the world was full of supernatural powers. As there were angels to accomplish every good act, so there were demons or evil spirits to perpetuate every evil deed or to prompt every sinful impulse. These were an important part of their world view. Trying to live at peace with them, or manipulate these forces for their own benefit, was an important part of daily life and religion.

CONCLUDING THE OLD TESTAMENT Warfare – no one wants it. But we will experience much of it if we will follow God. The only ones who aren't in a battle are those who are in Satan's army or taken captive by him. Any and all who follow God will have to fight. But God will bring victory. Remember that the battles you fight are really God's battles. He alone can bring the victory, and one day He will. There will be no more battles. But until that time, we faithfully follow and serve Him.

SPIRITUAL WARFARE TRAINING: Answer the following questions. Send the answers to me if you want and I'll offer comments and suggestions.

1. The time of the captivity and return was a sad time in Jewish history. If God was greater than the enemies of the Jews, so why did they so often live in defeat?
2. Why do God's people today often live in defeat?
3. What are some of the most important lessons you have learned about spiritual warfare from the Old Testament?
4. How do these apply to your life?

II. LIFE OF JESUS

The coming of Jesus Christ was the invasion of the kingdom of Satan by the kingdom of God in the person of the true King. His incarnation was an infiltration, a landing behind enemy lines. The enemy mustered all the opposition it could to stop Him. He came to rescue mankind which had been held captive in sin since the time of Adam and Eve. He provided the only way for man to get out of bondage. Jesus came to end Satan's undisputed rule (Matthew 12:28-29). Darkness fought against the Light, but praise God the Light was greater (John 1:5; 3:19; 8:12)!

A. BIRTH OF JESUS

1. 400 SILENT YEARS

For four hundred years the Jews languished in defeat and bondage, first to the Greeks, then to the Romans but always to Satan and his forces. The people living in those days were well aware that the world was full of supernatural forces: angels to accomplish good and evil spirits to promote and perpetuate sin. They attributed sin, sickness and even accidents to the work of demons.

According to the Jewish Talmud, the Jews living at the time when Jesus came to earth believed that evil spirits were innumerable. The air was packed tight with them. Many incantations or charms were available to exorcise demons from parts of one's house, food or person. Blindness, headaches, epilepsy, leprosy, croup, fever, forgetfulness, nightmares, depression, madness, diseases of the brain, and diseases of the inner parts of the body were all thought to be caused by demons. The techniques used by the Jews to cast out spirits included curses, trumpets, fumigations, angelology, herbs (roots), incantations, poems, music, talismans, magical stones, invocations, the laying on of hands with prayer, and adjurations (verbal commands). Justin, an early church leader and writer, reported that the Jews were only able to have success in driving out demons when they did it in God's name, but even then they didn't have nearly the success the new followers of Jesus had.

2. JESUS' BIRTH (Matthew 1-2; Luke 1-2)

Jesus' birth was truly an infiltration of enemy-occupied territory, a landing behind enemy lines. While the accounts of Jesus' birth speak of a quiet, peaceful event, reading between the lines shows there was much conflict involved both in heaven and on earth. The news of Mary's pregnancy before the consummation of her marriage with Joseph led to community rejection. Strong Satanic opposition to Jesus' coming is seen by there being no comfortable place to stay in Bethlehem. The religious leaders failed to come see the baby even though they knew when and where He was born (Matthew 2:1-7), and Herod attempted to kill Him (Matthew 2:16).

There were some who were very willing to recognize this baby as God Himself come to earth. God affirmed Jesus' deity through the words of Gabriel to Mary, Joseph and the shepherds. Each of them believed. Simeon and Anna in the temple knew who He was, and the Magi from the east were clear confirmations that God had come to earth in the form of a baby (Matthew 1:18-2:12).

B. JESUS GOES PUBLIC

1. JESUS' BAPTISM (Matthew 3:1-17)

To escape being killed by Herod, Joseph took Mary and Joseph to Egypt for several years. Then, in obedience to God's direction, he took his little family back to Nazareth (Matthew 2:13-23). The only event recorded during Jesus' childhood was when He went to the temple at the age of 12 (Luke 1:41-52). We have no way of knowing how much Jesus understood of His origins or future while growing up. We can confidently assume He grew up experiencing all the feelings, emotions and temptations any human being would go through (Hebrews 4:15; 2:18). He voluntarily chose not to use any part of His deity which would have made His life as a human any easier (Philippians 2:7); He laid aside all knowledge and power, the ability to be present anywhere, anything that would have given him an advantage that other human beings did not have. He grew up with a deep faith and attained a clear understanding of God's Word through study and training (Luke 2:52).

It's hard to know just how aware He was of His deity and purpose in coming, but there is no doubt the angels and demons were quite aware. Jesus didn't get married when other boys would have (late teens or early twenties) but stayed single, knowing God had something else for Him. When He reached thirty (Luke 3:23), the age when young men would enter the priesthood, He felt God's Spirit leading Him to leave His family and home and go to where His cousin John the baptizer was preaching (Luke 1:1-60).

While He was there He publicly committed Himself to the work He had volunteered for before the world was created – providing redemption for us (Ephesians 1:3-4). This was the only way God could give us a free will yet still have us in heaven with Him. He became our substitute, our sacrifice, the “lamb of God” as John calls Him (John 1:29, 36). When He was baptized, God Himself affirmed His approval and sent the Holy Spirit to fill Jesus in a special way to enable Him to do the work of the Messiah/Christ (Luke 3:21-22).

While the people watching Him be baptized by John may not have been aware of the great significance of what was happening, the spiritual forces, both angelic and demonic, were totally aware of what was occurring. The enemy knew what they must do – defeat the Messiah before He defeated them! The battle was on.

LESSON FOR TODAY: When God calls us to come follow Him and serve Him, there is a time we need to make that commitment public. It could be by baptism or some other way of letting others know of our promise to live for Him and follow Him in all we do. This usually brings opposition. Even Jesus was greatly attacked after His baptismal statement of commitment.

2. JESUS' TEMPTATION (Matthew 4:1-11)

Immediately following His baptism, Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit, the ‘dove’ who had just descended on Him, into the desert (Matthew 4:1). He needed time to focus on what was about to come. He needed time alone with His Father, something that would happen time after time during His earthly life. After 40 days of fasting and praying, Jesus was tempted by Satan. Whether He waited because God restrained him or because he wanted to hit Jesus when He was weakest is unknown. Satan, who had been opposing God's plan of redemption from the beginning (Genesis 3:14-15), now focused his attacks on Jesus.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Note that Jesus was in the perfect center of God's will when He was tempted, for God Himself led Him to the desert (Matthew 4:1). Being tempted to sin does not mean we are out of God's will or not following closely to Him. Often the opposite is true, like with Jesus. It is because we are following God closely that we are attacked the hardest. Be aware so you aren't taken by surprise. Don't think it is a bad sign that you are tempted. Being attacked is actually a good sign for Satan diligently attacks those who are doing damage to his kingdom. When you aren't being attacked is the time to make sure you haven't drifted from the conflict (Luke 6:26).

LESSON FOR TODAY: Note that Satan attacks immediately, as soon as Jesus commits to doing God's will by being baptized. For us, too, the attacks come when we move in the direction of following God. When we are not as close to God, Satan and his forces leave us alone, but when our devotion increases so do the enemy's attacks. We soon discover that when we fade a bit in our walk with the Lord then the pressure decreases, tempting us to follow God, but less closely!

LESSON FOR TODAY: Notice, too, that this battle with Satan was God's perfect will for Jesus. “Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil” (Matthew 4:1). God does not prevent our battles, no matter how hard we pray for that to happen, but He does help us through them. So it is better to focus on fighting them in His strength than looking for ways to avoid

them. They are part of God's will for us because they strength us and show us that His grace is sufficient, as was true of the Jews fighting for the Promised Land behind Joshua's leadership.

LESSON FOR TODAY: The place where Jesus was sent by God to fast, pray and battle Satan was the "desert," considered the abode of demons (Matthew 12:43). Sometimes God leads us into strongholds of Satan's so we can do battle for Him, knowing we can have victory through His power (1 John 4:4). We aren't to run from such encounters but face them with His strength.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Fasting can be a useful tool in spiritual warfare, not because our suffering earns God's pity so He is more apt to answer our prayers, but because it is a way of denying our flesh and putting spiritual things before personal needs. It clears our mind and helps us focus on the battle at hand. Hunger reminds us of our weakness, our need of His strength and it reminds us to pray. It frees up more time to spend in prayer as well. We must be sure God wants us to fast before we do so, and we must use wisdom in what kind of a fast it is and how long it lasts, but it is a tool we should make us of. Jesus used it often.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Jesus faced these human temptations as a man just like us. He did not rely on His deity to make it through. He was attacked just as Adam had been, but unlike Adam He did not sin and therefore He won back what Adam lost (Romans 5:12-21). We, too, can have victory through God's power, just as Jesus did. The same resource is available to us!

The **first temptation** was for physical needs – Jesus was hungry after 40 days of not eating. Jesus could turn the stones to bread, but that was not God's will. This was a legitimate need but not God's way of meeting it.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Sin is using an illegitimate way to meet a legitimate need. Hunger is a legitimate need, but Jesus had to meet it in God's way, not in his own or Satan's way. When tempted, look for the legitimate need behind it (peace, comfort, companionship, joy, etc.) and seek to have that need met God's way instead of taking a 'shortcut' that is sinful.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Building on what was just said, the fact that we have a legitimate need doesn't mean it has to be immediately met. The very common "entitlement mentality" today, we should have everything we want as soon as we want it, and that parents, God, the government or life itself owes it to us! That is a very unbiblical attitude and quite dangerous. In fact, it's the very lie Satan used with Eve in Eden – "You are entitled to this fruit!"

Jesus had victory over Satan's temptations by quoting God's Word each time He was tempted. That is the only way to have victory. Jesus knew the Bible well enough to quote the book of Deuteronomy three times.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Quoting Scripture is our best weapon against Satan's attacks against us as well. Paul says our only offensive weapon is the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God (Ephesians 6:17). Psalm 119:9-11 tell us that it's through God's Word that we have victory. When thoughts or temptations you don't want come into your mind, use Scripture to have victory. There is power in God's Word that is lacking in our own words (Hebrews 4:12). Reminding demons of God's truth shows them they must submit to it, and helps us put our faith in Him and not give in to the lie behind the temptation. It allows our mind to explain reality to our emotions. Always have some verses that speak to your situation memorized or written down where you can reference them at any time. Use them as soon as you sense opposition coming against your thoughts.

The **second temptation** Satan used was an appeal to Jesus' pride. He was due recognition from everyone, so Satan suggested an easy way to get it - by throwing Himself down from the highest part of the temple and letting angels come rescue Him in the sight of the watching crowds. If Satan wanted to defeat Jesus, why would he offer to help Him have everyone come worship Him? While this might have seemed like something that would benefit Jesus, it really was a subtle way to give

him recognition without having to go to the cross. This would have been a short-cut to His Kingship – giving Him the throne of Israel without having to go through the agony of crucifixion. But if He had taken this route, then there would be no salvation for us – and that was exactly why Satan tempted Him in this way. He was willing for Jesus to have His temporary throne on earth as long as He didn't pay for our sins in the process.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Pride is what motivated Satan to sin and rebel against God (Isaiah 14:13-14). It is still one of his best tools against us today (1 Timothy 3:6). There is no short-cut to maturity or spirituality, no easy way to grow. The way up is down. God exalts those who humble themselves (James 4:10; 1 Peter 5:6). He brings down those who exalt themselves (Luke 18:14). Pride is self-centered, a focus on ones self. It is pride if we think we are better than others or if we think we are worse than others. A poor self image isn't humility, its just another form of self-focus. Either extreme is pride: an inordinate attention to self. Either extreme is wrong. Satan doesn't care which direction he gets us to fall as long as we fall!

Satan's **third temptation** was a final desperate measure. He put it all on the line, something he didn't have to do with Adam and probably didn't want to do with Jesus. But everything was at stake so he offered Jesus rulership of the whole world if Jesus would bow down to him. Rulership of the world was what Jesus had come to win back, and Satan was offering to give it to Jesus for free. But there was one condition – Jesus would have to recognize Satan as His authority instead of God the Father. Again, we see that the end does not justify the means.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Satan seems to offer people today everything they want if they turn to this world system. He received ownership from Adam of the world system of values and motives as it operates today (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11). He tries to get us to think that we, too, can have everything we want. Adam and Eve believed this lie, and many today believe it as well. But it is a lie. It is bait to trap people into bondage.

When Satan was unable to defeat Jesus after three tries he left, and the angels came to minister to Jesus (Matthew 4:11). Satan wasn't done, though. Luke 4:13 says he left but would return at an "opportune time." He is never done; he never stops working against Jesus.

LESSON FOR TODAY: There will be lulls in demonic oppression against us. Often it seems oppression comes in cycles or waves. Sometimes things are very difficult, then it seems the attacks get milder or even disappear for awhile. But they always return. We will never have ultimate, total victory in this life. If you are going through a difficult time, remember that it will one day lessen. If you are not going through a time of challenges and attacks, be prepared for when they return. Don't be surprised or discouraged when it happens again. The battle lasts a lifetime.

C. SPIRITUAL WARFARE IN JESUS' MINISTRY

While Satan continued to harass Jesus, especially through his demons, no direct overt attack is recorded until Jesus is half way through His ministry, about a year and a half after His baptism and temptation.

1. JESUS' FIRST DELIVERANCE (Mark 1:21-28; Luke 4:31-37)

Jesus had proclaimed Himself as the Messiah ('Christ') for two years. Some responded but most turned away, following the lead of the religious rulers who completely rejected Jesus and His claims. He did miracles to authenticate His authority and to show His power. If He can heal a body then He can certainly heal a soul as well.

One day Jesus went to Capernaum (Mark 1:21-28; Luke 4:31-37), His new home and the home of several of His disciples. While teaching in the synagogue on the Sabbath a demonized man

cried out, "What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who You are – the Holy One of God!" (Mark 1:24) Jesus commanded the demon to be quiet and leave the man, which he did after shaking the man and causing a loud shriek to be heard. Naturally, everyone was amazed and word of this soon spread throughout the whole area. With this event the battle between Satan and Jesus moved to a new level.

LESSON FOR TODAY: The Greek word δοιμονιζομαι ("demonizing") refers to one who is heavily impacted by demons. It is used 15 times in the New Testament. The term "demonizing" does not differentiate between possession (demons within) or influence (demons without). God doesn't make that clarification or distinction, and we shouldn't try to make it, either. We don't need to know the exact extent of demonizing, just that it is taking place. The cause is the same, as are the symptoms and so is the cure in the spiritual realm there are no clear-cut divisions like we try to make (demons 'within' or 'without', etc.). There are, of course, degrees of demonizing depending on the person, the demons involved, the access, and other factors, but it isn't always possible or necessary to pinpoint what is 'without' and what is 'within'.

Other words the Bible uses for 'demonizing' are "entered in" (as when Satan entered into Judas - John 13:27) and "filled" (Acts 5:5 about Ananias and Saphira, the same word that is used of believers being filled with the Holy Spirit). The common denominator is that the person being demonized usually doesn't separate his own consciousness from demonic influence. He assumes that the thoughts and feelings the demon feeds him are his own. A person always has a free will to turn to God for help, but following these demonic impulses bring one deeper and deeper into bondage. Perhaps demonizing can be better understood by thinking of it as a kind of spiritual hypnotism from within. Hypnotism of any kind is something for God's people to avoid (Psalm 54:4-5; Joshua 1:8; Philippians 4:8).

LESSON FOR TODAY: Demons can impact believers as they do unbelievers. Note that the demonized man was not a pagan who worshipped Satan. He was a faithful Jew who regularly attended synagogue, someone familiar to the people there and whom no one previously had suspected of being demonized. Probably he wasn't aware that the struggles he had in life were caused by demons. This happened at other times as well (Mark 5:39). While we don't know this man's exact spiritual state, this still brings up the question of believers being demonized. While there is general agreement that unbelievers can be demonized, some don't believe that can happen to believers because believers belong to Jesus. We do belong to Jesus, but demonizing doesn't imply ownership, just influence.

As long as we are in this body we still have a sin nature, a capacity to sin just the same as we did before salvation. Salvation creates a new spiritual nature within us. But the old capacity to sin still remains. It is in this area, this sin nature, this capacity to sin, that demons work. Salvation does not remove our capacity to sin (sin nature) but gives us a new nature so we don't have to sin but can live in obedience to God. Our new nature is greater but doesn't take away our free will choice to still function in our sin nature. Paul's struggle as recorded in Romans 7:15-25 describes this well.

The Bible makes no distinction between believers and unbelievers as far as demonizing is concerned. In fact, the Bible refers to many believers who were demonized: Paul's thorn in the flesh was a demon (2 Corinthians 12:7), King Saul was a believer (1 Samuel 11:6) and was obviously demonized (1 Samuel 16:14-23), David was motivated by Satan to take a census of the people (1 Chronicles 21:1ff; 2 Samuel 24:1ff), Ananias and Saphira were believers (Acts 4:32-35) but allowed Satan to "fill" them (Acts 5:3) and Peter was Satan's spokesman in tempting Jesus to not go to the cross (Matthew 16:23). Paul warns believers to not give Satan a "foothold" in their life (Ephesians 4:26-27), showing such a thing is possible. Jesus Himself called deliverance "the children's bread" (Matthew 15:22-28), meaning it was for His children. A Christian can receive another spirit (2

Corinthians 11:2-4). There are other examples of believers being demonized (Luke 13:10-16; 1 Corinthians 5:4-5). Christians are warned to guard against this (1 Peter 5:8-9; Ephesians 6:10-18).

A believer belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ. Satan cannot own him as he did before salvation (1 John 4:4), but he can still influence him, "demonize" him. The Bible never talks about 'possession' – just 'demonizing' which means being influenced by a demon, either from within or without.

A Christian has every right and resource to be free from this demonizing, however. Property which you own can be trespassed on by another person, but you have every right and resource to put him off your property. You just need to learn how to do it. That's what spiritual warfare is all about.

LESSON FOR TODAY: It is not coincidental that it was Jesus' presence and teaching that caused the demon to react (see also Mark 5:39). When Jesus is lifted up and His Word communicated, demons who are present will be affected for they can't stand to hear these things. Correct teaching of God's Word is essential for a church or individual to grow spiritually. Don't be surprised when it stirs up opposition against a person, family or church. Satan will do what he can to silence it, to keep the light from shining in his kingdom of darkness.

LESSON FOR TODAY: How many demons were involved in this incident? "What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who You are – the Holy One of God!" Usually there is more than one demon involved when someone is demonized, there is a structured organization. Satan organizes his demons in the same manner God has angels organized - in a military-like structure. These are similar to generals, colonels, majors, lieutenants, sergeants, corporals, privates, etc. (Ephesians 6:12). Usually a "strong man" (or ruler) is assigned to a task, and he has lesser demons under his command to help in the work (Matthew 12:25-29; Daniel 10:2-6, 12-14). The names of these demons usually refer to their work ("Fear," "Anger," "Lust," "Pride," "Deception," etc.). In this case the ruling demon is the one speaking ("I") for the others who are part of the group working against this man ("us").

LESSON FOR TODAY: While the demon(s) in this man try to bait Jesus into communicating with them, He refuses to do so. Do not converse with demons, either by having them give messages to a person's mind or to speak verbally through a person's vocal cords. The objective in deliverance is not to get in contact with demons but to remove them. Don't speak to them but silence them! Communication makes you a medium and God's words forbids that (Deuteronomy 18:9-13).

There are good reasons God forbids communication with them. Neither Jesus (Mark 1:25) nor Paul would (Acts 16:17) encouraged them to speak. They are liars and deceivers (John 8:44) and you can't believe what they say. God wants you to be in touch with Him only (Deuteronomy 4:24). Through the Holy Spirit we have access to all truth and power (John 8:31-32; 1 Corinthians 12:7-11). By communicating with demons, you give them recognition, allow them to stall and deceive, give them the focus and attention they crave, make things much harder on all people involved, and open yourself up to demonizing. Communicating with demons can be a temptation to pride and we can find ourselves drawn into working by the power of our own flesh. We don't need any information they might give us, we walk by faith, not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:7). The only time Jesus ever talked to a demon was for the purpose of showing those who were watching how many demons were involved and therefore how great His power was (Mark 5:9). Eve got into a dialogue with Satan and was deceived by him (Genesis 3:1-16 – for more about this see THE BATTLE BEGINS Genesis 3:8-15). If there is something you need to know, God will show it. Don't expect a demon to give information that will lead to his own defeat!

LESSON FOR TODAY: When the demons left this man they shook him and caused him to scream loudly. Sometimes demons will try to manifest in ways that are intended to bring fear to a person, but Jesus never allowed demonic manifestations to get out of hand and neither should we. In Jesus' name bind them, take away their power to resist, and command them to obey immediately and

quietly when commanded in Jesus' name. We do not have to put up with their antics for they are only done to distract and to cause fear in us and recognition of their power. We know God is greater than they are (1 John 4:4).

LESSON FOR TODAY: *The first occasion of an act or event in the Bible often sets the prototype for others to come, and that is true of this first deliverance in the Caernaum synagogue. The exact methods used by Jesus to cast out spirits are mentioned in only five specific cases and in only one generalized case (which appears first on the following list):*

Matt 8:16: "he cast out the spirits with a word."

Matt 15:28: "Then Jesus answered her, 'O woman, great is your faith! Be it done for you as you desire.' And her daughter was healed instantly."

Mark 1:25: "But Jesus rebuked him, saying, 'Be silent, and come out of him!'"

Mark 5:8: "For he had said to him, 'Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!'"

Mark 9:25: "He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, 'You dumb and deaf spirit, I command you, come out of him, and never enter him again.'"

Luke 13:12-13: "He called her and said to her, 'Woman, you are freed from your infirmity.'

So generally speaking, it is true to say that Jesus cast out the spirits "with a word." This refers to a short sentence or phrase according to the five examples given above, and not to some singular word. And what was that "phrase?" According to the above examples it was: "Be it done," "Come out (3 times)" and "You are freed." Jesus cast out spirits by a verbal command. In three of these cases, the command was, "Come out" (exerchomai ek), which is command. In the remaining case[s] it was, "Be it done," [and "You are freed,"] which are decrees of accomplishment. In two of these cases, He accompanied the verbal command with a verbal "rebuke." This rebuke was once stated as being, "Be silent." Hence, the commands used by Jesus contained variety, being tailored to fit the occasion or the subject. He used no rigid formula, no incantations, no rituals, no charms, etc.as did Hebrew exorcists. There are no special prayers, no 'magic' words or phrases to use or pray, no set way of "doing deliverance." Each situation is different, but all include the believer using Jesus' power and authority to stop the demons' work and to command them to be gone. Be sensitive to God's Spirit when dealing with such things and proceed as you feel Him leading you. Don't expect Him to lead the same as He does others. Nor will He always lead you the same way He has in the past. It's not our words or actions that bring deliverance, it's always and only His power.

SPIRITUAL WARFARE TRAINING. At the end of each major section in this paper you will find questions to help you remember and apply what you have learned. You can look back through what you have read for the answers if need be. You need a Bible, a notebook and a pen to do these questions.

1. What is the significance of Jesus' baptism? What change took place?
2. List three lessons you have learned about spiritual warfare from Jesus' temptation.
3. How did Jesus have victory over Satan when tempted?
4. In what ways are you most tempted?
5. What have you learned from Jesus' example about how to resist temptation?
6. What does the Greek word 'demonizing' mean?
7. How would you answer someone who asked if a believer could be demonized? What proof would you use to show them that Christians can be demonized?
8. Should you talk to demons? Why or why not?
9. How did Jesus cast out demons? What does this show about how we can have victory over them?

2. TEST OF TRUE DISCIPLESHIP (Matthew 7:21-23)

Shortly after Jesus delivered the man in the synagogue from demons (Mark 1:21-28; Luke 4:31-37), He warned the disciples that even being able to drive out demons in Jesus' name wasn't proof of salvation. "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'" (Matthew 7:21-23)

LESSON FOR TODAY: Don't put faith in your ability in spiritual warfare, as if that makes you a more mature believer or someone special in God's sight. Our relationship with God is all about who we are, not what we do. It is all His doing anyway, never ours. Focusing on it can only lead to pride. No matter how greatly God uses you, you are still just the instrument, the channel for His power. It is never us. It is only and always Him!

We'd all love to have the success Jesus had at spiritual warfare. Certainly, His disciples wanted that as well. But Jesus had to warn them to keep this skill in perspective.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Spiritual warfare is a means to an end, not an end in itself. It is another tool that God gives us to live for Him and serve Him. When building, various tools are needed: hammer, saw, screw driver, etc. No piece of furniture can be built with only one tool. Each tool has a specific purpose, but no tool is greater than all the others. Spiritual warfare is a tool God gives us to have victory over Satan and his demons, but we have other tools that are also needed to live the Christian life: prayer, teaching, worship, fellowship, meditation, fasting, listening to God, knowing God's will, being controlled by the Spirit, walking by the Spirit and others. All are needed. Each has its specific purpose. No one does it all. Don't get spiritual warfare out of perspective. Don't see it as some superior way to live and serve. It is great for its purpose, but we need a balanced Christian life. It's a tool we must master and keep close, but in doing so we must not neglect the other tools God gives us.

3. FILLING THE HOUSE (Matthew 12:43-45)

At about this same time Jesus spoke other words about spiritual warfare: "When an evil spirit comes out of a man, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it. Then it says, 'I will return to the house I left.' When it arrives, it finds the house unoccupied, swept clean and put in order. Then it goes and takes with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that man is worse than the first. That is how it will be with this wicked generation" (Matthew 12:43-45).

LESSON FOR TODAY: Where do demons go when cast out of a person? Where should we command them to go? Here Jesus says they go to "arid places" (Matthew 12:43-45; Job 30:3-8). Other times they are said to be "sent away" (Mark 5:12-13), go to "destruction" (Mark 1:24), or go to "torment" (Matthew 8:29). Eventually they will all be sent to the lake of fire for all eternity (Revelation 20:10 – 21:8). Whatever term you use, God will decide where they are to go. You can command them to "go to the place where Jesus sends you." It is important to forbid them to return, forbid them to go into any other family members, and forbid any new demons to come to take their place. Don't just send them out, leaving them free to continue their evil work wherever they choose. Command them to go where Jesus would send them.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Jesus' words also show the extreme importance of being filled with God's Spirit when the demons are sent away. If one does not turn to God's Word and live a life of holiness to God, the door that was closed will be immediately open again and more and worse

demons will enter to work against the person. When praying to have demons removed also pray for God's Spirit to fill the person and remove all the work of the enemy. Pray for them to be filled with the fruit of the Spirit, mentioning each fruit one by one (Galatians 5:22-25). Ask God to remove all the work and effects of the demons in the person's life and to heal them from it. Ask God to send angels and/or His Spirit through their life to remove every work of the demons and anything any demon might try to leave behind to continue their work. Ask God to fill each and every part of the person with His light and glory, His Spirit and presence. Then dedicate the person to God as a new creation in Him (2 Corinthians 5:17).

The purpose of deliverance from demonizing is to grow spiritually. Often that comes slowly and by stages because all growth comes that way. It is often more of a process than a one-time event. Each lesson we learn and step of progress we make must become part of us as we fill that part of our lives with His presence and bring it under His control. Freedom from demonizing is not a one-time event where God does everything for us, but a series of steps whereby we grow in faith and become more like Jesus. It is very important to stay close to Jesus and grow spiritually when seeking to be delivered from demonizing. This includes prompt repentance from any and all sin (Ephesians 4:26-27; Genesis 4:7), doing all we do out of a motive of love (1 Corinthians 13:5), living a life of disciplined thoughts and actions (Philippains 4:8) and implementing God's principles into daily family life (Ephesians 5:22 – 6:4).

4. SNATCHING TRUTH AWAY (Mark 4:3-34; Matthew 13:1-15; Luke 8:4-13)

Jesus is now about half way through His three-year ministry. He has been preaching and doing miracles to proclaim Himself the Messiah, but only a small group has accepted His claims and followed Him. The majority, including the religious rulers, have rejected His offer because their pride kept them from admitting their need of Him. At this point a change took place in His ministry. His focus shifted from trying to reach the masses, to training those who will follow Him. Teaching replaces miracles, and parables become Jesus' main way of teaching truth to His followers while hiding it from those who would mock and reject (Matthew 13:10-17).

His first extended use of parables were those about the growth of the kingdom, starting with the parable of the sower and the seed. In this series Jesus taught His disciples that the rejection He was experiencing was to be expected. His Kingdom was starting small, but would eventually grow and expand. His followers weren't to be alarmed by the slow response.

When interpreting the parable of the sower and the seed to His followers, Jesus gives insight into the workings of Satan. "Satan comes and takes away the word that was sown" (Mark 4:15). Evidently Satan and demons can influence our thought processes.

LESSON FOR TODAY: *The majority of demonizing consists of demons putting thoughts into a person's mind or snatching thoughts out of a person's mind. While they don't have access to our minds and thoughts to the same extent that God does, the Bible makes it clear there is some access (Mark 4:15). David's thought to take a census was demonic (1 Chronicles 21:1ff; 2 Samuel 24:1ff). So was Ananias & Saphira's greed (Acts 5:3) and Saul's jealousy/anger (1 Samuel 16:14-23). When talking about spiritual warfare Paul says we are to "bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ." (2 Corinthians 10:4-5). Not only can demons put wrong thoughts into our minds, they can snatch right thoughts out (Mark 4:15) so we forget them. Pray specifically for those you are ministering to, claiming their minds and thoughts for God. Watch your own mind, making sure God is in control of every thought (Romans 12:1-2).*

5. GADARENES DEMONIAIC (Mark 5:1-20; Matthew 8:28-34; Luke 8:26-37)

About six months after Jesus' first recorded deliverance, casting demons out of the man in the synagogue (Mark 1:21-28; Luke 4:31-37), one of His major confrontations with demons occurred. He was about half way through His three-year public ministry. Unlike most of the other occasions, when the demonized person came to Jesus, this time He went to them.

Jesus left the crowds He was ministering to in order to take a boat across the Sea of Galilee. He wanted to go help a man who couldn't come to Him. Satan didn't want Him to go free that man so he sent a storm to sink the boat. Jesus spoke to the storm and got safely to the other side.

When Jesus got there He was met by a man with an evil spirit, actually many demons afflicted this man. Matthew 8:28 says there were two demonized men present, but Mark and Luke only refer to the one who was the spokesman. By looking at the lives these men were living we can see some of the symptoms of demonizing.

SYMPTOMS OF DEMONIZING

Symptom 1: Darkness and death. These men lived in a graveyard, probably in caves in the limestone cliffs by the lake. Dead bodies were placed in these caves to decay, so it was a very unnatural place to live (Mark 5:3, 5; Luke 8:29). God is light and life, but Satan and his demons are all about death and darkness. They are attracted to death and darkness, and bring death and darkness wherever they go.

Symptom 2: Anger and violence. Demons fuel violence and anger, and that characterized these men (Mark 5:3-4; Luke 8:29; Matthew 8:28). They attacked whomever came nearby. Demons love pain and destruction, and they enjoy using humans to bring suffering and misery to others. This can be physical, mental or emotional abuse of any form.

Symptom 3: Out of control. These men didn't have control of their actions (Mark 5:5). They cried out and continually did evil. Demonizing takes control away from a person and motivates them to do what the demons want them to do.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Demons can never take 100% control of a person's free will, but over time they can build so much influence over a person that the person seems to be unable to resist. No matter what, no matter how strongly a person is controlled by demons, he or she still has a free will to reach out to Jesus. Demons can never take away their free will. That is the key to deliverance, especially for those who are greatly controlled. The demonized person **MUST** want to be free. If they don't, no one can force deliverance on them against their will. Don't pray that they would be delivered, for God won't force their free will, but pray they would see the facts clearly and make a decision for God, however small it may seem. Deliverance is not done by the one ministering to the demonized, but by Jesus responding to the free will of the demonized person. Jesus chooses to use us as His vessel to bring this about, but it all depends on the will of the demonized.*

Symptom 4: Pain and self-destruction. Another characteristic of demonic activity which is also unnatural is inflicting pain on themselves by cutting themselves (Mark 5:5). The only other time this is seen in the Bible is when the prophets of Baal slashed themselves so they bled in order to have Baal hear their cries and send fire to consume their altar (1 Kings 18:28). Both cases are clearly demonic.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Demons are behind self-destructive desires. It is not normal for a person to want to harm themselves. Everything natural in us pushes for self-protection and survival. When a person inflicts pain on themselves by cutting, tattoos (Leviticus 19:28) or taking their life we can be sure something has caused them to go against what is normal and natural, and usually that is demonic influence (Mark 9:20).

Suicidal thoughts should always be assumed to be motivated by demons (Matthew 17:14-19; Luke 9:37-45; Mark 9:14-29). This is also the case with Judas who was indwelt by Satan (Luke 22:3; John 13:27) and then committed suicide (Acts 1:18-19). If you or someone you know has these thoughts, pray against them. The person with the thoughts must confess them and take back any ground they have given to demons. These of thoughts are like 'prayers' to Satan. These free-will desires give authority and power to demons. Thoughts of hate, death, fear, lust, etc., also have power. The greater the thought given it the greater the power. The power is in the thought which empowers demons to help bring this about in a person's life. It is always with the person's free will choice never forced on them against their free will.

Symptom 5: Ungodly sensuality and sexual perversion. These men did not wear clothes (Luke 8:27). Their natural inhibitions and modesty were affected by the demons influencing them.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Demons are often behind the sexual sins and perversion so common today. Immorality, adultery, living together without marriage, sexual abuse, child molestation, sex trade and trafficking, LGBTQ+ and all the gender confusion are fueled and fed by Satan and his demons. It destroys families and civilizations.

Symptom 6: Thoughts into their mind. Sinful actions start with sinful thoughts. Demons are able to put a thought into a person's mind, then keep bringing it back again and again. It's not always a thought that the person wants, and certainly isn't a thought God would give them. Therefore, the only other source must be demonic. They can't force a person's free will, but keep suggesting, deceiving making the sin seem acceptable until the person gives in. The thoughts lead to actions that bring bondage and destruction. They could be thoughts of anger, fear, violence, lust or greed. The thoughts could be sexual, self-destructive, vengeful or blasphemous. They can even be thoughts that cause a person to feel unforgiven or unloved by God, that a person has lost their salvation, or are too evil to ever be in heaven. Thoughts of fear, insecurity, unworthiness, failure, being alone, rejection and revenge are some of the many that demons strive to instill in a person's mind.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Satan does communicate with man. He did so with Jesus when He was tempted after forty days in the wilderness (Matthew 4). Paul says Satan sows deception in the hearts of people (2 Corinthians 11:3). Ananias obviously listened to Satan's voice instead of God's when saying he was donating all he received for the sale of his land when it was, in fact, only part of the amount (Acts 5:3). Jesus says that everything Satan says is a lie, for that is his nature (John 8:44). He can put thoughts into a person's mind (Mark 8:33). In addition, Satan can take thoughts out of a mind (Matthew 13:19). As with Adam and Eve, Satan's communication with man is always deceitful and destructive. He uses various forms of the occult to communicate with man, such as tarot cards, Ouija boards, séances, and other means. He can and will speak directly to a person much as the Holy Spirit does (1 Peter 5:8).

Satan is a counterfeiter. He tries to counterfeit all God does for His people. Judas heard Satan's voice and betrayed Jesus (Matthew 26:14-16). Peter heard Satan's voice and did not believe the voice of Jesus (Mark 8:31-33). A leper was healed by Jesus and told not to tell anyone who did it but he heard Satan's voice and disobeyed (Mark 1:40-45). David's thought to take a census of the people was demon-inspired (1 Chronicles 21:1ff; 2 Samuel 24:1ff). Saul's jealousy and anger at David was as well (1 Samuel 16:14-23). Ananias and Sapphira's greed was demon stimulated as well (Acts 5:3). When God didn't speak to Saul, he went to a medium to connect with a supernatural power (1 Samuel 28:4-7). For this reason, John warns us to always make sure it is God's voice and not Satan's vice we hear (1 John 4:1). How can we tell them apart?

The first way we can tell the difference between God's voice and Satan's voice is that God convicts while Satan condemns. When God speaks to us about sin we feel guilty and sinful but still loved (John 8:10-11). When it is Satan condemning us we don't feel loved but rejected and hopeless (Revelation 12:10). God will expose the sin and focus on it, but only for the purpose of us confessing

and removing it. He offers hope of restoration. He doesn't emphasize our guilt, failure and unworthiness in that area and as a person in general, but Satan does. So, God convicts but Satan condemns.

A second way of telling the difference is to remember that God explains but Satan confuses. When God speaks to us it is to clearly show us sin in its true, deadly light. The 'pleasure' and deception are removed and the awful deadliness is revealed. Satan, however, tries to perplex us with worldly logic and explanations. He feeds us excuses, justifications, thoughts of how it is another's fault and general confusion over it (James 3:15). When God speaks there is a sense that everything is under control (1 Corinthians 14:32). Satan's purpose is to ensnare and take captive (2 Timothy 2:24-26). God's voice brings peace (Philippians 4:7) but Satan's voice brings uncertainty for what he tells us conflicts with what the Spirit is also telling us. Thus, we feel perplexed. If the voice you are hearing brings a nagging, gnawing feeling of frustration in your spirit, it's not from God. God brings a deep calmness in your spirit.

There's another way to tell the difference: God confirms what the Bible says while Satan contradicts the Bible. When it's God's voice speaking to us we know it lines up with the Bible and advice Godly believers would give us. It passes Paul's test of making sure everything is true, noble, right, pure, lovely and admirable (Philippians 4:8-9). However, when Satan speaks his words don't agree with the Bible or advice of mature Christians. When we desire it so much we ignore the warnings in our spirit we are headed to sin.

Further, God frees us while Satan binds us. God's voice brings us freedom, there are no strings attached. "You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free." Following Satan's voice brings bondage, we are trapped and taken prisoner (2 Timothy 2:26).

In addition, God motivates us to follow Him but Satan discourages. God draws us by His love and gives us a desire to want to live for Him (2 Corinthians 5:14). Moving from sin to following God is like taking a shower when we are really dirty because we know how good we'll feel afterwards. Satan's communication does not bring that. It constricts, limits, makes us feel dirtier and ineffective. We feel discouraged and hopeless.

LESSON FOR TODAY: for more information about how demons influence our thoughts today see above: 4. SNATCHING TRUTH AWAY (Mark 4:3-34; Matthew 13:1-15; Luke 8:4-13)

LESSON FOR TODAY: It is also natural to wonder how these men ever got to such a state. Why are some people so greatly demonized and others seemingly unaffected? The Bible doesn't tell us what allowed this in these men but does give us information as to the most common causes of demonizing. While any sin can open the door to allow demons in, there are some sins that are particularly effective in allowing this. Some of the more common openings to demonizing include:

OPENINGS FOR DEMONIZING

Opening 1: Sins that allow another power to control us. If we turn to another power other than God, if we open our lives to influences that aren't from God, if we indulge in sins that allow us to be vulnerable to spiritual influences from demons, then we are opening the door for demons to enter and influence us. Idolatry, for example, opens the worshipper to demonizing because they allow the demon behind the idol to have access to themselves (1 Corinthians 10:20). Drug or alcohol abuse can do the same thing. Involvement in false religions also opens a door. Sexual sin is another way demons enter a person's life (1 Corinthians 6:15-16). Pride, anger and fear also make us vulnerable, for they become a prayer for these things to grow in our lives, and only Satan's forces would answer such a desire.

Opening 2: Sin in our family line. The sin that opened the door for demons to enter doesn't have to have been committed by us. It could have been committed by an ancestor of ours. When a

demon has access to a person, he also claims right to all that person has, including their children. The Bible says God "punishes the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation" (Exodus 20:4-5; Deuteronomy 5:8-9; Exodus 34:6-7). The Bible says that children are affected by their parents sins (Ezekiel 18:2) and this is one of the ways. Children are not accountable for them, but are impacted by their consequences. The same is true of positive, godly influences from our parents which also are passed on. This is called "generational openings" or "ancestral openings" and is one of the most common reasons people are demonized. (For more information see under Old Testament, Moses (Exodus – Deuteronomy.)

Opening 3: Where we live. Some event may have happened on the land or in the home or room where you live that give openings to demons. It could be a violent act, an occult activity, a curse, a dedicating of the property to the powers of darkness or similar acts. Sometimes when we go into a certain neighborhood or home there is a 'sense' of evil, a discomfort in our spirit. In a store that sells New Age materials you may 'feel' different in your spirit, a discomfort. This is the explanation for supernatural apparitions that happen in 'haunted' homes – demonic activity may be present. Often this can be sensed by mature, sensitive believers. The message we get is from God's Holy Spirit Who is warning us against the evil around us. Pray against it. Rebuke it. Leave unless you have a reason God wants you there.

If it is your home or church property then cleanse it. Pray, taking back any access the enemy may claim to the property and asserting your right as a child of God to claim and use it. Put any other claims under the blood of Jesus and dedicate it to Him for His honor and glory. A sign, picture or cross on the wall can be a good visual reminder to all of the ownership of the property by the Lord Jesus Christ.

You can anoint the house and property while praying. Walk around your' boundaries praying out loud, claiming your property for God and forbidding any demons to have any access to it. Dedicate it to God and invite His presence throughout all of it. Take back any access any demons may claim to the property and put the access under the blood of Jesus. Break it in Jesus' name. Ask God to put an angelic hedge of protection around it. Do the same in all the rooms of the house, especially the basement (if you have one). Anoint each room with oil by dipping your finger in oil. Any kind will do, it is not the oil but the symbolism of God's Spirit being present that matters. With your finger then draw a cross on the door, walls, whatever seems appropriate. Pray as you would when you're walking around the property.

If there is one particular part of the house that seems worse put a night light there so there is always light in to the room. Demons turn from light because it shows truth and reality, which they don't want to see. They live in the realm of lies and deceptions. Demons hate light, and they hate hearing Jesus praised, so you can play praise music in various places 24 hours a day. It can be really soft – they will hear it! It's a constant reminder or Who is your Lord and Savior. It reminds them of the truth which counters their lies. Playing recordings of the Bible being read is even more powerful.

Opening 4: Curses. The Bible says we can curse others (Ps 109:17). Demons use this as an excuse to work against the person, as a 'prayer' to gain access. Old Testament men (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, etc. Gen 27:23, 38) would bless or curse their children (Genesis 48:20). Sometimes they even put a curse on them, as Abraham did with Ishmael and when Isaac cursed Esau. The Levites were used to pronounce blessings (Deuteronomy 10:8; 21:5). When Naomi came back to Israel she said she was to be called 'mara' because things had turned 'bitter' for her. A father is to bless his children by his words and send them into life with his and God's blessing. What you have done is the opposite.

This includes everything from occult and witchcraft curses to one individual 'wishing' harm on another. Balaam was paid to curse Israel, but God wouldn't allow it (Deuteronomy 23:4; Numbers 22 -

24). Curses can also be passed on from generation to generation. The Bible says that speaking evil of someone is the same as cursing them (Romans 12:14). Curses can be thinking or saying things like: "I hope you die..." "Since he/she won't love me I wish they'd" "You're no good, you'll never amount to anything..." "I hope she gets some of her own medicine..." "I hope your children" Using profanity ("curse" words) also falls into this category. When someone "damns" someone to "hell" that is an awful, awful thing to say! Demons love to hear it. They use the power of the hate in the speaker and will latch onto any authority or justification to do their evil!

It may be someone has put a curse on you or your family by asking that something bad happen to you. That is really a prayer that Satan loves to answer! That desire empowers demons to try to carry out the person's desire. Parents can curse their children by saying they wish they hadn't had them, they hate them, don't want them, they are no good and will never amount to anything, and so forth. Also, we can curse ourselves (Proverbs 6:2) by saying we hope we die, that we aren't good enough, that we'll never be happy, we'll fail in what we try or many such things about ourselves(Proverbs 6:2).

If you feel this may have happened to you remember to "Bless them that curse you" (Matthew 5:44). Treat the person with love and kindness, for when you return good for evil the "undeserved curse does not come to rest" (Proverbs 6:2). Break that curse against you in Jesus' name, claiming Galatians 3:10,13 which says "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: 'Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.'" Ask God to turn the curse to a blessing (Deuteronomy 23:5).

LESSON FOR TODAY: Curses can and must be broken in Jesus' name for the truth is that they can't prosper against God's people (Isaiah 54:17). 1) Break any and all of them in Jesus' name (Galatians 3:13) and 2) ask God to surround you and protect you with His presence and angels instead (Job 1:5).

Let's go back to our account of Jesus with the demonized men in the Gadarenes. When Jesus crossed the Sea of Galilee and landed they immediately came to Him and knelt before Him (Mark 5:1-8). The demons recognized He was God. Perhaps the men did as well, or somehow sensed something different about Him. Despite the terrible control the demons had, they still have free will to choose to come to Jesus or not.

LESSON FOR TODAY: The demons could not prevent these men from coming to Jesus. No matter how many demons or how strong the influence, God always makes sure the person still can make a free will choice to move away from the demons and towards God should they choose to do so. No one is helpless, locked in – not unless they choose for it to be that way. (See Symptom 3. Out of Control. above for more information about a demonized person's free will).

This is the only time Jesus ever talked to a demon. He asked him his name, which was 'Legion' meaning about 5,000 or 6,000 soldiers, signifying the number of demons influencing this man. Jesus wanted everyone to see how great His power was by how many demons He could defeat at one time. The only other thing they said was a request to go into the pigs. Jesus had commanded them to leave and, while they stalled as long as they could, they knew they couldn't resist His command.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Jesus had to command the demons to come out over and over (Mark 5:8, continual present tense in the Greek, "kept saying over and over").. They were very resistant to leaving, even when Jesus commanded them. This is the only time that happened for every other time they left immediately (Matthew 8:16). Some demons have such a strong hold on their host that it takes persistent warfare to remove them (Mark 9:29).

As stated, the demons made an unusual request – to indwell the pigs which were nearby since they could no longer indwell the men. Jesus allowed this, again probably to show those watching the

power and destruction of the demons He had so easily defeated. Also, Jews were forbidden from eating pig meat, but it seems some were disobeying God's command.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Demons want to indwell something, if they lose their host they will immediately seek another. Often they share several hosts at one time, moving from one person to another. That's why demonic oppression often seems to go in cycles. An attack may be strong, but then it will fade and be gone while the demon(s) attack someone else to whom they have access. Then, for no known reason, they return.

If demons can't indwell people they will indwell animals. Perhaps this is why sometimes whales, the animals with the greatest intelligence and the closest to humans in many ways, beach themselves. That could be an explanation of why these great sea creatures sometimes beach and kill themselves. This shows that demons seek to bring death and destruction, and self-destructive tendencies come from demonic influence. Why else would pigs suddenly commit suicide?

LESSON FOR TODAY: The demons didn't want to be sent "out of the area" (Mark 5:10). This was the territory they were assigned to and they didn't want to leave it. It was their 'home' area. Demons are assigned to different geographical locations, families, groups, world movements, religious or secular groups, etc. They stay with them for generations and want to continue working in those areas. They become very good at what they do. If they fail an assignment, the demons with authority them have power to greatly punish them.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Neither did they want to be sent "into the abyss" (Luke 8:31). The Greek word, 'tartarus,' is used as a place of confinement for demons who are awaiting their expulsion into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:1-3). They didn't want to go there because they would then be inactive and not able to cause harm to God's kingdom.

LESSON FOR TODAY: The demons knew they would one day be tormented, but it was not time for that yet (Matthew 8:29). They fear the coming judgment. We can have courage and confidence that they fear us when we are ministering in Jesus' power.

The end of the story has a happy ending: "When they came to Jesus they saw the man who had been demonized by the legion of demons, sitting there, dressed and in his right mind" (Mark 5:15). Today we talk about chemical imbalances, emotional disorders and bipolar tendencies. We prescribe various kinds of medicines. When Jesus faced people with these symptoms, He cast out the demons and immediately they were total freed and completely normal and mentally healthy

LESSON FOR TODAY: When Jesus cast demons out of someone or forgave them He, in some manner or way, told them to not sin any more (John 8:11). It was sin that led to the bondage and demonizing in the first place. The sin must be confessed (admitted to as sin, 1 John 1:9) in order for the demons to no longer be able to claim it and stay. Then be filled (controlled) by the Holy Spirit or 8 worse demons may come back (Matthew 12:43-45).

LESSON FOR TODAY: Here is a prayer you can use if you sense any demonic activity against yourself. You can change the words and use them for others. It is only an example. There is no one right way to pray or say things. Adapt and use this however you would like:

"Dear Jesus, I thank you for the salvation you give me in Jesus. know You are greater than Satan and His demons. I know You have power and authority over them. I know You have given us that power & authority in Jesus' name. In Jesus name I forbid any demons to work against me or my family or my church. In Jesus name I close the door to any reason they think they can work against me. If I have committed any sin that they use to work against me I put it under the blood of Jesus. In Jesus' name I forbid them to work and command them to be gone. In Jesus' name I break any claim that comes down through my family line. I am a new creation in God's family. I forbid any claim against me through my name or family line. In Jesus' name I dedicate the land where my home is to

God. In Jesus' name I break any claim demons may make through those places. I ask for Your presence only to fill and use those places. In Jesus' name I break any curses any one has made against me or my family. Jesus has taken all my curse on the cross. His power has broken any power of the enemy against me. So, in Jesus' name I forbid any demons to work against me or my family. I commit myself and my family to God only. Fill me with Your Holy Spirit. Surround me with Your angels. Use me for Your glory. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen"

SPIRITUAL WARFARE TRAINING: Answer the following questions. Send the answers to me if you want and I'll offer comments and suggestions.

1. What happens if someone is delivered of demonic attacks but doesn't live an obedient life and grow spiritually?
2. How can this be prevented?
3. To what extent do demons have access to our thoughts? Can they put ideas in our minds? What can we do to prevent this?
4. List 4 symptoms of demonizing which are seen in the men in Gadarenes?
5. Name some of the most common causes for demonizing, that which opens the door to demons?
6. Why did Jesus ask the demon what His name was?
7. Should we communicate with demons? Why or why not?
8. What are some of the main lessons you have learned from the story of the demonized men in the graveyard?

6. POWER & AUTHORITY GIVEN (Luke 9:1; 10:1, 17-19)

There must have been many discussions between Jesus and His disciples as they walked the dusty roads, sat and ate in the evenings, and ministered to others who were demonized. Jesus took every opportunity to teach the disciples what they would need to know to continue the battle when He was gone. Only a very small part of all that happened is recorded in the Gospels for us. As John so aptly states, "If everything Jesus did was written down there wouldn't be enough room in the whole world for all the books!" (John 21:25)

Because of this, what is recorded about spiritual warfare is all the more important. There must be good reasons for choosing that which is recorded for us. It must be information we need. God Himself kept it accurate for us (2 Timothy 3:16). That being said, Jesus' comments about the power and authority believers have over Satan and demons are all the more significant. These comments were recorded because they are something we must know.

"When Jesus had called the Twelve together, He gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases" (Luke 9:1). "After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of Him to every town and place where He was about to go. ... The seventy-two returned with joy and said, 'Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name.' He replied, 'I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you'" (Luke 10:1,17-19).

"I HAVE given you" Jesus says indicating it happened in the past, it is already done. It's not something for them to wait for in the future. The Greek tense indicates the action is completed and the results continue on. Jesus had given to them, and therefore to us as well, two things: "power" and "authority."

Authority, 'exousia' in the Greek, is used 108 times in the New Testament and refers to the right to use power. He gave the disciples the authority to enforce His spiritual commands and laws. Policemen have authority, a badge, which allows them to enforce the laws of the government. It's not their own authority but that which comes from their government. It is delegated authority, like a husband has over a wife and a parent over a child. Everything Jesus did was because God had given Him authority to do it (John 5:19). He had laid aside His own divine authority (Philippians 2:6-8) to live life as any other human being. All He did was by God's own authority given to Him, as it is to us as well.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Jesus has given us that same authority to use today (John 14:12; Matthew 28:18-20). Satan deceives us into thinking we are powerless victims but that is a lie. As God's children we have access to the same resources Jesus did when He lived on earth. God has given us His full blessing because we are His children. He planned salvation and chose us to receive it before creating the world (Ephesians 1:4; Jeremiah 1:5). He created us in His own likeness (Genesis 1:26). He paid for our sins before we were ever born (Romans 5:8). He formed and cared for us while we were still in our mother's womb (Psalm 139:13-15). He chose us and He calls us His friends (John 15:15-16). We are born into His family; He is our Father (Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:6) and we are His children (John 1:12; 1 John 3:2). He rescued us from slavery (Galatians 4:4-7) and put His Holy Spirit inside us (John 14:17). He gives us an equal inheritance with His Son, Jesus (Romans 8:14-17). When He looks at us He sees us as holy because of what Jesus did for us (Romans 1:7; 2 Corinthians 5:17). We can come into His presence in prayer any time we want, we have eternal life guaranteed, we are free from any condemnation (Romans 8:1) and He has delivered us from the power of Satan. All these things and more He gives us.

Not only did Jesus give His disciples authority, He also gave them **power** (Greek 'dunamis'). A policeman needs authority, a badge, but sometimes he needs power to enforce that authority – a club or gun. 'Power' is used 118 times in the New Testament and refers to power, might, strength and force. Our word 'dynamite' comes from it. God has also given us His power as well as His authority (Acts 1:8; Luke 10:17).

LESSON FOR TODAY: We also have this power available to us (Acts 1:8; John 14:12). It is His power that transforms us into a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17) as He makes us a new person (Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10). His power delivers us from temptations and trials when we rely on Him (1 Corinthians 10:13; 2 Corinthians 2:14). He has power to put His divine nature in us (2 Peter 1:4), give us abundant life now & eternal life in heaven (John 3:16; 10:10).

Jesus gave His followers power and authority to drive out ALL demons (Luke 9:1) – none are greater than His power. He did not enable His followers to cure all diseases, though. Some He will remove in response to our prayers, but only with demonizing are we assured that ALL must obey and yield. When Jesus returns all disease will be gone, but we don't have authority to remove all of it now (for more information on healing see under 13. LAYING ON OF HANDS, Luke 13:10-17).

LESSON FOR TODAY: Always remember the power and authority you have in Jesus. You can pray and preach in His name and power. Use it to encourage people when they need it, give counsel with the wisdom of God's Spirit, rebuke demons in Jesus' name, ask God to heal if it is His will, claim protection for your family and yourself, teach His word with authority, witness to others with power, forgive those who hurt you and show unconditional love to all. We don't have to live in defeat nor do we ever have to fear Satan or his forces. We have everything we need for victory in Jesus, but we must use the power and authority He gives us because on our own we can do nothing (John 15:5).

LESSON FOR TODAY: Another important lesson from this is that Jesus sent the disciples out to minister (Luke 10:1). The way we learn is by doing, not by waiting or letting someone else do it. We will never know it all, never feel competent, never be on top of everything – we must keep

depending on God which is how He wants it (2 Corinthians 12:9). All you need to know to begin your own spiritual warfare is that Jesus is greater than Satan (1 John 4:4). That is enough to start. God will be with you, honor your attempts and help you learn. God knows when we start this work we will not be experts but will learn as we go. Read worthwhile books, talk with others who do this in a Biblical way and do whatever it takes to learn more about spiritual warfare (see information on my web site ChristianTrainingOrganization.org where you can sign up for my weekly Spiritual Warfare blog, or just mail me jerry@ChristianTrainingOrganization.org Fight wisely, or the demons will not leave. If they do they will come back even stronger (Matthew 12:44-45; Luke 11:25-26). Do your best with God's strength and keep growing in wisdom and skill.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Not only did Jesus send them out, but He sent them out by twos. As much as possible have someone with you to pray for you, to help you and encourage you, to provide wisdom and so you can train them (or learn from them) so that they can then go on their own and train someone else.

Jesus' power over demons was from God, but those who didn't want to recognize this needed to find a different way to explain His power because clearly it was super human. The only other power source in the universe besides God is Satan, and so they were forced to say that what Jesus did was by demonic powers (John 7:20; 8:48-52; 10:20-25). They said Jesus was an imposter, a deceiver (Matthew 27:63; John 7:12, 47). When Herod heard about Jesus' miracles he thought it was some kind of supernatural 'magic', somehow John came back to life (Matthew 6:14-16).

7. DEMONIZING OF CHILDREN (Matthew 15:21-28; Mark 7:24-30)

A few months after Jesus sent the disciples out to do spiritual warfare there was an encounter with a demonized girl that is recorded by both Matthew (Matthew 15:21-28) and Mark (Mark 7:24-30). A Gentile woman asked Jesus to drive the demon out of her daughter but He resisted, saying He came to bring deliverance for the Jews. Her faith was strong enough to accept that but to also know He was able to help her without taking away from the Jews. Jesus honored her faith by casting out the demon even though the girl was back at home in bed far from Jesus (Matthew 15:21-28; Mark 7:24-30).

LESSON FOR TODAY: Children can be demonized. The Greek word for 'daughter' here refers to a very young daughter. When one person opens the door to demons those same demons claim all the person has, including their children. They claim the blood line and/or name as access. (See also 5. Gadarenes Demonic Causes, #2, with Mark 5.)

Often adopted children, who have experienced rejection, are demonized by demons who use the open door of rejection to move into the child's life. Usually there is a history of alcohol, drugs and/or sexual sin in one or both of the birth parents. This makes adopted children all the more vulnerable to demonizing.

If a child is an unwanted pregnancy, even if the parent keeps and raises the child, this can open the door for demons to enter. If someone curses a child that prayer to Satan is something his demons will draw power from and do what they can to bring that about in the child's life. (See also 5. Gadarenes Demonic Causes #4, with Mark 5.)

Sometimes, too, young children are attacked as a way of getting back at a parent or family who is serving God and living for Him.

LESSON FOR TODAY: This child was delivered without confessing or repenting of any sin, without even being in Jesus' presence. Often this is the case with children. Parents, who are their authority figure, can represent them and pray for deliverance for their children. Many times, they are

quite young or don't understand what is happening, so being present would be more of a distraction than a help. It is usually the parent's sin (through family line) that has to be dealt with by confession and taking back access.

8. DELIVERANCE FAILURE (Matthew 17:14-19; Luke 9:37-45; Mark 9:14-29)

Shortly after the event with the Gentile girl there was a situation with a Jewish boy that is also recorded (Matthew 17:14-19; Luke 9:37-45; Mark 9:14-29). A young boy was demonized to the extent he would have a seizure, foam at the mouth, gnash his teeth and then become rigid. This had been happening since childhood. The demons also caused him to try to kill himself by throwing himself into fire or water. Evidently the boy was deaf and mute as well – all work of the demons influencing him. We saw previously how demons bring death and destruction, and this is another example of that (see Mark 5:5; 1 Kings 18:28). Jesus was disappointed that the Jews didn't have enough faith in God to have victory over these demons. Even his own disciples were unable to drive them out. Jesus said it would have been possible for them to have driven the demons out if they believed. Jesus commanded the demons to leave and never return and they obeyed! They had no choice but to obey Him.

LESSON FOR TODAY: It takes faith in God, that He is greater and able to deliver, to have successful prayer for deliverance. Satan and his demons use fear as a big weapon to undermine our faith. If we don't firmly believe that God is greater than they and totally able to defeat them we will never see victory through our prayers. Only prayer brings deliverance, no other rituals, public ceremonies, emotional activities or anything else – only prayer in faith. That is because prayer taps into God's power and brings victory. It's not the words of the prayer that does it, but the God to Whom we pray!

LESSON FOR TODAY: Learn from your failures, for you will have them. The disciples had been living and traveling with Jesus all day every day for over a year and had been trained by Him to do this. They had great success in spiritual warfare in the past (Luke 10:1, 17-18) but not now. Jesus uses this to teach them. Don't fear failure – try your best and learn from any mistakes or failures. Trying and failing is not nearly as bad as not trying at all.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Always forbid the demons to return when you cast them out (Mark 9:25). It's good to forbid any others to replace the ones driven out. Forbid them to enter anyone else but to go where Jesus sends them. All this must be done in Jesus' name and power. Ask God for wisdom and be sensitive as to how He leads.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Jesus explained their failure to use their authority and power to command the demons to be gone by saying "This kind can come out only by prayer" (Mark 9:29). "This kind" clearly implies there are various kinds of demonic strongholds and some are easier to break than others. The demons who controlled this boy, causing him to be mute and deaf, have seizures and try to kill himself, were strongly entrenched and took 'prayer' to remove them. Jesus didn't elaborate, but evidently the disciples understood. Perhaps they were trying to have victory in their own strength instead of God's strength, trying to command the demons on their own instead of through God's power and authority.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Epilepsy, in fact any kind of seizures, are not demonic, but that possibility should always be considered when praying for them. When Jesus confronted someone having seizures He always cast out demons and they were healed (Matthew 4:24; 17:15; Luke 9:38; 22:54; Mark 9:18). As we see in this account, demons who work in this way usually have a strong foothold and aren't easily removed, but with God's persistently depending on God's power and authority we can defeat them in Jesus' name.

LESSON FOR TODAY: *What about when deliverance is slow or not at all? Remember sometimes God has a greater purpose than casting out every demon as soon as we pray. Sometimes there is delay. Even Jesus had times when He had to persevere for a while (Luke 8:31 Greek). Usually, deliverance is a process. It's like peeling the layers off an onion. As new sin is revealed and removed, more ground is taken back from Satan's forces. This gradual process allows the person to better fill the ground which has been reclaimed with God's Holy Spirit and gives him time to grow spiritually (Psalm 59:11; 119:50,67,71) before the next 'layer' is removed. That's why the Jews under Joshua only conquered the Promised Land bit by bit instead of all at once. If they would have driven out all the Canaanites immediately then lions and other wild animals would have increased and done harm to the people. In addition, there is a learning process involved that can be used to help others (2 Corinthians 1:3-4).*

Other times complete deliverance never comes. Paul's thorn in the flesh is an example (2 Corinthians 12:7). Paul testifies God then provides the grace needed to withstand. God wants us to learn to depend on Him (Psalm 119:59,92). Of course, if the opening is allowed to continue then the demonizing will continue, too (Psalm 94:12-16; 81:11-14).

9. THOSE WHO DO IT DIFFERENTLY (Mark 9:38-40; Luke 9:49-50)

During this busy time of ministry, the disciples happened upon someone driving out demons in Jesus' name but not doing it the way they did. Jesus said to not stop them because anyone who is not against them is for them (Mark 9:38-40; Luke 9:49-50).

LESSON FOR TODAY: *Deliverance is done many different ways today. We are to seek God's wisdom and will in how we are to approach this ministry, patterning what we do after Jesus and the disciples as revealed in His Word. Yet when confronted by someone who doesn't share our practices we aren't to judge or withdraw fellowship from those whose methods differ from ours. We don't have to agree or support them, but neither are we to criticize or try to oppose them. Make sure they know Jesus as Savior for it is possible to be able to drive out demons in Jesus' name without being a believer (Matthew 7:22).*

SPIRITUAL WARFARE TRAINING: Answer the following questions. Send the answers to me if you want and I'll offer comments and suggestions.

1. What is the difference between 'power' and 'authority' from Jesus?
2. Why does Jesus give us both of them?
3. Give some examples of when you should use His power in your life?
4. Give some examples of when you should use His authority in your life?
5. What are some reasons young children can be demonized?
6. Why is deliverance often a slow, gradual process?
7. Why does it sometimes seem that deliverance fails?

10. AUTHORITY TO BIND & LOOSE (Matthew 16:13-19; Mark 8:27-29; Luke 9:18-20)

As Jesus' time on earth wound down and opposition, both human and Satanic, kept getting stronger, Jesus continued to teach and prepare His disciples. During a time of informal discussion,

Jesus asked His disciples who they thought He was (Matthew 16:13-19; Mark 8:27-29; Luke 9:18-20). Many and various opinions were circulating and bringing much confusion. Peter stepped to the front and affirmed that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God! Jesus was greatly pleased and told them all that on this truth Jesus would build His church, which not even Satan himself would be able to overcome. He also said "whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven" (Matthew 16:19).

LESSON FOR TODAY: Jesus promises He will build His church. No one else can do so, and nothing can stop it from happening. It is not our church for us to grow, it is His church for Him to grow. There will be opposition, even from the 'gates of Hades' (Satan and his evil forces) but nothing can defeat God and His people.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Binding and loosing is very similar to rebuking, just a bit more specific. Rebuking means to resist, oppose what an evil spirit is doing. Binding and loosing, which applied to demonizing, refers to stopping (by binding) evil spirits and freeing (loosing) those they have in bondage. This passage (Matthew 16:19) is quite difficult to understand in detail, but clearly authority over evil is given to God's people.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Jesus gave Peter, as he spoke the truth about Jesus as revealed to him by God, the keys to the kingdom so that whatever they bound on earth would be bound in heaven and whatever they loosed on earth would be loosed in heaven (Matthew 16:19). This is authority and power to minister in His name, as seen before (Luke 9:1; 10:1, 17-19). Jesus will be gone, and He is giving His disciples the right to represent Him, like a parent would give a grown child were the parent to be leaving for a long time. They are not keys TO the kingdom but keys OF the kingdom. Whatever is bound or loosed on earth is first bound or loosed in heaven. When we affirm that someone is forgiven when they confess their sin, or not forgiven when they do not humble themselves and confess their sins, we are applying God's truth as revealed in His Word. We can represent God and tell others when they have done what God accepts to receive salvation, and also when they don't.

11. SATAN ATTACKS THROUGH OTHERS (Matthew 16:21-23; Mark 8:31; Luke 9:22-27)

At that point in His earthly ministry Jesus repeatedly told His followers that He must go to Jerusalem, suffer, be crucified but come back to life on the third day (Matthew 16:21-23; Mark 8:31; Luke 9:22-27). Peter rebuked Him and said it would never happen! In response Jesus said, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men" (Matthew 16:21-23; Mark 8:31; Luke 9:22-27). Satan was subtly attacking Jesus through Peter, making a way for Him to avoid the cross. This was a repeat of the temptation in the wilderness after Jesus was baptized.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Some of Satan's attacks are overt, clear attempts to overpower us. But the more successful ones are subtle and often go unnoticed. Without being aware of it, Peter is being used by Satan to tempt Jesus to avoid the cross. We don't know if Satan inserted the thought into Peter's mind or just used what He said to tempt Jesus. Either way Jesus recognized Satan was behind it and using it.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Satan will use those closest to us to mislead us if possible. He will use seemingly innocent comments by those closest to us to influence us in the direction he wants us to go. Perhaps this is why Satan allowed Job's wife to remain when he took everyone else in his family (Job 2:9). He used Eve, who was deceived, to influence Adam, who knew what he was doing was wrong (2 Corinthians 11:3; 1 Timothy 2:13-14).

LESSON FOR TODAY: In order for Satan to use Peter, Peter had to be open and available. There had to be negative thoughts of fear and/or pride in Peter which he fed and allowed to remain. Then Satan was able to work through Peter and use him to tempt Jesus. It is of the utmost importance to keep every thought and feeling captive to Jesus (Romans 12:1-2), to make sure they all line up with the Word of God.

12. JUDAS IS SATANIZED (John 6:70)

At about the same time, almost 3 years after being baptized by John, Jesus revealed that one of the twelve He chose was being used by Satan (John 6:70). Judas, in his pride and greed, allowed Satan to indwell him (Luke 22:3-4). The Antichrist was also Satanized (2 Thessalonians 2:9-10).

13. LAYING ON OF HANDS (Luke 13:10-17)

A few months afterwards, 3 full years after Jesus left the carpentry shop in Nazareth and was baptized by John, a final example of Jesus' power over Satan is recorded (Luke 13:10-17). Jesus was teaching in a synagogue on the Sabbath and a woman who had been crippled by a demon for 18 years was present. When Jesus saw her He called her to Him, put His hands on her, and immediately she was healed. The religious rulers objected to Jesus doing this on the Sabbath and Jesus rebuked them as hypocrites. Talking about the woman, Jesus referred to her being crippled as Satan binding her (Luke 13:16).

LESSON FOR TODAY: Sometimes God may lead you to lay hands on the person you are praying for, and on occasion Jesus Himself did this (Luke 4:29; 13:11-23; Matthew 8:15) as did the early church (1 Corinthians 1:14f; 12:4; 2 Corinthians 1:21f; James 5:13-16). Touch can be a way of bestowing God's power and presence from you to the person you are praying for. It can help God's power break down the demons' defenses. It is a way of identifying with the person and connecting to them. Demons hate being touched, so laying hands on a person helps break their resistance as well. Be sensitive to God's leading in this area and do whatever it is He leads you to do.

When a person is demonized, the demons experience sound, touch, etc. through the host person. Making the person look at you forces them to be aware of the truth you are speaking and not able to hide from it. Touching the person also gets their attention and focus so they are recipients of the truths you are speaking and they can't hide behind their lies and deceptions.

When a person allows someone to lay hands on them, they in effect submit themselves to the authority of that person. That person can then pass on any access demons have to him. So be VERY careful who you allow to lay hands on you to pray for you.

Make sure there is no sin in your life when you lay hands on someone, for when you stir up demonic opposition their first target will be you. Make sure you are walking closely with the Lord. Make sure that every sin is put under the blood of Jesus (1 John 1:9). To engage in this form of spiritual warfare is similar to taking the Lord's Supper with sin in your life for you are opening yourself up to demonic activity or God's discipline (or both).

LESSON FOR TODAY: There is often a strong relationship between spiritual deliverance and physical healing. Often physical problems are also gone when the demons leave. That is because it was the demons who were causing the physical problems. Examples of these in the Bible include: crippled limbs (Luke 13:11), Paul's thorn in the flesh (eye disease? - 2 Corinthians 12:7), muteness (sometimes dumbness, too - Matthew 9:32-33; 12:22; Mark 9:17-18,24-25), blindness (Matthew 12:22), seizures (Mark 1:26; 9:17-18,20,22,25; Matthew 17:15,18; Luke 9:39), deafness

(Mark 9:17-18,20,25), sores (skin cancer?) (Job 2:7), boils and other painful afflictions (Psalm 78:49 - the plagues in Egypt were demon-caused), and physical torments of all kinds (Revelation 9:5,10). The Bible states that Satan can cause illness (Job2:7-8), even death (Job 1:19).

Physical healing can be a result of deliverance. If any of the demons who were removed were causing physical problems those problems will be resolved when the demons are removed. Generational spirits can cause the same ailments from generation to generation. Physical problems are usually not God's main concern, rather He is more concerned for the spiritual condition of the heart. We often pray for the symptom (physical problem) to be removed while God wants us to seek Him and what He is trying to teach us through it. Paul's thorn in the flesh is a clear example. It wasn't God's will for that demon to be removed, but for Paul to be spiritually strengthened through the experience.

If a physical problem is present it is helpful to find out when it first started and what else was going on at that time. Instead of focusing on removing the physical symptom, look for the root cause, be it demonic, spiritual or physical.

Jesus often cast out demons and cured illness at the same time. Jesus said he would do this (Luke 13:32). He did this at the start of His ministry (Matthew 4:23-24; 8:16; Mark 1:34; Luke 4:41), around Tyre and Sidon (Mark 3:10-12; Luke 6:18-19), and in the middle of His ministry (Luke 7:21). Many female followers of Jesus were cured of both (Luke 8:2). This was done by Jesus (Mark 6:13), early church believers (Acts 5:16), Philip (Acts 8:7) and Paul (Acts 19:12).

It must be noted that not all illness is demonic in origin. Jesus healed physical ills that weren't demonic (Matthew 4:23-24; 8:16-17 fulfilled Isaiah 53:4; Mark 1:34; Acts 10:34; etc.). The Bible clearly talks about illnesses that are not demonic: severe pain (Matthew 4:24), seizures (Matthew 4:24), paralysis (Matthew 4:24; Acts 8:7), leprosy (Matthew 10:8), blindness (Luke 7:21), crippled limbs (Acts 8:7) and many other various diseases (Matthew 4:24). The fact that some physical ailments are on both lists (like seizures) shows that many ailments may have demonic or natural causes.

Thus, it is obvious that some, but not all illness is demonic. There are no certain illnesses that are exclusively demonic, nor others that aren't. Any physical ill can be demonic, but it doesn't seem that any one physical illness is always demonic. In our day and age, we err by seeing too few illnesses as being demonic. Thus, we often miss the cure. How can we tell if an illness or physical problem is demonic or not? Some clues to look for are: medical doctors aren't able to bring relief or cure; there is a pattern of it running in the family; it seems strange or doesn't follow the regular pattern of symptoms (comes and goes for no particular reason, etc.); or you feel in your spirit that it should be prayed about and looked into as possibly being demonic.

Again, our pattern for bringing about this removal of physical ills by deliverance should follow Jesus' example. He rebuked a fever and it left immediately and strength instantly returned (Luke 4:39). On at least one occasion power came from within Jesus to heal (Luke 6:19). He often laid hands on a person to bring both deliverance and healing (Luke 4:40; 13:13; 4:29; Matthew 8:15; Luke 13:1-13).

As to us doing this today, again it must be done in God's strength and power. If He chooses to bring healing through deliverance that is His will. We must never demand it or make it dependent on having enough faith. No one today has a gift to heal anyone and everyone instantly, totally and forever. It is right for us to pray for healing when doing deliverance and leave the results to God. It is also necessary to deal with any demons who may be causing the illness (physical or mental). Often demons affect our health in indirect ways, such as working in us so we overeat or do things that are unhealthy for us in the long run and undermine our health. All of these, too, must be dealt with in Jesus' name (Matthew 10:1). Sometimes God may lead you to anoint with oil as a symbol of the Holy

Spirit who does the healing (Mark 6:13). Do NOT put any faith in the oil or any ritual in using it, it is simply an audio-visual. For more on healing see under 13. LAYING ON OF HANDS (Luke 13:10-17). Never fear, demons can only cause illness with God's approval (Job 1:6-12).

One word of warning: since demons can cause illness, they can also bring counterfeit 'healings' by stopping the physical ills they themselves cause (Matthew 12:24; 24:24; 2 Thessalonians 2:9; Revelation 16:14). This explains seemingly "miraculous" healings that aren't done in accordance with God's will and Word.

LESSON FOR TODAY: IS IT GOD'S WILL FOR EVERYONE TO BE HEALED TODAY?

There are those today who believe that Jesus not only paid for sin on the cross, but that He also paid for our sickness. They say that each is received by faith, if you have enough faith to receive it. Is God's sovereignty or man's free will the final and ultimate deciding factor? It must be God's sovereignty. The motive for living for Jesus should not be fear of losing our salvation. The goal of living for Jesus should not be a problem free life. Pain and suffering aren't to be faced by whipping up enough 'faith' so that God removes it (or living with the feelings of failure and guilt if it isn't removed and we believe that is our fault by not having enough faith). What about these claims of 'faith healers'? What does the Bible say?

Is the gift of healing for today? While it's true that Jesus and the Apostles healed, it was done as a sign to authenticate that they were from God (Matthew 12:39). This was God's way of having people listen to them instead of all the counterfeits around. When they were fully authenticated, there was no longer any reason for the sign. In AD 35 all were healed but by AD 60 some were not (Epaphroditus, Paul's thorn in the flesh). Then by AD 67 very few were being healed (Trophimus was left at Miletus sick, Timothy's stomach was unhealed, etc.). Jerusalem, the scene of many early miracles, had not one miracle done in it after Stephen was stoned. The people had the evidence but rejected it. James, the oldest book in the Bible, says that if someone is sick we are to pray for them (James 5:14).

Should we see miracles today like in bible times? Actually, if you list all the miracles in the Bible you will find almost all of them fit three time periods. They cluster in the times of Moses/Joshua, Elijah/Elisha and Jesus/apostles. In each of these times a new issues had developed so God sent a new message through a new messenger whom He authenticated by miracles ("signs"). One more time of miracles is coming, called the Tribulation.

Is faith a prerequisite for healing? Jesus didn't make faith a requirement for healing. Many that He healed didn't have faith. The impotent man at the pool didn't even know who He was. The man with the withered hand and the man with dropsy were healed as a sign to religious leaders who were present, they didn't ask to be healed. The cripple that Peter and Paul healed outside the temple didn't exercise any faith. Of course, the demoniacs who were delivered and those brought back from the dead didn't exercise faith. Then there are others who had strong faith but weren't healed: Stephen, Paul, Timothy, Job, David, Elisha, etc.

Is 'healing' today the same as in Bible times? Today's 'healers' must meet the same characteristics of Jesus and the apostles to claim they are doing what was done then. Jesus and the apostles healed with a word or touch wherever and whenever. There was no special place or time, no chants or music, no gimmicks, nothing. Do today's faith healers walk down the hall in a hospital and empty every room? That's how Jesus and Peter did it. Also, Bible miracles were done instantly, not gradually or slowly. There was no healing to 'claim' or lose. Healing was then done totally, not partially, and it was never lost. Everyone was healed. There was no screening done. 100% of every one, no matter the need, was healed. Organic diseases were healed: limbs grew back instantly, strong enough to walk on, eyes were open, leprosy instantly gone and healthy flesh grown. Then, too, the dead were raised. Today's faith healing doesn't meet these characteristics.

Does God not heal? Yes, a sovereign God can always heal. He is always able to heal, but He is not always willing. Healing isn't guaranteed. Healing isn't based on our having enough faith. Miracles by Jesus and the apostles were done as a sign to authenticate the One who could heal an unseen soul. God can and does heal, but He doesn't promise to heal all.

What are we to do when sick? When we are sick, it's good to first make sure it isn't for sin or disobedience. If there is sin that God is using the sickness to point out, confess it and God will forgive and then use that illness for good (Romans 8:28). It's fine to pray, asking God to heal if that is His will. We are to submit to His will; not demand He do what we want. Ask Him to use the pain and suffering for His glory (that we and others can see His greatness through His provision and peace) and our growth (make us trust Him more and become more like Jesus). Use the best available resources: diet, rest, exercise and medical help. Realize that all healing does ultimately come from God. Leave the results to His will, though.

D. SPIRITUAL WARFARE IN JESUS' FINAL WEEK

1. JUDAS IS SATAN-INDWELT (Luke 22:3-4)

“Then Satan entered Judas, called Iscariot, one of the Twelve. And Judas went to the chief priests and the officers of the temple guard and discussed with them how he might betray Jesus” (Luke 22:3-4). Being demonized is terrible, being ‘Satanized’ is beyond comprehension. The only other person recorded to be indwelt by Satan is the antichrist (Revelation 13:2, 14-15). Satan wanted to make sure Judas followed through with killing Jesus.

2. TWO DECREES AGAINST SATAN (John 12:31; 16:7-11)

After entering Jerusalem on a donkey and proclaiming Himself Messiah, the Jews continued rejection of Jesus became final. Jesus, knowing crucifixion was certain, told His followers what would happen so they wouldn't be surprised or discouraged. “Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out” (John 12:31). The coming judgment on Satan and this evil world system is so certain Jesus speaks of it as if it is currently happening. “Driven out” is the same Greek word (edballoe) that is used of casting demons out of people.

A few days later, after the Last Supper and while walking to Gethsemane, Jesus affirmed the same truth. “The prince of this world now stands condemned” (John 16:11). Satan was given authority over this world system from Adam when he sinned and followed Satan's advice. Now Jesus is winning it back (Romans 5:12-21). Satan will be condemned by Jesus' victory over sin on the cross. Again, using the present tense shows Jesus' assurance that it is as good as done!

LESSON FOR TODAY: We must always remember that Satan is a defeated foe. He was cast out of his original position in heaven because of pride (Ezekiel 28:16; Luke 10:18; Isaiah 14:12). His judgment was pronounced in Eden (Genesis 3:14-15). He was defeated by the cross (John 12:31). He will be cast to the earth in the tribulation (Revelation 9:1; 12:7-12), bound during the Millennium (Revelation 20:1-3) and then cast into the lake of burning sulfur forever (Revelation 20:7-10; Isaiah 27:1; 40:23-24; 2 Thessalonians 2:8).

3. SATAN DEFEATED ON THE CROSS (Hebrews 2:14-15)

The culmination of the battle between God and Satan which started in Eden ended as God predicted, with Satan painfully wounding Jesus but with Jesus defeating Satan (Genesis 3:15). It was

a terrible battle, the worst ever. Jesus, as a man, faced all the hate, violence and evil Satan and all his demons could throw at Him. He was literally drug Him through hell for those hours, totally separated from God and faced it as a man. Yet He stayed faithful and endured, paying the price for every sin we would ever commit (Hebrews 2:14-15; Colossians 2:15).

LESSON FOR TODAY: Satan and his forces are defeated foes, having given their all to destroy Jesus on the cross, but being beaten by Him instead (Hebrews 2:14-15; 1 Peter 3:18-22). Now they are free to continue their work because God still honors man's free will and allows each one to decide whom they want to serve. They have been condemned and sentenced, now they are awaiting that sentence to begin. Knowing their time is short they strive to do all the evil they can against God and His people. When Jesus returns, Satan and his demons will be cast into the lake of fire forever (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:1-15).

Jesus defeated death on the cross. He paid for every sin, then said "It is finished" (John 19:30). Only then did He voluntarily leave His body for there was no more any need to suffer in humiliation (John 19:30). Every sin had been paid for, Satan and his forces had been defeated. Technically Jesus didn't die for our sins, He suffered for them and died because His work was done. Sin did not kill Jesus, nor did Satan. It wasn't a matter of waiting to see if He'd come back to life. He voluntarily died and so He also voluntarily came back to life.

4. SATAN DEFEATED BY THE RESURRECTION (Ephesians 4:8)

Jesus' resurrection and ascension showed His victory over Satan on the cross. He freed us from sin and gave us eternal life (Ephesians 4:8). It is one of the most provable facts of history. If Jesus didn't come back to life, what else could have happened to his body? Some say the disciples stole His body, but how would they gain courage to preach that they didn't have before? Why would they give up their lives for something they knew was a lie? So, others say, enemies stole the body. Then they would have said so and showed it to disprove the resurrection when that was first claimed. Neither theory explains the eye-witness accounts of over 500 people who saw Jesus alive after the crucifixion. More common is the swoon theory, that Jesus never really died but swooned then came 'to' later. But he was pronounced dead by experienced Roman executioners after having a spear run through His heart. He spent 3 days wrapped totally in cloth and covered with 100 pounds of spices, with no food or water. He would have had to come to, get out of the wrappings while leaving them there in the shape of a cocoon as if He were still in them, with hands pierced by nails move the monstrous rock from inside with no handholds, overpower the Roman soldiers, walk many miles on feet pierced by nails, and then prove to those He met that He had a superior, eternal body! That takes more faith than believing in the resurrection!

There is additional proof of the resurrection. Jesus appeared 10 times to over 500 people. If there was no resurrection how do we explain the change in the disciples, the spread of the early church, the conversion of Paul, the start of the Lord's Supper and baptism, the switch of the day of worship from Saturday to Sunday and the impact His life has had even to today. Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "The name of Jesus is not so much written as plowed into the history of the world." A liar or lunatic can't do that!

CONCLUSION TO THE LIFE OF JESUS

Jesus is our **example** in how to have victory over Satan and his demons. At the start of His ministry, He cast out many demons (Matthew 4:23-24; Mark 1:39,34). In the Gadarenes He cast thousands of demons out of two men (Matthew 8:28-34; Mark 5:1-17; Luke 8:20). He cast demons out of the daughter of a Canaanite woman (Matthew 15:21 Mark 7:20), and cured a demonized man

(Mark 1:21-28; Luke 4:31-36). He healed a boy with seizures and demons (Matthew 17:14-20). He cast seven demons out of Mary Magdalene as well as out of other women (Luke 8:2; Mark 16:9).

LESSON FOR TODAY: Jesus is our example in delivering people from demonizing. Before casting them out He rebuked them (took their power away) (Matthew 17:18; Luke 9:42). Then He "drove" them out (Mark 1:39). He did it verbally (Matthew 8:16), not by a certain ritualistic procedure. He didn't let the demons speak (Mark 1:34; Luke 4:41), except Legion, and that was just to give his name so others would know what was happening (Mark 5:9). He never communicated with them in any way or asked them for information. He never let them say who He was (Mark 1:25; Luke 4:35; Mark 3:11-12). He told them to "be quiet and come out" (Luke 4:35; Mark 1:25). Other times He told them to "go" (Matthew 8:32). Sometimes He was a far from the person whom He was delivering (Matthew 15:21-28; Mark 7:24-30). When He cast them out He forbid them to ever return (Mark 9:25).

The King of Kings and Lord of Lords invaded the kingdom of Satan, but He did it in the form of a man. His first coming brought out all the opposition the enemy could muster against Him. He came to rescue mankind from the consequences of sin. The darkness opposed Him but He was victorious (John 1:5; 3:19; 8:12).

Satan and his demons are defeated, and Jesus shares that victory with us. However, until Jesus comes for the second time and Satan and all demons are removed, the battle continues. Satan can no longer attack Jesus directly, so he takes his fury out on God's people – Jews (because they are God's chosen people) and Christians (because we are children of God). However, we can have victory because we fight a defeated foe! But we must learn spiritual warfare to do so. The rest of the books in the New Testament add further detail to how to have victory over our enemy.

REFERENCES TO THE SPIRIT WORLD IN THE GOSPELS

MATTHEW

4:1-11, 24

6:13

7:22

8:16,28-34

9:32-35

10:1,25

11:18

12:22-30,43-45

13:19,24,28,37,39

15:21-28

16:18-23

17:14-21

MARK

1:12,13,21-28,32-34,39

3:11-15,22-30

4:15

5:1-20

6:7,13

7:24-30

8:33

9:14-29,38-40

16:9,17

LUKE

4:1-13,,33-37,41

6:18

7:21,33

8:2,12,26-39

9:1,37-43,49-50

10:1-20

11:14-26

13:10-17,32

22:3,31-32,53

JOHN

6:70

7:20

8:44,48=52

10:20-21

12:31

13:2,27

14:30

16:11

SPIRITUAL WARFARE TRAINING: Answer the following questions. Send the answers to me if you want and I'll offer comments and suggestions.

1. Why does Satan try to use those who are close to us to influence us in wrong ways?
2. Why is laying hands on someone who is demonized while you pray effective?
3. What are some Bible verses that state that Satan has been defeated by Jesus? Write them down, memorize them, and keep them with you so you never forget that we have victory in Jesus.
4. What have you learned about spiritual warfare and bringing deliverance to others through this study? Name as many lessons as you can.

III. NEW TESTAMENT

Jesus' first coming was God's invasion of enemy occupied territory. He landed behind enemy lines to begin the work of setting the captives free (Isaiah 42:7; 49:9; Luke 4:18-21). He provided freedom from bondage by His work on the cross (Luke 13:12; Romans 6:18, 22). He showed the way to have victory through the light that overcame the darkness (John 1:5; 3:19; 8:12). When His mission was completed He ascended to heaven.

However, the fact that He left didn't mean the war ended. Although defeated and awaiting his ultimate doom, Satan is still free to attack God through His people. Because he knows his end is near he works all the harder to wreak havoc on God's people and work. God allows Satan freedom to attack because that is part of allowing mankind a free will. Also, God uses Satan's evil to show mankind their need of Him and for His people to grow in faith as we trust Him and learn to fight.

Now we Christians are the ones in enemy-occupied territory. Jesus has called us to be the light of the world. It is up to us to spread His message of deliverance. But the darkness tries to put out our light so none will be attracted to it (John 1:5; 3:19; 8:12). Satan and his demons try to get us back into bondage and misery. It is their entire focus, day and night, and all their skill and energy are focused on bringing this about. We know that God is greater (1 John 4:4) and His kingdom will prevail (Revelation 19-22), but for now the battle rages.

So, the Christian life is a life of warfare. As the book of Acts shows, that has always been the case. We are at war: war with our sin nature, the world and war with Satan and his forces. That was true for the Christians who were left when Jesus returned to heaven as well. As the early church grew we see the battles continuing. We live in a Satan-controlled world (1 John 5:19). We must fight. God has given us the equipment we need (2 Corinthians 10:4; Ephesians 6:10-20). We can learn how to have victory in our battles by studying the victories, and failures, of those who have gone before. The book of Acts shows examples of those who have fought their spiritual battles. The writings of Luke, Paul, Peter, John and others help us learn to apply Jesus' victory to our own life.

The book of Acts records the growth of the early church. This comes about through evangelism. The Christians are young believers with much to learn, including spiritual warfare. Satan continued to do all he could to stop and destroy the young church before it grew large and strong. There are about 178 references to the spirit world in Acts, many more than in the Gospels. Spiritual warfare by no means ended with the ascension. If there is any change in Satan's tactics between the Gospels and Acts it would be that he attacked Jesus directly and overtly when He was on earth. When Jesus left, Satan attacks His children (Jews and Christians) instead.

In Acts we see more deceptive, subtle ways of working to bring about destruction. That makes him more dangerous. He works harder to cover his trail and make what he does appear like it is something else (emotional disorder, chemical imbalance, etc.). He attacks more from within instead of just from without. He still uses persecution, but has become adept at dividing families, churches and even nations from within. The battle continues, it just changes a bit. If anything, it is more difficult to fight a subtle, hidden foe than one who is obvious and easily seen.

Spiritual warfare has not decreased. Rather it has increased through the centuries. God tells us it will continue to get worse and worse until Jesus returns. The book of Revelation has the most references to Satan and evil spirits – about 86 references. We know that the nearer to the end times we come, the more active Satan and his forces will be. God has given us His Word to teach us how to live for Him in these days of increased warfare. There is much instruction for us in Acts and the Epistles.

A. EVENTS (Acts)

1. PENTECOST AND AFTER (Acts 1-4)

The book of Acts opens with **Jesus returning to heaven** after His victory over sin and Satan while on earth (Acts 1:1-11). Then, after choosing Matthias to replace Judas (Acts 1:12-26), the believers waited for Jesus' promised gift, the Holy Spirit. When He came they had God's power and presence to help them in their life and ministry (Acts 2:1-13). The difference the Spirit makes is immediately seen in Peter's change from a coward who denied Jesus (Mark 14:66-72) to a courageous spokesman (Acts 2:14-40). Three thousand responded by putting their faith in Jesus (Acts 2:41).

LESSON FOR TODAY: God's Spirit is essential for us to have victory in our battle against sin and Satan. Without His wisdom, guidance, power, peace and protection we wouldn't be able to stand against all that comes against us. It is essential to learn to listen to Him, be sensitive to His guidance, follow His leading and know how to tap into His power.

Satan had failed to stop Jesus from sealing his doom by His crucifixion and resurrection. Satan was not able to stop Jesus from defeating him at the cross and the empty tomb. But if he could keep the gospel message from spreading, he could still rule the vast majority of humanity. His goal at this point became to limit the power of the brand-new Christian church, intending to keep it weak, keep it from growing. He put all his energy into defeating the early Christians, and keep mankind in darkness and bondage. However, as we follow the growth of the early church, we will see how his attempts failed.

His first approach was to bring **physical opposition**. The early Christians experienced rejection, suffering, persecution and imprisonment (Acts 4:1-4). However, this opposition actually worked against Satan! The disciples responded to their trials with increased faithfulness and commitment (Acts 4:5-22). God used even the efforts of the enemy to make them stronger as they trusted in Him and saw His provision (Romans 8:28).

LESSON FOR TODAY: While Satan still attacks the church today, God often uses persecution to make the church stronger and increases their witness. He uses Satan's attacks for His purpose. All things may not be good in themselves, but God does use them for the good of those who love Him (Romans 8:28). It has been said that the church can stand anything but success. Where the church has not faced opposition but has been popularly accepted, there has often been a compromising that leads to weakness among God's people. Rome and the USA are 2 examples. We must respond to trials with increased faithfulness and commitment, as the early disciples did. In that way, we can actually turn Satan's efforts against him and take ground for God's kingdom.

2. ANANIAS & SAPPHIRA (Acts 5)

When external persecution didn't stop the church's growth (Acts 4:4) Satan tried **attacking from within**. He wanted to contaminate the spiritual life of the church members, as seen in the case of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-10). God revealed to Peter that Satan had "filled their heart" so that they lied to the Holy Spirit by not being honest about the amount of money for which they sold their land (Acts 5:3).

The sin was not in keeping some of the money for themselves. That would have been fine. The sin was lying and saying they gave all the money to the church in order to impress their fellow

believers. They did this despite the Holy Spirit convicting them that such a statement was wrong. To set an example of the importance of holiness, God took the lives of these two carnal believers (Acts 5:3-11). They still went to heaven, but lost opportunity to serve and grow in this life. Again, God took the work of Satan and used it instead for His own glory. The Christians were taught the importance of holiness, and as a consequence, unbelievers were attracted to Jesus (Acts 5:42 – 6:1).

LESSON FOR TODAY: Our pride often keeps us from getting help when tempted. If Ananias or Sapphira would have shared their struggle with greed with someone it would have brought the work of the enemy against them into the light and weakened it. Prayer support and accountability would also have occurred. We play into the enemies' hands when we allow our pride to keep us from sharing our struggles with others.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Satan causes more damage to the church from within than he does through attacks from without. Christians hurting other Christians, churches hurting Christians, Christians hurting churches - this is a very common and successful approach of Satan even today. It can be more dangerous because when we are attacked from without we recognize the hand of the enemy and pull together in unity. When it is from within, though, we often fail to recognize it for the attack that it is. Instead of joining together against it we allow divisions to come among God's people. It is our pride that keeps us from humbling ourselves and confessing our sins to God and go to others for help.

LESSON FOR TODAY: "Satan filled your heart" (Acts 5:3) is Peter's appraisal of what happened to Ananias and Sapphira. "Fill" (Greek 'pieroo') means "to fill to the full" and is the same word used for the filling of the Holy Spirit in Ephesians 5:18. There is no way of knowing to what extent they were demonized or exactly what Satan did. Surely he helped them go in the direction they themselves chose and gave them opportunity to believe his lies so as to deceive themselves. He may have fed their greed or even encouraged fearful thoughts of not having enough money. He did this to counter the conviction of sin in them by the Holy Spirit. We do know they always had a free will to resist and are totally responsible for their thoughts and actions. Admit and confess the sin in your life that has allowed the demons to work. They don't cause a sin, they enhance a sin that is already there, and so it must be removed and stopped so the demons stop as well. As it has been said, if you want to keep the rats away, get rid of the garbage!

LESSON FOR TODAY: Peter states that Satan enticed them to lie to the Holy Spirit. Whether this was literally Satan or one of his demons we don't know. Often we say that 'Satan did ____' when we know it wasn't personally him, but done by his forces. Perhaps it was Satan himself since this was a direct, frontal attack on the young church. If the flame could be distinguished before it took root and spread, then the church could be severely crippled. If it was a demon assigned to destroy them, saying 'Satan' did it is still applicable for they are all his forces working with him for the same effect. However, it would be most unlikely that Satan would personally attack any of us today. He has far greater places to exert his influence and has plenty of demons to work against us. It doesn't take Satan to entice us to sin, the weakest demon, along with our sin nature, can bring about plenty of sin in us because we freely go along with it.

LESSON FOR TODAY: The specific sins that Ananias and Sapphira were guilty of were greed, pride, lies and deception to cover the lies. They also seemed to be guilty of jealousy (of Barnabas Acts 4:32-37), and that is greed and pride combined. Their attitude to material things was idolatry, for they put something before God. Idolatry is really spiritual adultery (Jeremiah 3:8-10; Ezekiel 16:23-43; 23:24-30; Revelation 17:1-5). It is clearly forbidden by God (Exodus 20:3,4,23; 23:224). Pride is also seen in wanting to impress everyone with their generosity and have the affirmation which Barnabas had just received (Acts 4:32-37).

LESSON FOR TODAY: Fear of not having enough money for themselves in the future probably entered in as well. Seldom is there a sin that doesn't have fear as part of it somewhere! As

do all sins, it starts in the mind (Judges 2:10-13; Ezekiel 14:7) and then becomes an action. When anything is more important to us than God, there are demons who receive that adoration and 'worship' that we bestow on the object (Zechariah 10:2; 1 Corinthians 10:19-21).

LESSONS FOR TODAY: When a demon has access to one person, that demon can also claim anyone that person becomes attached to, emotionally or physically (1 Corinthians 6:16). Emotional soul ties or physical sexual activity open a person to the demonizing of another, as was the case with Ananias and Sapphira.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Peter was made aware of what was happening so he could deal with the sin. As the leader, he was responsible for those under him. God gives insights into the workings of demons so their work can be defeated. When dealing with something demonic always pray for supernatural insight, wisdom and protection so you will be able to defeat the plans of the enemy. Some have the gift of distinguishing between spirits as part of their spiritual gift mix (1 Corinthians 12:10; Acts 13:6-12). If so, it must be used wisely and with maturity, always in total dependence on God.

LESSON FOR TODAY: God is a holy God and does not allow sin. He uses this first clear rebellion as an example to show how He feels about sin. But in His mercy He doesn't deal with every sin among His believers in this way. God did the same when He first formed the Jewish nation (Exodus 32:1-35). In each case, starting the Jewish nation or the church, He showed His holiness by bringing strict judgment at the first sin. He doesn't enforce the same penalty of death on subsequent sinners, not because He couldn't but because He chooses to show mercy. His failure to judge our every sin today is not weakness, but mercy. It is certainly not something we should take advantage of. Every sin of lying, greed, jealousy, fear, etc., like Ananias and Sapphira also deserves death. We can thank Him for not striking you dead for sin.

LESSON FOR TODAY: God promises to bring good out of all things (Romans 8:28). That happened here. A new respect for God and a fear of sin gripped the church (Acts 5:5, 11) which led to renewed reverence for God and an increased motivation for holiness. This strengthened the church and allowed God to work through them all the more (Acts 5:12, 15-16). A great number of people were attracted to Jesus and joined (Acts 5:14) but others without pure motives stayed away (Acts 5:13). God's power was manifested in many being healed and delivered from demonizing (Acts 5:15-16). To have God's power in your life, there must be cleansing from sin and a deep desire for holiness. Revival starts with a deep awareness of the holiness of God and sinfulness of man.

3. PETER'S SHADOW DELIVERS (Acts 5)

To validate the **authenticity of the message** the disciples were bringing, God did the same kinds of miracles through them that He did through Jesus. "As a result, people brought the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and mats so that at least Peter's shadow might fall on some of them as he passed by. Crowds gathered also from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing their sick and those tormented by evil spirits, and all of them were healed" (Acts 5:15-16).

LESSON FOR TODAY: These special manifestations of spiritual power through healing and deliverance have not been seen to the same extent since the first days of the early church (1 Corinthians 13:8). At the start of the church, with Satan's attacks, God made sure the spark took hold and grew. He validated and authenticated His servants when it was needed, where the church had not been established before. But as it took root these manifestations faded. Do not think these should regularly occur everywhere today or something is wrong with the church. These are necessary to open a new area of darkness to God's truth, but not what a growing Christian builds his faith on. God is always able, and will do these kinds of miracles again in the Tribulation (Revelation

11:1-6). These signs had, and still have their place. But that place is not a part of everyday life in areas where the church has been established. So, when we see signs like this, we should be careful how we interpret them. Satan can and does counterfeit these things as well (Matthew 7:22-23; 24:44; Mark 13:20-22; Revelation 16:24). We live by faith, not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:7).

LESSON FOR TODAY: Some feel strongly signs and wonders exist today while others say their time has passed. What is the truth? Are we to seek them or deny them? Is God really behind some of the stories we hear from foreign countries or are they Satanic counterfeits to confuse and mislead (1 John 4:4; Exodus 7:8-13)? God performed miracles to enable Peter to speak (Acts 3:1-4:4). Paul had the same experience in Ephesus (Acts 19:1-20). Are they still applicable for us today, or were they just something for the Apostles to do?

There are four Greek words in the New Testament referring to miracles. *Dynamis* often means “power” and can be used for miracles or Satanic power. *Erga*, or “works,” is used in John’s writing to describe the miracles of Jesus. *Sēmeion* is translated as “sign” and describes physical or material manifestations, while *teras*, commonly translated as “wonders,” is always used in conjunction with one of the other words.

Miracles are divine interventions that produce something that would not have happened under normal conditions. God used them to confirm the man and the message had His approval and authority. Jesus showed His deity by performing about 35 recorded miracles.

One specific form of miracles are power encounters, where God’s power is shown to be greater than that of Satan or his demons (Acts 19). Evil entered the world because God gave angels and then people a free will. God didn’t bring evil into the world, Satan and man did that. Jesus defeated Satan and evil on the cross, but He didn’t remove it because if He did then we would lose our free will (John 3:18; 12:48). God never forces anyone to believe in Him, but He does use signs and wonders along with power encounters to show His greater power so people can make an informed free will choice. Sensational displays alone are not enough to turn people to God (Luke 16:31). The people in Jesus’ day saw many miracles and deliverances, yet most refused to believe. These continued in the early church. The early church leaders asked God to do signs and wonders to validate their ministry (Acts 4:30). Should we do the same today?

There are passages in the Bible indicating miracles are a thing of the past. First, Luke emphasizes miracles were only done by the hand of the Apostles (Acts 2:43; 5:12; 14:3; 15:12). Also, one of the ways Paul proved his Apostleship to the Corinthians was by pointing to the signs he had done (2 Corinthians 12:12). If everyone were doing signs, it would not be a unique event worth pointing to. In addition, Hebrews 2:4 gives the impression signs and wonders were part of a special time in the church—not an ongoing occurrence. Jesus’ ministry was unique and is not meant to be reproduced today. For example, in Matthew 10, Jesus sends out the disciples, telling them in verse 5 not to go to the Gentiles or the Samaritans. However, in Matthew 28, Jesus instructs His followers to go to every person and place. The follower of Jesus understands the first command was temporary, while the second command came after the resurrection and is meant to be obeyed until His return. Similarly, Jesus’ command to heal the sick (Matt. 10:7–8) was also temporary. Finally, there has been no parallel to the miracles of Jesus and the Apostles since their time. These people could heal everyone immediately and completely, dealing with the most complex cases. Church history has no record of people doing the same. These arguments against praying for miracles today are solid and worthy of serious consideration.

Still, we can find examples in the Bible where it seems signs and wonders are something God still uses today. In Luke 9:2, Jesus sends the Apostles to preach the Kingdom of God and heal. Then, in Luke 10:9, He sends out seventy-two followers (sixty or more of whom are not Apostles) to do the same thing. Moreover, in Matthew 24:14, Jesus states the kingdom will be preached in all the world, and the end will come. If Jesus told His followers to do something and

gave no instructions to stop, then it would seem logical to keep doing it as it was originally done. Second, Stephen, Philip, and Barnabas (who were not Apostles) did signs among the people. When Peter and John went there to minister, they built on the work already done (Acts 8:15-17), even though it wasn't done by Apostles. They did not stop Philip from preaching or doing miracles. Galatians 3:5 states God directly gave the Spirit to the Galatians—it was not given through Paul the Apostle. Even though Paul was not with them, miracles were being done there. Finally, 1 Corinthians 12:8–10 lists several gifts from God, including the gift of healings and miracles. Then, in verses 27–28, Paul includes miracles and healings as roles within the church, separate from the roles of Apostles and prophets. That doesn't prove they are to continue today, but it does show that signs and wonders were a normal part of church ministry in the early church.

So, which is it? Signs and wonders or not? Since we can't say for 100% sure there seems to be room for allowable differences in interpretation among believers, as there are for the current use of the gift of tongues or concerning the rapture and Second Coming. The Bible can only say one thing, and it can't contradict itself, but in those rare instances where there seems to be more than one legitimate interpretation, we can only go by what God leads each of us to individually.

Personally, I have always believed that the sign gifts were not the standard for all believers today. But that doesn't mean God can't or won't use them when the circumstances call for it. The Corinthians were aware of Satan's manifestations of power, so God showed His power there in a way He didn't at other churches. It wasn't because they had more faith than the other churches, but because they had less. Thus, we see the use of these gifts there but not elsewhere. I have seen and been aware of God's supernatural work (signs and wonders) in India, especially in parts where the name of Jesus isn't known. Physical healings happen so people can know God also heals spiritually. Dreams and visions communicate truth to those who don't know and don't have anyone to tell them. In areas where the gospel is known, like in the USA, that isn't necessary or effective. In Luke 16:27-31 the rich man wanted Lazarus to send someone from the other side of the grave to talk to his brother so they'd repent. God said, "No." They had heard the prophets, even Jesus Himself. That was sufficient.

I see our culture like that of Israel back then – the name of Jesus is known and information about God and the Bible were available everywhere. They (we) don't need something supernatural to show God is greater than Satan. Our culture doesn't even believe in Satan. But in parts of India, China and even Africa where there is no knowledge of Jesus and Satan rules by power and fear, then signs and wonders are necessary and appropriate. Still, that is the exception and not the norm. That's how it was with Jesus, too. Although Jesus did sensational things (such as feeding 5,000 people; Matthew 14:13–21), He was not a sensationalist (He went off to pray alone; Luke 5:16). Sensationalism will never force anyone to believe whose heart is cold to the gospel (Luke 16:27-31). At the most they will be like the seed that sprouted quickly but soon faded and died (Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23). Pray for the hearts of those who don't have Jesus to be softened and opened so they will respond to the truth they already have.

*Satan continues to stir up problems within the church today as he did then. Tension, jealousy and competition took root not just in Ananias and Sapphira but in others as well. What was given by those who sold their land was intended to help the poor among them, yet some felt they weren't getting their fair **share of food and clothing** (Acts 6:1). The church responded by ordaining deacons to make a fair distribution of the resources to those in need (Acts 6:1-7).*

LESSON FOR TODAY: Satan's strategy is still to bring division. Jesus says our distinguishing mark as Christians is to be love (John 18:35). Satan has many subtle but effective ways of dividing friends, couples, families and churches. Many times, these things happen and he or his demons aren't even involved for our sin nature brings these about without his influence. Even so, his demons are always there to provide whatever 'help' they can to bring division among believers. Pray regularly

against that. Encourage others to do the same. Be alert to small things that can easily grow into big problems. Pray, give counsel, encourage and show love to all.

As the early church grew Satan continued to attack from within and without. He continued to stir up the political and religious leaders to bring more persecution by having **James killed** (Acts 12:1-2) and **Peter arrested** awaiting death (Acts 12:3-4).

How did the disciples counter this strategy? Or rather we should ask how God's Spirit led them to counter Satan's persecution without and division within. They did exactly as they saw Jesus do when attacked. They faithfully persevered in their mission. They weren't discouraged or swayed into changing their focus. They went out by twos and spread His Word wherever they went. Large numbers turned to Jesus for salvation. That, of course, brought up much demonic opposition but it also brought many people freedom from demonizing (Acts 8:5-13). Everything they accomplished was done in Jesus' name (Acts 4:7).

4. MANY HEALED & DELIVERED (Acts 8:1-8)

For the next two years the church continued to grow despite persecution. In fact, persecution caused much of the growth. As believers were forced to flee from Jerusalem, they took the Good News of Jesus with them wherever they went (Acts 8:1). One of the reasons God allowed the persecution was to move the people out so they would fulfill the great commission (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8). Again, God used Satan's attacks for His purpose (Romans 8:28; Genesis 50:20).

LESSON FOR TODAY: Once more, we see that God always uses what Satan planned for evil to bring about good (Romans 8:28; Genesis 50:20). He uses specific individual events intended for evil in the lives of certain individuals, including us, to bring about His plan. He also uses attacks against His Body as a whole and brings good from it as well. God is sovereign over Satan (1 John 4:4) and limits what he is allowed to do (Job 1:6-12; 2:1-6). Satan and his demons eventually go too far and overplay their hand, causing the person or group they are attacking to become more alert and turn to God for help. When they overplay their hand people become aware that something unusual is happening and they are in a spiritual war (2 Corinthians 2:5-11). Never fear or panic when it seems demons are winning. God is ALWAYS in control and always has a plan and purpose.

As the church spread into new cultures they found themselves confronted by a different spiritual world view, a greater openness to contact with spiritual forces of any kind. The Jews believed evil spirits were everywhere and behind virtually anything negative. Various and strange means were used to try to drive demons out, but without much success.

In the Greco-Roman world 'magic' was common and well recognized. Contact with a supernatural power who could bring protection against disease, bring revenge by harming an enemy, cause another to fall in love or to attain power over others or to foretell the future was common. When King Herod heard about Jesus and the miracles He was performing, his Greco-Roman world view led him to believe that Jesus really was John the baptizer, the one he had killed, come back to life (Matthew 6:14-16).

When the Jews came into these cultures they brought their deeper understanding of and power over these evil forces. As a result, some who sought to use God's power for their own gain were attracted to the Jews. When Christians started moving into these cultures they brought with them something unknown before – power over unseen forces in the name of Jesus. This, along with physical healings, validated their message as being from God.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Today, too, we must be aware of the spiritual world view of the culture to which we are ministering. The Western world is, for the most part, closed to recognizing spiritual

powers behind what happens. Third World countries, especially those with animistic beliefs, see supernatural powers and forces at work all around them. Demons adapt to and work within the beliefs of the people in the culture where they are assigned. In the West they do all they can to hide their identity but in animistic cultures they do all they can to manifest their presence and therefore bring fear on those around them.

Thus, when Philip went to Samaria with their Greco-Roman worldview he faced a different audience than he had in Jerusalem. "When the crowds heard Philip and saw the miraculous signs he did, they all paid close attention to what he said. With shrieks, evil spirits came out of many, and many paralytics and cripples were healed. So, there was great joy in that city" (Acts 8:6-8).

LESSON FOR TODAY: In cultures today that don't have a Christian heritage or much of a gospel witness God still uses physical healing and deliverance from demonic influence or even dreams to show His power and bring others to His truth. I personally have seen this many times in India, especially in dark northern India. (See Signs and Wonders with Acts 5 above. See more about Power Encounters with Acts 19 below)

5. SIMON MAGUS (Acts 8)

As word of the Christians' power in the name of Jesus spread, a man named Simon who practiced 'sorcery' heard of it (Acts 8:9). He had been using local traditions and pagan religions to remove demonic influence but with limited success. The powers he contacted to overcome the demons were demonic themselves, and therefore all of this was forbidden by God (Leviticus 19:26; Deuteronomy 18:10; 2 Kings 16:5; 17:17).

The word translated 'sorcerer' in the Bible is the Greek word 'magos.' Our word 'magic' comes from this but the real meaning does not refer to sleight of hand tricks which we associate with magicians today. It refers to those with supernatural abilities. It can be translated magician, sorcerer, wizard, enchanter, astrologer or even wise men ('Magi' in Matthew 2). Actually, the word started with the 'wise men' of the east, especially Babylon. These were men with learning and education that far exceeded anyone in their culture. This superior knowledge caused others to look up to them as something 'supernatural'. Daniel was one of these learned men who had great wisdom and insight (Daniel 2:12-48; 4:6, 18; 5:7-8, 15). As Greek culture spread, it picked up this word and applied it to anyone who did special acts or had special powers.

Simon used his demonic connections to impress the people around him (Acts 8:10) but when Philip came with his greater powers many came to Jesus and were baptized, including Simon himself who followed Philip everywhere because this new power was greater than anything he had seen (Acts 8:13). Simon, acting from his sin nature, tried to buy the power Philip had (Acts 8:18-19). Peter, who had come up from Jerusalem to help with the great working of God's Spirit that had broken out in Samaria, sternly rebuked Simon who immediately repented (Acts 8:20-24). God was teaching His followers that He bestows His powers freely and not to the highest bidder.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Unfortunately, there are still many like Simon in the church today, those who want to use God and His power for their own benefit. Many are overly impressed with works of power, sign gifts and the like. They focus on the supernatural instead of the God behind the supernatural. Pride lures them in dangerous directions like it did Simon. God's message is the same as it was then – repent and stop trying to use God for your own glory! Don't let demons, or those who are gifted to fight them, impress you or distract you from giving your attention and glory to Jesus alone. Don't make a god of spiritual warfare. It is a means to an end, not an end in itself!

6. BAR-JESUS (ELYMAS) (Acts 13)

The next clear incident of spiritual warfare recorded in Acts happened about a dozen years after the incident with Simon, which was about fifteen years after Jesus' resurrection. Paul came to salvation and started his training (Acts 9), and Peter began taking the Gospel to the Gentiles (Acts 10-11). Persecution continued as James was killed, and Peter was imprisoned and awaiting death (Acts 12:1-4) until God supernaturally intervened and released Peter (Acts 12:5-19). Then Paul and Barnabas left on their first missionary journey (Acts 13:1-3). When they reached Cyprus they met strong Satanic opposition (Acts 13:4-12). Since Jesus was in numerous power encounters with Satan and demons, it is no surprise that His followers would experience the same opposition as they continued His mission and ministry.

Bar-Jesus, a Jewish sorcerer and false prophet who had much influence with the local official, opposed Paul and Barnabas when they tried to present the gospel to the official (Acts 13:4-12). Bar-Jesus is also called Elymas, meaning "sorcerer". The same word, 'magos,' is used of him as was used of Simon Magus (Acts 8). That man was a Gentile but Bar-Jesus was a Jew and was demonized (Acts 13:10). He was Satan's pawn against God and His work in the continuing battle of Satan to defeat God's Kingdom (Genesis 3:15). The results of who won this power encounter between Satan (through Bar-Jesus) and God (through Paul) would determine who would have the most influence on the leaders and people of Cyprus. The kingdom of darkness was again challenging the kingdom of light (John 1:5; 3:19; 8:12).

Paul was not intimidated but gave Bar-Jesus direct eye contact (Acts 13:9) and called him "a child of the devil and an enemy of everything that is right" (Acts 13:9-11). Immediately God blinded him.

How did Paul know these things about him? God's Spirit must have shown Him, as He did Peter about Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5; 1 Corinthians 12:10).

LESSON FOR TODAY: When encountering a demon in someone who is demonized do not let them intimidate you or cause any fear. God is greater (1 John 4:4) and we have nothing to fear (2 Timothy 1:7). Looking them in the eye is important, for this contact establishes your authority in Jesus over them and puts them under Jesus' authority. Our eyes show truth. This truth is greater than lies and deception.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Learn to listen to God's voice as He speaks to you when you are involved in spiritual warfare. It is of utmost importance to stay in close communication with your Commander. Obey what He says. Be sensitive to God's Spirit as He shows you what you need to know to have victory against these demonic forces. God wants to speak to us and in deed does. God speaks to us today through His Holy Spirit. We can hear His voice. It's not a sound, it's a voice. It's not something you hear with your ears but in your mind. Once you learn to recognize and respond to this voice you'll recognize it often.

The first clue we have to what God's voice sounds like is in 1 Kings 19 where we see it is a still, small voice – a gentle whisper. 1 Kings 19:11-13 The LORD said, "Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the LORD, for the LORD is about to pass by." Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake came a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper. When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave. Then a voice said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" God speak quietly. We often miss His message because we wait for a deeply emotional, sensational, life-changing experience.

In the still, small voice of God we are given communication that bears the stamp of His personality quite clearly and in a way we will learn to recognize. It can be very easy to overlook His voice or just think it's a thought of our own. Like in any relationship, the better we get to know Him and the longer we listen to Him, the better we will recognize His voice.

Listen slowly; listen intently, for His voice is often a gentle whisper, a still, small voice. When we learn to listen for it we recognize that He speaks rich and enlightened thoughts to our spirits. God can put a new idea directly and immediately into our mind. He can give us a new perspective in which to view something. He can put new desires into our hearts. He can stimulate certain memories stored within our mind just when they are most needed. Often God's still, small voice takes the form of thoughts that are our thoughts, though they are not from us. Learn to recognize these 'sudden' ideas that pop into your consciousness.

When God speaks in your heart it doesn't matter where your mind has been going; He blocks and overrides all circuits. You are captivated by His voice speaking to you. He commands your undivided attention. There is absolute certainty in what He says. What He says is right. His word has perfect balance and proportion. Everything He shows us fits together seamlessly. The word He gives us is complete. Everything He says compliments everything He's been showing us.

Often this still, small voice speaks rich and enlightening thoughts by causing a burning within my heart. The disciples who talked with Jesus on the road to Emmaus that first Resurrection Sunday experienced this. Luke 24:32 says, "They asked each other, 'were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?'" Psalm 39:1-3 talks about this as well. "My heart grew hot within me, and as I meditated, the fire burned."

So, we see that this still, small voice speaks rich and enlightening thoughts by causing a burning within our hearts. How He speaks is by a gentle, quiet whisper. Where He speaks is to our thoughts and to our hearts. He touches our rational mental capacity (enlightened thoughts) as well as our emotional feelings (burning hearts). (See "Listening to God" by Jerry Schroyer for more info.)

God's judgment on Bar-Jesus was very appropriate – physical blindness to illustrate the spiritual blindness he already had (Acts 13:11-12). Everyone present saw God's power defeat Satan's power and that opened the way for the gospel to spread in that area. Hopefully his time in darkness brought Bar-Jesus to a realization of the truth and he found the true light in Jesus.

7. PHILIPPI MEDIUM (Acts 16:16-18)

Paul and Barnabas continued their mission trip for about a year and a half (Acts 13:13 – 14:28). Wherever they went the gospel spread and Jews and Gentiles came to Jesus for salvation. In fact, so many Gentiles were coming that the leaders of the Jewish Christian church met in Jerusalem to consider if Gentiles would have to become Jews also in order to be Christians (Acts 15). The clear answer was no. Paul then went back to the churches he had started on his first missionary journey, taking Silas and later Timothy with him (Acts 16:1-1-5). God led them through Asia Minor and across the sea to Philippi which was in Europe (Acts 16:6-12). They established a small church in the home of Lydia (Acts 16:13-15). This sets the background for the power encounter between Satan's forces and God's people, about two years after the previous encounter with Bar-Jesus.

When going to the place of prayer in Philippi, Paul and those with him were met by a young slave girl who "had a spirit by which she predicted the future" (Acts 16:16). This Greek word is "python." Thus, she was a "pythoress," a name used to refer to those indwelt by a spirit from the Greek god Apollo who gave oracles. This is the name of the dragon/snake, Apollo, killed at Delphi who guarded the priestess there and gave her oracles. Apollo was worshipped as the python god at the shrine of Delphi in central Greece. This Apollo spirit was the spirit by which the 'god' spoke to

the person he indwelt, enabling them to pronounce oracles. The people thought Apollo was speaking through this young slave girl, especially since it was probably a male voice they heard coming out of her. While there are many explanations to what some today call 'speaking in tongues' (see with 1 Corinthians 11-13), there are those who feel that at least some of what was happening in Corinth, and even today, is done by these types of demons. That is why we must test the spirits (1 John 4:1). Paul knew the true source of the slave girl's oracles was a demon. The girl was just their medium.

A medium is someone through whom a demon speaks (Isaiah 8:19; Leviticus 19:31; 20:27; Deuteronomy 18:9-13; Acts 16:16-18). For many days she followed them shouting, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who are telling you the way to be saved" (Acts 16:17). The demons immediately recognized Jesus as God and couldn't deny who He was and is. Perhaps some of this has to do with the girl knowing who He is through the demons and wanting to be free from them.

Whatever the cause of her continual comments, Paul became very troubled. It wasn't what she was saying, but knowing that she was demonized that bothered him. The Greek word for 'troubled', *disponeou*, has the idea of grief, pain and anger all together. It describes how the Jewish leaders felt when they heard John and Peter were still preaching (Acts 4:2). Paul was upset because the young girl was being victimized by the demons as well as her owner. Therefore, he turned and said to the spirit, "In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!" At that moment the spirit left her (Acts 16:18).

LESSON FOR TODAY: Paul didn't go out of his way to track down demonic activity, but when it was there he dealt with it. When demons interfered with his ministry or the lives of those he was ministering to, he expelled them. We can and must do the same thing. We don't have to go searching for demons to attack; we are to go about our daily lives and ministry. But when demons interfere with us or those we are ministering to, then we are to remove them.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Notice that Paul cast the demon(s) out in Jesus' name (Acts 16:18). We have no power or authority of our own to do this, only in Jesus. Jesus has given us that same authority to use today (John 14:12; Matthew 28:18-20). Satan deceives us into thinking we are powerless victims but that is a lie. As God's children we have access to the same resources Jesus did when He lived on earth. For more information about this see the following sections: 2. LIFE OF JESUS, C. SPIRITUAL WARFARE IN JESUS' MINISTRY; 6. POWER & AUTHORITY GIVEN (Luke 9:1; 10:1, 17-19).

We have this power available to us as well (Acts 1:8; John 14:12). It is His power that transforms us into a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17) as He gives us new life (Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10). His power helps us have victory over temptations and trials when we rely on it (1 Corinthians 10:13; 2 Corinthians 2:14). He has power to put His divine nature in us (2 Peter 1:4) and give us life abundant now and eternal life in heaven (John 3:16; 10:10).

LESSON FOR TODAY: How did the apostles cast demons out? Paul brought deliverance by a word (verbally, just as Jesus did). He said, "In the name of Jesus I command you to come out" (Acts 16:16-18). Paul was not establishing a pattern for us to following by using cloths to cast out demons. When God was showing everyone that Paul was His spokesman there was a time when just touching a cloth that Paul had used brought deliverance (Acts 19:12). That was a special event, not a pattern to follow! When directed by God, Paul defeated the demons in Elymas (an unbeliever) by making him blind so he'd stop interfering with God's word (Acts 13:6-12).

We have many examples of the disciples casting out demons, too. Jesus gave them power and commanded them to use it (Matthew 10:1; Luke 10:17; Mark 6:7; 16:17). They cast out demons as a regular part of their ministry (Mark 9:38; Luke 10:17). Paul cast out demons (Acts 16:16-18; 19:12) and so did Philip (Acts 8:7). When trying to do it in their own strength (without dependence on God) they failed (Mark 9:18, 28-29).

8. IDOLATRY ATHENS, CORINTH (Acts 17)

Paul and those who went with him then went to Corinth to start a church there. The culture was very sinful with much demonic worship involved in the lives of the people. When they came to Jesus for salvation they still had their demonic openings and involvement. Paul dealt with much of this in his letters to the Corinthians (see with 1, 2 Corinthians). One of his warnings was sacrifices made in pagan worship were really made to demons (1 Corinthians 10:20-21).

LESSON FOR TODAY: Today, too, demons go behind modern 'idols' and take the praise and worship given them. It empowers them to do more evil. False cults and religions do this. We idolize certain people and material objects. God is a jealous God and doesn't want us involved with any kinds of idols at all (Exodus 20:5; 34:14; Deuteronomy 4:24; 5:9; Joshua 24:19).

9. PAUL AT EPHEBUS (Acts 19)

The pagan goddess Artemis was worshipped in Ephesus. The people there were Asiatic and thus animists who were really worshipping demons. She was a widely worshipped deity whose temple in Ephesus was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. She was recognized by her followers as the greatest power in the universe. She was seen as savior, lord and queen and was worshipped by many long festivals. 'Missionaries' were sent out to spread her message. This cult was very influential and very rich.

Of course, the power behind Artemis was demonic, and those who promoted her worship knew it. They used demonic powers to help her reputation, and therefore theirs as well. She was recognized as the goddess over the underworld and the one with authority over all demons. In fact, these demons who served her were given Jewish, Egyptian and Greek names. The 'magic' she had, the supernatural power over natural forces, was demonic.

Because of Artemis, Ephesus became the main center for pagan demonic worship in Asia Minor. Because of its key place in Asia Minor, geographically as well as culturally, Paul visited Ephesus at least twice (Acts 18:19-21; 19:1 – 20:1). Eventually, the center of early Christianity moved from Jerusalem to Ephesus, then later to Rome itself. John and Mary lived in Ephesus. Because of its importance, Satan and his forces did all they could to oppose the Gospel. That is why spiritual warfare came to a head at Ephesus, as can be seen in the book of Acts as well as the epistle to the Ephesians, which was a circular letter read in all the churches in the area.

Luke records several of these power encounters between God and Satan during Paul's first visit to Ephesus. A power encounter is a crisis point occurring in the on-going spiritual warfare between God and Satan. Paul was bringing the kingdom of light into Satan's kingdom of darkness. Satan was doing all he could to keep the area under his control. God gave Paul the ability to show God's greater power by doing "signs, wonders and miracles" (2 Corinthians 12:12; Romans 15:19). Towards the end of Paul's time there, God worked in a special way through Paul to show the people the power of Paul's God and message (see Signs and Wonders).

LESSON FOR TODAY: We see that in cultures today which don't have a Christian heritage or strong gospel witness God still, many times, uses physical healing and, deliverance from demonic influence and even dreams to show His power and bring others to His truth.

POWER ENCOUNTER 1: HANDKERCHIEF HEALING Those who merchandized Artemis made a good profit by selling amulets and charms that claimed to have power to heal. Many of the illnesses were demonic, as were the 'cures.'

LESSON FOR TODAY: Satan can cause illness: crippled limbs (Luke 13:11), Paul's thorn in the flesh (eye disease? - 2 Corinthians 12:7), muteness (sometimes dumbness, too - Matthew 9:32-33; 12:22; Mark 9:17-18,24-25), blindness (Matthew 12:22), seizures (Mark 1:26; 9:17-18,20,22,25; Matthew 17:15,18; Luke 9:39), deafness (Mark 9:17-18,20,25), sores (skin cancer?) (Job 2:7), boils and other painful afflictions (Psalm 78:49 - the plagues in Egypt were demon-caused), physical torments of all kinds (Revelation 9:5,10), painful illness (Job2:7-8), and even death (Job 1:19). Since he can cause these things he can seem to 'heal' them by stopping what he does to cause them in the first place. Only God can heal, but Satan can counterfeit that by making it seem like he heals.

If the God Paul preached was greater than the demons who worked through Artemis, then everyone assumed He would be able to do what Artemis did and heal people. "God did extraordinary miracles through Paul, so that even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were taken to the sick, and their illnesses were cured and the evil spirits left them" (Acts 19:11-12). These free articles of Paul's worked much, much better than Satan's counterfeits.

LESSONS FOR TODAY: This is not a standard way to evangelize or to do deliverance. In fact, Paul probably wasn't aware of it when this began. Perhaps helpers or others took these cloths and gave them to needy friends. God honored their faith and used this to verify His power through His servant Paul. Of course, it wasn't Paul who healed, only God. But this validated Paul's claims to have the best and right power with him. It was a necessary first step to gain a hearing so Paul could spread the good news of Jesus Christ. We must not get involved in objects that seem to have supernatural power. Our full faith and attention must only be on God Himself. Special cloths or tokens, healing rituals, etc. are counterfeit.

POWER ENCOUNTER 2: SONS OF SCEVA As word of God's power through Paul spread, there were those who saw Jesus' name as a magic charm they could use to their own advantage. "Some Jews who went around driving out evil spirits tried to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who were demon-possessed. They would say, 'In the name of Jesus, whom Paul preaches, I command you to come out.' Seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, were doing this. One day the evil spirit answered them, 'Jesus I know, and I know about Paul, but who are you?' Then the man who had the evil spirit jumped on them and overpowered them all. He gave them such a beating that they ran out of the house naked and bleeding" (Acts 19:13).

Sceva, a Jew, was a self-proclaimed chief priest. He claimed to do Jewish exorcism but used occult ways to accomplish this. He thought he would try this new 'charm' so he could have better results in driving demons out, and therefore earning high fees for doing so. However, using Jesus' name just brought him and his sons' misery because they weren't believers. The people learned that 'Jesus' isn't a magic word to use. Only a personal relationship with Him will bring victory.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Often demons work together in cooperation to make it seem like the human they used had the power to cast out demons. Really they were just working together to make it seem that way. One demon would attack a person, then another would indwell a false deliverer so that when the demon was commanded to be gone it would leave. It was all set up to make it look like the person had power to deliver. This deceived the people. But one time the demons from the demonized man overpowered the demonized deliver and beat him up. Demons don't always work together, though. They are filled with hate and jealousy and often take it out on each other.

LESSON FOR TODAY: When we feel confusion in our minds it may be from demonic interference, trying to confuse and mislead us. Other times, though, what we sense as confusion is conflict among the demons themselves as they struggle with each other for authority and influence.

Their self-centeredness, pride and ego aren't just manifested against us but against each other also. They cooperate with each other out of fear and being overpowered, not for any other reason.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Our power and authority are in Jesus and His name, but we are not to use His name as a magic charm. We must always make sure there is no sin in our life, that we are right with God, and, of course, that we are His child through faith in Jesus.

POWER ENCOUNTER 3: BURNING SORCERY BOOKS As it became more and more obvious that God's power shown through Paul was much greater than that the followers of Artemis claimed, many came to God for salvation. "When this became known to the Jews and Greeks living in Ephesus, they were all seized with fear, and the name of the Lord Jesus was held in high honor. Many of those who believed now came and openly confessed their evil deeds. A number who had practiced sorcery brought their scrolls together and burned them publicly. When they calculated the value of the scrolls, the total came to fifty thousand drachmas. In this way the word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power" (Acts 19:17-20).

LESSONS FOR TODAY: "Sorcery scrolls" refers to magic texts, adjurations, formulas, protection rituals, curses, incantations and similar things. Such things exist today as well and have power behind them – demonic power. Keep away from such things. If someone you minister to has them they must be destroyed – anything that can be used by demons to gain access to their lives or family must be destroyed immediately and completely.

When the Jews took possession of Canaan under Joshua they were told to not keep any of the objects they captured. Even animals and children were to be destroyed. They had been dedicated to Satan and were claimed by him. Those who used these things would be opening themselves up to the demonic powers to whom they had been dedicated. Today we must watch for things like literature and objects from other cults and religions, Ouija boards and other occult paraphernalia, pagan objects from primitive cultures, objects from Masonic or other secret societies, some Native American artifacts and the like. Pornography, drug or alcoholic supplies, music with a black or evil dimension, even certain movies or articles of clothing dedicated to darkness can allow access.

The solution is to remove and destroy such objects. Ask for forgiveness for having them, cleanse the room from their presence, take back any access the enemy may claim and dedicate the space as well as yourself to Jesus. Ask Him to show you anything else that needs to be dealt with.

When a room or object is under the control of an evil spirit, dedicating it to God by painting crosses by dipping a finger in oil and making them on a wall is a good practice. Playing Christian music and leaving a small light on also are offensive to the forces of darkness. Pray and quote scripture while making the crosses.

LESSON FOR TODAY: We as a Christian have great power in blessing people, especially our own families. 'God bless you' is more than a slang or shallow comment. There's real power in it when one means it that way. It's a privilege to use and repeat it often to people. Distance doesn't seem to affect it at all. Of course, there is something even more special about touching a person when we pray or ask God to bless them, but when at a distance it carries just as well. The power is in God Who is everywhere (omnipresent). Satan and demons are limited to one place at a time so they are at a distinct disadvantage in this, too.

This extended time in Ephesus turned out to be Paul's last freedom of movement for some time. From Ephesus he went to Jerusalem (Acts 21) where he was falsely charged and arrested (Acts 22). He spent the next several years in prison, finally being transferred to Rome (Acts 23-28) where the book of Acts ends. Paul was eventually released to travel some more, but his health had been broken and the brunt of the load of ministry which he had carried was now spread to many new evangelists and missionaries. In a few years Paul was again arrested and this time put to death

in Rome. But during his travels and imprisonment he wrote letters to churches to stay in touch. We can learn much about spiritual warfare from these letters.

LESSON FOR TODAY: It must have been very frustrating for Paul to have to write letters to people and places he wanted to see in person. No doubt he wondered what purpose God would ever have in that. However, that is what God used to form the majority of the New Testament and its teaching. Were Paul free to visit these places in person, millions of Christians for two thousand years would not have had these priceless letters and their teachings. God always has a purpose in what He does. When things don't seem to make sense to you trust that God knows what He is doing (Romans 8:28; Genesis 50:20).

SPIRITUAL WARFARE TRAINING. At the end of each major section in this paper you will find questions to help you remember and apply what you have learned. You can look back through what you have read for the answers if need be. You need a Bible, a notebook and a pen to do these questions.

1. Why was it so important for the Holy Spirit to come to the believers on Pentecost?
2. What sins were Ananias and Sapphira guilty of?
3. What lessons can you learn from the account of Ananias and Sapphira?
4. List some lessons you can learn from the way Paul and the apostles brought deliverance to those who were demonized.
5. What were the 3 power encounters that took place in Ephesus in Acts 19? What was the outcome and why?
6. Have you ever been or are you now involved in a power encounter with Satan's forces? What can you learn from Acts 19 to help you have victory?
7. Why were the sorcery books burnt? What kinds of objects today should be burnt so they don't allow demonic influence to come?

B. PAUL'S WRITINGS (Epistles)

1. GALATIANS

After Paul's first missionary journey, when the church leaders met in Jerusalem and decided a Gentile did not have to become a Jew to have salvation (Acts 15), Paul wrote his first letter, at least the first to be part of our New Testament. He wanted to get this important message to the churches of Asia Minor (also called Galatia) so he wrote what we call the Book of Galatians and sent it ahead. He traveled back to these places at the start of his second missionary journey (Acts 16-18). Several truths concerning spiritual warfare are included in this book.

Demons counterfeit God's Truth. Paul tells the Galatians "But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned!" (Galatians 1:8) "Angel from heaven" could be one of God's angels, or a demonic counterfeit. Paul's point is that even an angel of God who speaks a different message is not to be believed. Certainly, demons who have another gospel are counterfeit. Works, pride, ritual, etc., do not bring man closer to God – He is found through truth, grace and humility.

Jesus took our curse and broke it. Paul quotes Deuteronomy 21:23, “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree” (Galatians 3:10-13). Jesus has broken any and every curse against us, from sin or from demons or from someone who knowingly or unknowingly curses us.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: For more information on curses and breaking them see *Life of Jesus*, 5. *Gadarenes Demoniac* - Mark 5:1-20; Matthew 8:28-34; Luke 8:26-37, Opening #4.*

2. 1 THESSALONIANS

This second missionary journey of Paul’s took him further east than his first. After revisiting the churches, he started on his first missionary journey in Asia Minor (Galatia), God led him to Greece and the European continent. One of the places he visited there was Thessalonica. Not long after his visit he wrote them the letter we call 1 Thessalonians. Because he left suddenly after a short visit he wanted to write back to them and encourage them to stay faithful in their new life in Christ.

Satan hindered Paul’s plans. Paul recognized that, even though God is sovereign and has ultimate say over everything, Satan’s opposition kept Paul from visiting them again (1 Thessalonians 2:18). God wasn’t defeated but used it for good.

LESSON FOR TODAY: We don’t know what obstacles Satan used or how he accomplished this, but we know God used it for His glory by establishing the church even with Paul not there and with God using Paul’s letters to them to benefit so many Christians over the years (Romans 8:28). God’s purpose is never hindered, but from our perspective it can sometimes seem that the work of God is set back by Satan’s opposition. Don’t be surprised when you are opposed or when God seems to allow the opposition to succeed. He will be the ultimate victor. He is in control of all that happens now as well.

Satan the tempter. Because he was concerned about their faith, thinking the tempter (Satan) might have tempted them, Paul sought to find out how they were doing spiritually (1 Thessalonians 3:5). He knew Satan would attack and do whatever he could to keep the people from growing spiritually.

LESSON FOR TODAY: SATAN’S PURPOSE His goal is to rule the whole world instead of God. He was given authority over this world system by Adam when he sinned (2 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 2:2) and controls our world system (1 John 5:19). He rules over it (Matthew 4:8-9; John 12:31; Luke 4:5-7; John 14:30; 16:11). He is behind its values and world view (James 3:15). Presently he works to deceive the nations (Daniel 10:13,20; Matthew 4:8; Ephesians 6:12; Revelation 20:3,7-8; 16:14; 1 Kings 22:6-7). He leads mankind into idolatry (Psalm 96:5; 106:36-38; Leviticus 17:7; Deuteronomy 32:17). He especially wants to destroy God’s special people: Israel (Revelation 12:13-17; 20:10; 2 Thessalonians 2:9) and the Church.

SATAN’S WORK AGAINST ALL PEOPLE He works against the gospel, hardening hearts to God’s truth (Matthew 13:19-22). He blinds their minds (2 Corinthians 4:3-4; 2 Thessalonians 2:7-10; Luke 8:12; Colossians 2:18). When they hear the truth, Satan tries to snatch it from their minds (Mark 4:15; Matthew 13:19). He denies the truth (Genesis 3:1; 2 Timothy 4:3-4) and promotes false teaching (1 Timothy 4:1-2; 2 Thessalonians 2:9). As is true of any good counterfeiter, he tries to make his deceptions as close to the truth as possible so as to be more deceptive. The authority of the Scriptures, the person and work of Jesus and salvation by grace are areas he especially tries to obscure. Satan brings oppression on everyone he can. He does this through sickness such as dumbness (Mark 9:17-29), blindness (Matthew 12:22), deformity (Luke 13:11-17), epilepsy (Luke 9:37-43) and other ways. He also uses the following to oppress: mental illness (Mark 5:1-20; 9:14-29);

Luke 9:39), sin (Genesis 3:13-24; Ephesians 2:2), lawlessness (2 Corinthians 6:15) and death (Revelation 18:2; 9:13-18).

SATAN'S WORK AGAINST BELIEVERS A primary objective of Satan is to oppose God's work and God's people. He oppresses and leads the persecution against the Jews (Revelation 12:13-17; 20:10; 2 Thessalonians 2:9). He works especially hard against believers, for we are the light in his darkness, the only threat on this work against his kingdom. Since he can no longer attack Jesus directly he does so indirectly by attacking His children. He points out our sin to God (Job 1:6-21; 2 Corinthians 2:11; Revelation 12:9-10; Zechariah 3:1-2) but Jesus is our defense attorney, our Advocate when accused (1 John 2:1). Satan does all he can to oppose and hinder our service to God (2 Corinthians 4:4; 1 Thessalonians 2:18; 2 Corinthians 11:2-7; Zechariah 3:1; Matthew 13:19). He tries to infiltrate the church through false teaching (1 Timothy 4:1-2; 2 Thessalonians 2:9), false teachers (1 Timothy 4:1-3; 1 John 4:1; 2 Peter 2:1-2) and false 'Christians' (Matthew 13:38-40). While not all temptation comes from Satan and demons, he certainly does all he can to entice us into sin (2 Corinthians 2:11; 1 Timothy 3:7; 2 Timothy 2:26; 1 Corinthians 7:5) as he did when tempting Jesus. He will use our sin nature (James 1:14-15), the world system (1 John 2:15-16) or attack directly through demons (1 Corinthians 7:5). He can cause and use anger (Ephesians 4:27), pride (1 Timothy 3:6; 1 Chronicles 21:1; 1 Timothy 3:6), immorality (1 Corinthians 7:5), lies (Acts 5:1-3), doubting God's Word and goodness (Genesis 3:1-5; Luke 4:9-12), 'miracles' to deceive (Mark 4:8-9; 2 Corinthians 11:13-15; 2 Thessalonians 2:3,9-11), hypocrisy (John 8:44; Acts 17:22), self-sufficiency (1 Chronicles 21:1-7), worry and fear (1 Peter 5:7-9; Hebrews 2:14; Psalm 23:4), lack of faith (Luke 22:31-32; 1 Peter 5:6-10), physical affliction (Job 1:6-22; 2:1-7; John 8:44; 1 Corinthians 5:5; 1 Timothy 1:20) and sin of any kind (1 Thessalonians 3:5; Matthew 4:3; 1 Corinthians 10:19-21, 2 Corinthians 11:3,13-15; 1 John 3:8).

DEMON'S WORK AGAINST ALL Demons carry out Satan's commands and wishes. After enticing Adam and Eve to sin and getting authority over the world from them, Satan and his forces have continued trying to keep worship from God and getting it for themselves. They blind the minds of unbelievers (2 Corinthians 4:4) and snatch the Word from their hearts (Luke 8:12). They do all they can to oppose God's work (Revelation 2:13). Since they can't attack God, they take their anger out on those who are God's -- His people (Jews and Christians today). Satan and his forces tempt Christians to lie (Acts 5:3), accuse and slander them before God (Revelation 12:10), hinder their work (1 Thessalonians 2:18), do anything possible to defeat them (Ephesians 6:11-12), tempt to immorality (1 Corinthians 7:5) and incite persecution against them (Revelation 2:10). They promote human wisdom (1 Corinthians 2:12; 2 Corinthians 11:4; 1 John 4:5-6). They influence and control the nations (Daniel 10:13,20; Ephesians 6:12) and mislead them so they can destroy them (Isaiah 9:14). It must always be kept in mind, however, that God is in sovereign control. They can do nothing without God's permission (Job 1:6-12).

Physically they can give superhuman strength (Mark 5:4); physically torment (Revelation 9:5,10), emotionally torment (1 Samuel 16:14-23); do miracles (Revelation 16:13-14; 13:12-15), inflict disease (Matthew 9:33; Luke 3:11,16), indwell people (Matthew 8:28-34) and indwell animals (Matthew 8:31-32).

Emotionally they torment (1 Samuel 16:14-23), cause fear (1 Samuel 18:12,15; 2 Corinthians 11:4; 2 Timothy 1:7; Romans 8:15; Job 4:14-15), cause anger (1 Samuel 18:10-11), cause jealousy (1 Samuel 18:10-15) and harden consciences (1 Timothy 4:2).

Sexually they cause immorality (Revelation 9:21-22; 2 Timothy 3:1-9; 1 Timothy 4:1-3) and cause all kinds of impurity (Zechariah 13:2).

Mentally they cause bondage (2 Corinthians 11:4), influence the mind (Genesis 3:15; Ephesians 6:10-20; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Colossians 1:13), control the mind (1 Corinthians 10:20; 2 Corinthians 4:4), and deceive, mislead and lie to people (1 Timothy 4:1,6; 1 Kings 22:22-23; 2 Chronicles 18:20-23).

Religiously they promote false doctrine (1 John 4:1-3; 1 Timothy 4:1; 1 Kings 22:22; Revelation 16:13), counterfeit the truth (2 Corinthians 10:20-21), promote hypocrisy (1 Timothy 4:2), promote legalism (1 Timothy 4:3), use false prophets and false teachers (1 John 4:1; 1 Kings 22:22-23; 2 Chronicles 18:20-23), use fortunetelling and occult practices (Acts 16:16-18) and promote idolatry while receiving the worship of idols (Leviticus 17:7; Deuteronomy 32:17; Psalm 106:37; Revelation 9:20; Hosea 4:10-12; 5:4; Acts 16:16; 1 Corinthians 10:20).

DEMON'S WORK AGAINST BELIEVERS *They especially work against believers by frustrating and opposing God's perfect will (Acts 16:16-18), putting obstacles in the path of those following God (1 Thessalonians 2:18; Romans 15:22), influencing believers to mislead other believers (Matthew 16:22-23.) and instigating things such as jealousy, pride and disunity (James 3:13-16). They seek to get believers to turn from God and living for Him (1 Timothy 4:1), they can cause physical torment (2 Corinthians 12:7), and they try to get us to operate by our own strength and ability (2 Timothy 3:5). All this will intensify as the return of Jesus gets closer (1 Timothy 4:1).*

3. 2 THESSALONIANS

Soon after writing 1 Thessalonians, Paul wrote another letter to the believers in Thessalonica. He warned them about the coming antichrist who will be used by Satan to try to destroy God's people and kingdom (2 Thessalonians 2:1-12). Paul knows that as the time of Jesus' return gets closer Satan works harder to cause all the damage he can.

4. 1 CORINTHIANS

After finishing his second missionary journey, Paul went back to Antioch for a brief stay. Very soon, though, he went on another, a third missionary journey. During this time, he wrote to what was probably his most problematic church, the church in Corinth. Although believers, the people there were thinking and living as unbelievers. Pride, greed, immorality, selfishness and jealousy were rampant everywhere in the church. Paul wrote them at least 4 letters but God only inspired and included two in the New Testament.

DISCIPLINE OF SIN: In one case, a man was living with his father's wife and the people were proud of this open-minded attitude (1 Corinthians 5:1-2). Paul says they are to exclude him from the benefits of church fellowship to show him the seriousness of his sin and to keep others from being negatively influenced by his example (1 Corinthians 5:3-5). "Hand this man over to Satan" is the way he puts it (1 Corinthians 5:5). The purpose is so that his "sinful nature" (Greek word refers to the physical flesh, home of the sin nature) may be destroyed. Figuratively Paul is saying that Satan's world system will be so bad for him that he'll miss what he had in the church and will repent of his sin and return. Eternal salvation is not at stake here, but daily fellowship and future reward is. Without God's protection people are even more susceptible to demonic attack. God is allowing this so it will bring this man to repentance and back to fellowship with God and the body of believers in Corinth. We see this same thing happening in 1 Timothy 1:18-20.

SEXUAL UNION CAUSES ONENESS: God created sexual intimacy to show the great oneness of believers and Jesus (Ephesians 5:25-32). Satan tries hard to destroy this model by perverting and destroying the model of sex as a special union between a husband and a wife.

LESSON FOR TODAY: *Satan understands the power of human sexuality and uses it to gain control over people through their sin (Ephesians 5:3-6; 1 Corinthians 6:13-20; Revelation 2:14, 20-21). When a demon has access to one person and that person physically unites themself to another person, the sexual union allows that demon (or demons) to also have access to the other person. This does not have to be a marriage relationship, or even a love relationship. Paul says it happens*

even when one has sex with a prostitute (1 Corinthians 6:16). Therefore, sexual activity with anyone before or outside marriage can be a direct opening to demonization. Any demons that have access to the person you are involved with will have immediate and instant access to you as well. It is like a spiritual AIDS infection, but there is no prevention, no 'safe sex' application.

When going through deliverance with someone, or for yourself, it is very important to confess any sexual sin and put it under the blood of Jesus. Then any demons who have claimed access through this sin must be commanded to be gone and not return. Ask to be filled with His Presence instead, and thank Him for His mercy!

LESSON FOR TODAY: *Physical intimacy can lead to demonizing, and so can emotional intimacy. Soul ties in our past can be another opening for demons. Just like they can transfer from one person to another through a physical union like sex, so they can transfer through an emotional union as well. Souls can bond as well as bodies. When one gives their trust to another a bonding is formed. Bonds between mates, parents and children, godly friends, etc., are good and necessary. But when we bond with someone who is demonized then demons can use that as access to the other person (2 Corinthians 6:14-16). Souls become bonded, or tied together. If you have any of these in your past that you feel may not have been godly and healthy, confess them as sin and break the bond in Jesus' name.*

SPEAKING IN TONGUES: Before salvation the Corinthian believers spoke in ecstatic utterances, prophecies, revelations, spells and curses through the 'power' of Artemis (for more information about this see 9. PAUL AT EPHESUS (Acts 19)). This was a regular part of their pagan worship, and was still happening in their church services. They were unable to distinguish demonic utterances in their pagan past from the 'languages' the Holy Spirit gave them as believers (1 Corinthians 12:1-3). Without knowing it, some were saying things that were blasphemous to God, so of course that didn't come from the Holy Spirit. Paul writes 3 chapters (1 Corinthians 12-14) showing the place, purpose and limits of speaking in 'tongues.'

LESSON FOR TODAY: *Does God want us to speak in tongues today? Are they from the Holy Spirit or from demons (or both)? A correct understanding of 'tongues' is important for those involved in spiritual warfare.*

*The Bible teaches that each believer is **filled with the Holy Spirit** at the moment of salvation (1 Corinthians 10:1ff; 12:3; 6:19; Ephesians 4:5; Romans 5:5). One cannot be saved without the Holy Spirit indwelling them (John 7:37-39; 14:16-17; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20). From there on it is not a matter of getting more of the Holy Spirit but of the Holy Spirit getting more of us! As we totally submit and live a holy life He fills and works through us.*

*Then what about Acts 2, 8, 10 and 19, when the Holy Spirit came on those who were already believers? **Acts 2** is a one-time, non-repeatable experience (not even repeated in Acts 8, 10 or 19). Just like the Second Person of the Trinity made a unique, one-time entrance into the world through a virgin in a stable, so the Third Person made His entrance in a unique, one-time way in Acts 2. When Jesus came back to earth after the resurrection and appearances to the apostles, Paul or John on Patmos, He never repeated the virgin-in-a-stable entrance. Acts 2, also, is non-repeatable.*

*Acts 2 is a transition, from Old Testament law when the Holy Spirit only indwelt some believers some times, to New Testament grace, when the Holy Spirit indwells all believers for their whole life. The apostles had already accepted Jesus' claims and were saved in the old dispensation, then when the new dispensation started and the Spirit came they naturally would be the first to receive Him in that way. That is non-repeatable, too. In **Acts 8** we see this same truth applied to half Jews and half Gentiles believers, in **Acts 10** to Gentile believers in Palestine, and in **Acts 19** to Gentile believers outside of Palestine. They were similar to Acts 2 to show that Jews and Gentiles were now equal in the same Body, that the same thing happened to each. Each one showed the changeover from Old*

Testament law to New Testament grace. There had to be a definite time of change, showing the transfer had been made and those believers accepted. Still, what happened was different enough to show that it wasn't Acts 2 repeated again. Those were the only times anything even resembling Acts 2 happened in Acts, and it only happened once for each new group as the gospel spread from Jerusalem. All others received the Holy Spirit immediately at salvation.

Tongues is not proof of Spirit baptism. Many received the Holy Spirit but not tongues: 3,000 on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:38-41), early church believers (Acts 4:31), Samaritans (Acts 8:14-17), Paul (Acts 9:17-18), John the Baptist (Luke 1:15-16), Jesus (Luke 3:21-22; 4:1,14,18,21) and many others (Acts 4:8,31; 6:5; 7:55; 11:24; 13:9,52). Speaking in tongues is never mentioned in the leadership qualities in Titus or 1 Timothy. The Bible makes it clear that obedience is the proof of the Holy Spirit's indwelling, not tongues (Ephesians 5:18f).

Tongues in Acts and Corinth were the same. The same Greek word ('glossa' meaning 'tongue, to speak, language') is always used of known foreign languages and is used in both Acts (2:6-11, etc.) and Corinth (1 Corinthians 14:21; 12:10). In Acts it is obvious that the listeners heard known languages spoken by those who had no previous knowledge of the language. There is no indication that what Corinth experienced was different. It is only the church at Corinth that is mentioned as using tongues, and then many corrections were needed because it was a very carnal church (1 Corinthians. 3:1-3).

The purpose of tongues was to show Jews that God's judgment was on them. They were to spread God's message to Gentiles but failed. God would show He was judging them by bringing His word to them by Gentiles in Gentile languages. This was prophesied in Isaiah 28:9-12; 33:19f; Deuteronomy 28:49; and Jeremiah 5:15. Paul said tongues fulfilled those prophecies (1 Corinthians 14:21-22). When the Jews didn't heed this sign and repent, God's judgment came upon them in 70 AD when Jerusalem was destroyed. After 70 AD there is no instance of tongues being used in the early church. Signs are placed before what they are to mark, not after! Paul said (1 Corinthians. 13:8-12) that tongues "will be stilled." The Greek word, 'pauo,' is in the middle voice; they will stop by themselves and not start again. History records only a very few, very isolated, very minor outbreak of tongues from Acts to the present. These groups were often heretical in some or all of their other beliefs. Obviously tongues did stop. There is nothing to indicate that they would ever begin again, for their purpose has been fulfilled. When Joel 2 talks about the Holy Spirit coming back after the Tribulation, there is no mention of tongues!

Then what about those with the gift of interpretation? First, the Greek word for this refers to someone who interprets known languages, like from Spanish to German. The use of foreign languages was to show God's judgment to the Jews present. The content of the message was God's good news, which the Jews should have been spreading. Since speaking in an unknown language would mean nothing to Gentiles present, Paul said there had to be an interpreter present when the gift was used (1 Corinthians 14:26-28). This was necessary for the weak and immature Corinthian believers (14:20-22) who were ignorant of God's truth (12:13). It was to be kept to a minimum (14:6-12) because it was an inferior gift (1 Corinthians. 14:4). Paul himself only used his ability to speak in unknown languages in Jewish synagogues if he didn't know their language (14:39).

Applying these criteria to tongues today (known foreign language, showing God's judgment on the Jews, used only with Jews present, see as a lesser/minor gift whose use was to be kept to a minimum, etc.) shows that what is happening today is different from what happened back then.

Tongues are not a heavenly language. The Greek word makes it clear they are a KNOWN language (Acts 2:6-11; 1 Corinthians 14:21; 12:10). This is different than the 'groanings' of Romans 8:26 for those are clearly said to be unutterable (not able to be spoken). The "tongues of angels" (1 Corinthians. 13:1) is a hyperbole (overemphasis to make a point) like "faith to move mountains."

Besides, when angels spoke in the Bible, it was always in the known language of those to whom they were speaking.

Tongues are not a private prayer language. All spiritual gifts are given for the sake of others, not the one having the gift (1 Corinthians 12:7, 12f; 14:19,27), that's why an interpreter had to always be present in Corinth (1 Corinthians 14:26-28). Every time the gift of tongues was given in the Bible it was given to a group, not an individual. It was always used in a group, too, with no instance of private use recorded. The tongue is to be controlled by the speaker, not beyond his control (1 Corinthians 14:28-33). Plus, tongues were to be a sign to unbelievers, not believers (1 Corinthians 14:22). Jesus Himself warned about praying words we don't understand (Matthew 6:7). Paul said he always understood what he said when he prayed, even in tongues (1 Corinthians 14:15). When asked how to pray Jesus gave the Lord's Prayer, not tongues.

Dangers of speaking in tongues today. Paul warns about Satan's ability to counterfeit this (1 Corinthians 12:2-3) as he has in other religions and cults today. Tongues is said to be an inferior gift because it is self-centered (1 Corinthians 14:4) and leads to emphasis being put on emotions which can lead people astray (2 Corinthians 6:11-12; Rom 16:17-18). We are told to pray with understanding (1 Corinthians 14:13-17) and control our spiritual gift (1 Corinthians 14:28-40). God arbitrarily chooses which gifts to give to whom (1 Corinthians 12:7,11,18,28). We are told to not seek any particular gift (1 Corinthians 12:31; 14:1-4). Tongues speaking can become a substitute for spirituality (1 Corinthians 14:26-28). Worst of all, it can produce a false security by those who put faith in it as proof that God loves and accepts them. Most who practice tongues-speaking do not believe in eternal security of salvation, so their speaking in tongues becomes their proof of acceptance by God. Our faith must be in Jesus' work on the cross, not in our ability to speak in 'tongues.' Those without the gift can feel pressured to fit in with the rest of the group.

Another danger of tongues, despite Paul saying it is the least of all gifts (1 Corinthians 14:1-25), is that today it is often elevated to equal importance to what God says in the Bible. This happens with 'interpretations of tongues' and those with the 'gift of prophecy' as well. These people can be looked up to and their 'word' taken on the same par as, or even above Scripture. That is a deception from the enemy for NOTHING is to be seen as authoritative as Scripture (Revelation 22:18-19).

I have been told by those who are more experienced in dealing with tongues spirits than I am that these demons are often 'gatekeepers' and keep other demons in. They also call others in and keep them from exiting. Even those who claim to speak in tongues themselves warn about the possibility of demons counterfeiting the experience.

5. 2 CORINTHIANS

Paul soon wrote another letter to the Corinthians, called 2 Corinthians in the New Testament. In it he warned the believers to **be aware of Satan's schemes** so they aren't tricked and defeated (2 Corinthians 2:11). The brother who was living with his father's wife and was disciplined by exclusion from church fellowship (1 Corinthians 5:1-5) evidently repented and was restored to fellowship (2 Corinthians 2:5-6). Paul encouraged them to forgive the man and treat him with love and acceptance (2 Corinthians 2:7-10). If they don't forgive him, Paul says Satan will use that to work against them (2 Corinthians 2:11).

LESSON FOR TODAY: Many believers today are ignorant of spiritual warfare, some even deny it exists, or falsely assume that believers are immune from Satan's attacks. Nothing could be further from the truth. We must be soldiers who know how to use the equipment our commander provides in order to defeat those who would destroy us. Ignorance of how Satan works plays into his

hands and leads to sure misery. Learn spiritual warfare, teach it to others, and use it whenever necessary.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Paul warned them that Satan would use their unforgiveness as an opening to attack them. One of the leading causes of demonizing is unconfessed anger. Anger includes any form of unforgiveness, bitterness, hate, jealousy, gossip, criticism, etc. Paul says these can "give the devil a foothold" (Ephesians 4:26-27). He tells the Corinthians that if they don't forgive each other Satan will use that to "outwit" them (2 Corinthians 2:10-11). Jesus Himself said that those who don't forgive others will be turned over to tormenting demons to bring them to repentance (Matthew 6:14-15; 18:34). This anger includes anger toward others, parents, self or God. There can be no removing demons who claim this access until all anger is truly confessed and put under the blood of Jesus. This is one of the first things that usually comes up when I counsel people and pray for their deliverance. Do NOT take this lightly! Don't rush through this step. Spending time praying for God to show anger and unforgiveness is time well spent. (For more information see 7. The Book of Ephesians.)

Satan blinds unbelievers so they don't see the truth of the Gospel. "The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God" (2 Corinthians 4:3-4). Satan does all he can to keep men from leaving his kingdom/army and joining God's kingdom/army.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Satan is really fighting a battle on three levels. There is the cosmic battle: 1) Satan and demons battle against God and angels in the heavenlies (Daniel 10:1-14), the battle against believers on this earth (Ephesians 6:10-12) and 2) an entirely different war against unbelievers to keep them in his kingdom and use them for its advancement (Acts 26:18). Our battle against him in this life is really just a faint reflection of the real battle which takes place in the heavenlies. Although fiction, Frank Peretti's books "This Present Darkness" and "Overcoming the Darkness" help show us what these conflicts may look like. As you battle, remember the angels are battling with you and for you, you are not alone, you are just part of the greater cosmic conflict for control of the universe, and you are on the winning side! Never give in!

LESSON FOR TODAY: All unbelievers are children of Satan (Matthew 13:37-39; John 8:44; 1 John 3:3-10) and are in Satan's kingdom (Colossians 1:12-14). All are bound by Satan (Acts 26:18) and blinded by him (2 Corinthians 4:3-4; 3:14-15) and are under Satan's power (1 John 5:19). They belong to him (Matthew 12:22-29) and are enslaved in a world system controlled by Satan (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; 1 John 5:19). Believers are a small minority, living in enemy-occupied territory, seeking to free some of those bound in darkness so they can find freedom in Christ. Meanwhile those who oppose us do all they can to dim our light and render us ineffective in our battle against them. That is where we find ourselves. That is our battle. We do not live in a neutral world nor are people nonaligned until they decide who they will follow. Everyone who has not committed their lives to Jesus is under the power of darkness and under judgment (John 3:16-21). Every one of them needs rescuing by us!

LESSON FOR TODAY: Since all unbelievers are in Satan's possession, does that mean that all of them are demonized? Not all have had their lives invaded to the greatest extent, but without Jesus' protection and God's power they are potentially open to demonizing to one degree or another. They still have the image of God in them which we all have, and they have a free will to use to make wise choices. That can limit the amount of influence demons can have over them. But we must always be aware of the demonic when we witness to or counsel someone who is not a believer. That is why Paul's strong works about being 'unequally yoked' carry so much weight today (2 Corinthians 6:14-16). "Do not be yoked together with unbelievers." This isn't just about marriage, but about business partnerships, close friendships, soul ties and the like. As believers we cannot be closely bound to those who are closely bound to demons.

LESSON FOR TODAY: If you are a believer then you have left Satan's kingdom of darkness (Ephesians 2:1-10) and deserted his army, choosing instead to join the forces of his arch rival. If you think he will take that lightly and leave you alone, that he will do nothing to retaliate and render you ineffective for God, then you are greatly mistaken (Daniel 10:10-21; Acts 13:6-12; 16:16-24; 19:11-18). He is totally committed to your destruction (Ephesians 6:10-18). That is why it is imperative to learn to fight. In addition, we still fight our old sin nature (Romans 7:14-25), so in reality we are fighting a battle on two fronts: Satan and our flesh. Often they combine and make things that much harder on us!

LESSON FOR TODAY: When a blind person does not see the sun shining, that is no reflection on the brightness of the sun but rather on the inability of the person to see it. The same is true of spiritual things. Satan is the ruler of the kingdom of this world (2 Corinthians 4:4) and in authority over it (Luke 4:6). Naturally he wants to keep his subjects in darkness, which he does. In addition, our sin nature keeps us from coming to God for salvation. It is only as His Spirit works in us to draw us to Him that we come (John 6:37-46; 15:16, 19; Ephesians 1:3-6, 11; Romans 9:23; Acts 16:13-15). Still, man has a free will to choose or reject salvation (1 Timothy 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9; Acts 2:21; John 3:14-16; Exodus 8:15, 32). Somehow, even though our brains are not great enough to understand how it can be, both God's sovereignty and man's free will choice are true (John 6:37, 44, 47; Romans 9:1-23). It should not bother us that there are some things about God and His working that we are unable to understand for He is God (Daniel 4:35; Isaiah 55:8; Romans 11:34; 9:14-16; Isaiah 40:13, 2 Corinthians 2:16). Both are true, and when we get to heaven we will see how that can be (1 Corinthians 13:12).

It is imperative that we pray for those who are blinded. Pray that God would roll back the blindness for a time so they can clearly see the claims of the Gospel and make a free will choice to accept or reject Jesus. We can't pray for God to make them believe, for God will not violate a person's free will choice, but we can pray they can unmistakably see the issues so they can make their own choice. Now having said that, we must acknowledge that sovereign God will make sure every person who ever lived understands the issues and makes his or her own choice. No one will stand before Him in judgment and say they didn't know or didn't have a chance. Everyone will acknowledge God is just in condemning them for they had a chance to turn to Him but, of their own free will choice, turned it down. This whole issue takes great wisdom and none of us can really understand all of it. What we do understand is that God is fair and just, He doesn't want anyone to go to hell, and the proof of that is that He paid for our sins voluntarily when He wouldn't have had to. His love and justice have been proven and we cannot question that. Just because we cannot understand all He understands is no reason to doubt His goodness (see note on Genesis 3:1-7, SIN ENTERS THE HUMAN RACE).

Taking thoughts captive. Paul clearly states that Christians battle an unseen enemy, Satan and his demons "For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds." (2 Corinthians 10:3-6). There are powers that set themselves up against God. They use thoughts which lead to sinful actions. Actions start with thoughts, so the key is to have victory over the thoughts before they develop into actions.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Satan can and will use thoughts inserted into our minds to control us. He will use worldly philosophies and views to get access to and control of us. The majority of demonizing consists of demons putting thoughts into a person's mind or snatching thoughts out of a person's mind. While they don't have access to our minds and thoughts to the same extent that God does, the Bible makes it clear there is some access. Jesus said this in the sower and the seed: "Satan comes and takes away the word that was sown." (Mark 4:15). David's thought to take a census was demonic (1 Chronicles 21:1ff; 2 Samuel 24:1ff). So was Ananias & Saphira's greed (Acts

5:3) and Saul's jealousy/anger (1 Samuel 16:14-23). That's why, when talking about spiritual warfare, Paul says we are to "bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ." (2 Corinthians 10:4-5). Not only can Satan's forces put wrong thoughts into our minds, they can snatch right thoughts out of our minds (Mark 4:15) so we forget them.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Feelings and emotions are fine, important and necessary. They are icing on the cake of life. They add color and enjoyment to life. God created them for this purpose. But He didn't create them to be the source of our decision-making. Our feelings should be dependent on our rational thought. When our feelings get ahead of it or away from it then trouble comes. For example, you know in your mind that you are an OK person, yet in your emotions you fear you will be rejected. When feelings aren't founded on the truth they can easily mislead. The truth is that you are a fine person, but your emotions reject that truth and try to do the 'thinking' themselves. We need to let our mind explain reality to our emotions. We must be very, very careful not to follow our emotions when they differ from our rational thoughts. One of the greatest needs of our emotions/feelings is security.

Paul's demonizing. Paul shares part of his own testimony about God's grace when he writes this letter to the Corinthians. He tells about his own personal battle with demons. "To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong" (2 Corinthians 12:7-10).

Clearly believers can be attacked by demons, for Paul says his battle was with a "Messenger" (literally 'angel') of Satan. But God was in control and, like with Job, allowed this for His glory and Paul's growth. God is more concerned in making us what we need to be than giving us what we want to have - a nice, easy life.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Sometimes God has a greater purpose than casting out every demon as soon as we pray. Sometimes complete deliverance never comes, like with Paul in this passage. Paul testifies God then provides the grace needed to withstand. God wants us to learn to depend on Him (Psalm 119:59,92). Of course, if the demonic opening is allowed to continue then the demonizing will continue, too (Psalm 94:12-16; 81:11-14).

LESSON FOR TODAY: God does not want us to know what Paul's 'thorn in the flesh' was, just that it was exceedingly painful and that he really wanted freedom from it. God allows different 'thorns' in each of our lives for He knows what we need to keep coming back to Him. If you haven't been healed (spiritually, emotionally or physically) that isn't because of lack of faith on your part, but because it is God's perfect will for you, your growth and your testimony.

6. ROMANS

Not long after writing to the Corinthians, Paul wrote to the Romans. He had been wanting to minister in this great center of civilization for many years but God always has kept him from doing so. Eventually he arrived as a prisoner after a shipwreck, but for now he wants to let them know he won't be coming and why. Instead of speaking to them in person, again he is limited to sending a letter. But what a letter it has been for mankind! The book of Romans is a very key part of God's Word to us through the centuries. Paul's loss is our gain. As would be expected, Paul refers to demons and spiritual warfare in this great epistle several times.

Fear. Paul reminds his readers that God does not give us fear (Romans 8:15). Any fear we entertain comes from the flesh, our sin nature, the part of us that tends to sin. We had this before salvation and still have it after salvation.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Fear is one of Satan's biggest weapons. Demons are often behind it and use fear to control us when our faith is weak (Romans 8:15). If it takes the form of insecurity, anxiety, worry, preoccupation with problems, or whatever, it is still fear. Demons put fear of David into Saul (1 Samuel 18:10-15) and put fear and terror into Eliaphaz by gliding by his face (Job 4:15). Anything not of faith is sin (Romans 14:23). God does not give us fear (2 Timothy 1:7; Romans 8:15), so if you experience fear realize it is not from God but from Satan. This doesn't mean it is always through demonizing, for you can be attacked with fear without being demonized.

Fear takes root when we choose to focus on circumstances instead of God. Peter walking on water is a good example. When his eyes were on Jesus, his faith was strong, but when he looked at the waves they grew (in his mind) to be greater than Jesus' power. Thus, he started sinking. He then did the right thing, though, and got his eyes back on Jesus.

Dream with me for a minute. Suppose as a young child you had a father who loved you more than anything and constantly showed it. He was always there for you, always showing his love, enjoying you and laughing with you. Whatever you needed he was there to help and supply. How would that make you feel? How can such a relationship benefit a child as they grow up? There is something down deep inside all of us that would love to have someone we could trust, someone to take care of us, someone to always be there no matter what. Then we wouldn't need to try to be in control of things we fear. Control is a poor substitute for love and trust. It may have seemed necessary in your past but isn't necessary anymore!

Trust is the antidote to fear. *How can we understand trust, what it means and how it works? I think understanding how a family should work is the best answer. God established a family relationship to answer all those questions. He is the Father; we are the children. Do your children trust you? What do they have to do to earn your love? What do you expect of them? It's exactly the same with us and God. Jesus says we are to be like little children in order to learn faith and trust. Let your children teach you. Put yourself in their position - with a Perfect Father.*

Satan defeated by God's people. Paul reminds the struggling believers that, although it may seem like Satan is winning at the moment, it won't always be that way. "The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet" (Romans 16:20).

LESSON FOR TODAY: Satan has already been defeated at the cross (Hebrews 2:14-15; Colossians 2:15; Ephesians 4:8). In the future he will be crushed and removed forever (Revelation 20:1-3, 10). Now, in the present, we have authority and power over him in Jesus' name (John 14:12; Matthew 28:18-20; Luke 9:1; 10:1, 17-19; Acts 1:8). God uses us to gain victory over Satan even today. His future fall and removal are sure. It's just a matter of time.

7. EPHESIANS

After writing to the Corinthians and Romans, Paul headed back to Jerusalem where he was falsely arrested and kept in prison for several years. Finally, he was transferred to Rome for trial. In prison at Rome Paul wrote four very important letters, his prison epistles. They are Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians and Philemon. Ephesians was written about four years after Romans.

Much spiritual warfare had taken place when Paul was in Ephesus (see Acts 19 above). It's been about seven years since those power encounters, but the warfare is still going strong. So, Paul writes to encourage and help the Ephesians believers in their spiritual warfare.

Satan's world system. Unbelievers are not only misled by demons, but actually energized and used by them to promote Satan's ungodly world system (Ephesians 2:20). Satan is called "the ruler of the kingdom of the air" and "the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient" (Ephesians 2:2), two of numerous names for Satan.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Looking at the various names of Satan help us understand his character and work better.

Abaddon, Apollyon (Rev 9:11) Abaddon is the Greek form and Apollyon is the Hebrew equivalent. These words mean 'destroyer,' 'destruction.' This title stresses his work of destruction; he works to destroy the glory of God and God's purpose with man. He further works to destroy societies and mankind.

Accuser of the Brethren (Revelation 12:10) The Greek word for "accuser" is *kathgor*, which refers to one who brings condemning accusations against others. In view of Job 1 and 2, this is also an attempt to malign the character of God and His plan.

Beelzebul (Matthew 12:24; Mark 3:22) Three possible spellings of this word each have a different meaning: (1) Beelzebul means "lord of the dung," a name of reproach. (2) Beelzebub means "lord of the flies." Either one of these are names of reproach and of uncleanness applied to Satan, the prince of the demons and uncleanness. Beelzeboul, means, "the lord of the dwelling." This would identify Satan as the god of demon possession. This spelling has the best manuscript evidence behind it.

Belial (2 Corinthians 6:15) This name means "worthless" or "hopeless ruin." The personification of worthlessness, hopeless ruin and the source of all idolatry and religion which is also hopeless or futile.

Devil (Matthew 4:1, 5, 9; Ephesians 4:27; Revelation 12:9; 20:2) "Devil" is the Greek word *diabollos* which means "slanderer, defamer." This accentuates his goal and work to impugn the character of God.

Dragon (Revelation 12:7) The Greek word is *drakon* (as in *draconian*) and refers to a "hideous monster, a dragon, or large serpent." This word stresses the cruel, vicious, and blood thirsty character and power of Satan.

Evil One (John 17:15; 1 John 5:9) The Greek *poneros* means "wicked, evil, bad, base, worthless, vicious, degenerate." It points to Satan's character as active deception and counterfeiting God.

False Angel of Light (2 Corinthians 11:14) One of his purposes is to make men as much like God as he can, but always without God. So, he will copy as much of God and His plan as he can, but he will always either distort, pervert, substitute or leave out those key ingredients of truth that are vital to the plan of salvation and sanctification through Christ.

Father of Lies (John 8:44) Using his network of deception through demonic forces and misled people, he promotes false doctrines in the name of God.

God of This World or Age (2 Corinthians 4:4) The fact Satan is called the god of this world (Greek, *aionos*, "age, course") may emphasize Satan's rulership over this final period or economy which is so marked by a growing increase in apostasy, deception, and moral decay.

Lucifer (Isa. 14:12) The Hebrew word for Lucifer is literally "the shining one." This name draws our attention to his pre-fall condition and to the nature of the cause of his fall - pride.

Prince or Ruler (John 12:31) The Greek literally means, "the ruler of this world system." This points to Satan as the head and energy behind the arrangements of things as they are in the world today.

Prince of the Power of the Air (Ephesians 2:2a) This points to Satan as the head of the demonic hosts which includes all the fallen angelic beings who operate night and day in our immediate spiritual atmosphere-an atmosphere of demonic influence controlled by Satan.

Satan (Job 1:6-9; Matthew 4:10) The title "Satan" occurs 53 times in the Bible. The primary idea is 'adversary, one who withstands.'

Serpent (Revelation 12:9) This name for Satan looks back to Genesis 3 and the temptation in the Garden.

Tempter (Matthew 4:3; 1 Thessalonians 3:5) This title reveals him in another of his primary activities as seen from the very beginning with Eve in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3).

God shows demons His greatness through us. "His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms" (Ephesians 3:10). "Rulers and authorities" refer to the breakdown of Satan's organization of demonic forces (see below under Ephesians 6:10).

LESSON FOR TODAY: ALL powers are under God's authority (Ephesians 1:22), but not yet brought under His final control (Ephesians 6:12). God allows them freedom as He respects mankind's free will. He allows man the choice to follow Satan or not. To remove or limit Satan would limit man's free will choices and God will not do that. We are living and building God's Kingdom of light in the middle of Satan's kingdom of darkness. Therefore, they can clearly see what we are doing – they carefully watch so they can destroy our work. But by our lives, our faithfulness and Christlikeness, we proclaim God's power and greatness. Our victory over their work reminds them of their ultimate final defeat and demise. Many demons, however, are ignorant of this fact, so by our small victories over them now we show them of God's sovereign control and final defeat of them. Satan, the great deceiver, has deceived many of his own demons about their final defeat. Thus, by our lives and our words, we proclaim God's victory over them.

Anger as a foothold. Many verses warn about the danger of unconfessed unrighteous anger and how demons can use it to gain access to the angry person (2 Corinthians 2:10-11). "In your anger do not sin: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold" (Ephesians 4:26-27).

LESSON FOR TODAY: Anger comes from mishandling hurt and pain. Instead of feeling the hurt we turn it into anger for revenge or control. This allows demons to use it as an opening. There is a lack of control that opens the door. Also, it is almost like a prayer for power to hate someone, and demons seek to answer that prayer. They made Saul angry at David, so much so that he tried to kill David (1 Samuel 18:10-11; 19:9-10). Paul says there is a very close connection between anger and demonizing (Ephesians 4:27).

Pain must be handled as pain, not turned into anger. You can't bury something alive and think you are getting rid of it. The hurt must be dead - faced, admitted, healed, removed, forgiven. When a person buries hurt alive it keeps poisoning everything until it is dug out and destroyed.

While there is a legitimate use for anger ('righteous indignation'), most of what we experience is not righteous. Anger is a secondary emotion, unlike fear which is a basic emotion. Wrong anger is always the result of mishandling another, deeper emotion like fear or pain. Let's take pain, first of all. When a person hits their finger with a hammer what do they do? Usually, they get angry. What they feel is pain, but it comes out as anger because anger is a much easier emotion to handle than pain. When someone says something critical or threatening it hurts, but the natural response in many is to get angry. That way they don't have to face the pain – but it stays and causes more and more anger. That's where fear comes in. It's not just pain that causes anger, but fear of pain. Fear is at the root of anger in other ways as well. In order to manage our fears we try to control our lives and

circumstances. We feel that is necessary to prevent pain and other things we fear. We use anger as a control tool. The adrenalin rush makes us feel in charge instead of a victim. We learn that people can be manipulated and controlled by our anger (or the threat of it) and we use that to control as well. This is another reason why it's important to deal with and get victory over the fears down inside. When they go, the anger and control issues will become much more manageable. A person can't stop their anger as long as what causes it is still inside pushing it out. They must get the root cause out, and that is where dealing with the fear comes in. (For more information see 5. 2 Corinthians.)

SPIRITUAL WARFARE TRAINING. Answer the following questions. Send the answers to me if you want and I'll offer comments and suggestions.

1. List some of the ways Satan and demons work against believers.
2. What exactly was the 'gift of tongues' in the book of Acts?
3. What was its purpose?
4. What were some of the restrictions that Paul placed on its use?
5. Why is fear one of Satan's most powerful weapons?
6. When or where do you most struggle with fear?
7. What can a Christian do to have victory over fear?
8. What is the root cause of anger?
9. How can we have victory over anger?

OUR GOD-GIVEN ARMOR FOR SPIRITUAL WARFARE

BACKGROUND TO THE ARMOR OF GOD

Paul included his most complete account of how to win spiritual battles in his letter to the Ephesians (Ephesians 6:10-18). In light of all the warfare going on in Ephesus this is very appropriate. Writing from prison in Rome, chained to a Roman soldier who was guarding him, Paul must have looked for a way to convey what he wanted to say about spiritual warfare in terms the people would understand. While looking at his guard, he applied the pieces of equipment that Roman soldiers used to those that Christian soldiers use.

Paul knew that Roman soldiers didn't supply their own equipment, it was provided by their commander. Thus, he starts by telling his audience that it is God's power and strength that gives us victory (Ephesians 6:10; Philippians 4:13; 1 John 4:4). We have the same power that raised Jesus from the grave (Ephesians 1:18-23; Hebrews 2:14-15). Our victory comes from God – He provides the equipment necessary to achieve it.

However, just because equipment is provided doesn't mean Christian soldiers use theirs appropriately, or even use it at all. It is Satan's schemes (Ephesians 6:11; 2 Corinthians 2:11) that deceive and trap us, like a hunter seeking to trap an animal. Therefore, it is up to us to use the power and equipment God provides – all of it ("full armor").

LESSON FOR TODAY: What makes this an even more difficult battle is that our enemy is not a physical soldier whom we can see and fight in our power, rather it is a spiritual enemy, a demonic power (Ephesians 6:12). "Rulers ... authorities ... powers ... spiritual forces" refer to various groups of demons in Satan's organization. Demons are organized according to their power like an army: generals, majors, captains, lieutenants, sergeants and privates. The generals and majors oversee

large geographical areas or philosophical ideologies. The lowest group are the privates, demons with names like Lust, Greed, Pride, Fear or Self-Destruction. These are the ones we usually deal with in a personal way when we are involved in our spiritual warfare.

LESSON FOR TODAY: When a person is demonized, there is a ruler (lieutenant or sergeant) who has a group of other demons (corporals and privates) under him. They set up their stronghold and each demon present is chosen for the particular focus of the work he does. Under the guidance of the ruler, they work together to accomplish the mission of the group which is always the destruction of the person they are attacking. The ultimate goal is the death of the person, but since they can't take a life they seek to make life so miserable that only death seems to hold hope of escape. Their goal is to cause the person to take their own life. Until they can get a person to that point they seek to make his witness for Jesus ineffective and his life as painful and empty as possible. For example, "Death" is often the ruler because Satan's purpose is to have the believer dead. He may bring demons of fear and rejection to move the person toward suicide, or addition or self-hate to encourage them to overdose. He will also use demons of deception, lies, lust, overeating, etc., to move the person to a premature death.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Paul says we are in a 'struggle' (Ephesians 6:12). This word refers to a fight to the death. Satan assigns demons to destroy each believer, their family and their church. We are in a life and death struggle, but often we don't realize how serious our enemy is about our destruction.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Not all problems and struggles are from Satan. While we want to know what he does so we can defeat him, we don't want to give him and his demons more credit than is due them. When he is bound, man's sin nature will still lead him into sin without Satan's help (Revelation 20:1-3).

Before listing the pieces of equipment available to us, Paul wants to emphasize the importance of Christian soldiers standing firm against any attack the enemy launches at them. Three times he commands us to "stand" (Ephesians 13-14a).

LESSON FOR TODAY: We are to be alert and ready, not sitting or lying down sleeping. We shouldn't be caught off guard but must be alert. Nor should we retreat in fear or defeat. Yet the truth is that the stronger we stand the hotter the battle will get for the harder the demons will attack. The battle will never end until our Commander comes and takes us home. Our fight here will be over when we are promoted to heaven at death, or when Jesus returns, but not before.

Paul then specifically states each piece of equipment God provides for His soldiers. **"Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, 15 and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. 16 In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. 17 Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. 18 And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints"** (Ephesians 6:14-18).

THE HELMET OF SALVATION (Ephesians 6:17) The helmet Roman soldiers wore was made of metal. An enemy would lift his heavy four-foot-long sword over his head with two hands and bring it straight down on the Roman soldier's head. The helmet was to protect his head from these attacks. Without proper protecting the damage done would be devastating!

LESSON FOR TODAY: Satan attacks our mind and thoughts whenever possible, for the damage done there can be tremendous. Demons seek to put thoughts of doubt, fear, anger,

confusion, lust, greed, pride or any other sin in our mind. We must know God's truth to have protection and victory. Our spiritual battles are won or lost in our minds first of all.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Often the thoughts that defeat us have been with us for many years, even since early childhood. Quite often they are thoughts others in our family struggle with as well – generational sins passed down through our ancestors (Exodus 20:4-5; 34:6-7; Deuteronomy 5:8-9). (For more information see under Old Testament, Moses (Exodus – Deuteronomy). See also Mark 5, Causes of Demonizing)

LESSON FOR TODAY: The solution to victory over demonic thoughts placed into our minds is to 1) close the door that let them in by confessing as sin any thoughts you entertained that were not godly (1 John 1:9). Know in your mind that they can't defeat you. Don't let them put fear or confusion into your mind. God has given us the power and authority to command them to be gone in His name (Luke 9:1; 10:1, 17-19). Then 2) pray and take back any claim they make against you through your family line (2 Corinthians 5:17; John 1:12-13). Finally, 3) whenever they knock on the door and try to return, quote Scripture to keep the truth of God's Word in your mind (Psalm 119:9-11) and to defeat them. Knowing and using God's Word, the sword of the Spirit, is key for victory (Joshua 1:8; Psalm 77:12; 1 Chronicles 28:9; Matthew 22:37-38; 1 Corinthians 2:16; Philippians 4:8). That's how Jesus defeated Satan (Matthew 4:1-11). Satan tries to plant doubts about God's word in man's mind. This is how he got Eve to sin. She misquoted God's Word to Satan and when he added to what God said (making God seem like He was keeping something good from her) she didn't recognize the error. Satan was undermining God's Word, and he won! We must be skillful in the use of our sword to win.

When Jesus was tempted He quoted Scripture to have victory over Satan's temptations. Paul says our only offensive weapon is the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God. Psalm 119:9,11 tell us that it's through God's Word that we have victory. When you have these thoughts and attacks use Scripture to have victory. Ask God to give you some verses that will help, write them down and memorize them. Say them over and over when these thoughts attack you. That is the only way to victory.

BREASTPLATE of RIGHTEOUSNESS (Ephesians 6:14) The breastplate was made of small pieces of metal or leather fastened together so they would move and bend but so no arrow, spear or sword could go through them. It was important for it covered the heart and other vital organs. If an enemy soldier could inflict a serious wound to the upper body he would be victorious. In hand to hand combat the enemy would grab the Roman soldier's arm to pull him close and with his sword in try to stab him in the chest or stomach. The breastplate made the difference between life and death.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Suppose a soldier didn't bother putting on his breastplate some morning? Maybe it was too hot or too heavy, or maybe he was in a hurry or lazy. What would happen? That's what happens to us when we don't put on our breastplate. Paul calls it the "breastplate of righteousness" because it refers to our holiness. We are holy because Jesus paid for our sins on the cross, but then we must strive to live a life free from personal sin as well. If we allow sin in our life our breastplate will have openings through which our enemy can attack and destroy us.

LESSON FOR TODAY: If you have any openings demons are using in your life pray to have them removed. It's like opening a door and allowing someone to enter a room, then realize you shouldn't have done that. You need to close the door so no one else enters, but you also need to command those who already have entered to leave. Confessing the sin and taking back the access closes the door. Rebuking and commanding them to be gone cleans the room. The solution for sin openings is to 1) ask God to show you any sin in your life (Psalm 139:23-24), then 2) confess the sin and close the door that let the demon(s) in (1 John 1:9). You must also 3) command any demons working against you or your family to be gone, using the authority we have in Jesus' name and power ((John 14:12; Matthew 28:18-20; Luke 9:1; 10:1, 17-19; Acts 1:8; Psalm 119:9,11).

BELT of TRUTH (Ephesians 6:14) The belt a Roman soldier wore was an important piece of equipment for it held the weapons and equipment which he carried with him. It also held his clothing out of the way so he wouldn't stumble and fall when moving or fighting. In cool weather a heavy cloak was worn and it was easy to get tangled up in it if there wasn't a belt to hold it out of the way.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Paul equates this with knowing God's truth which keeps us from stumbling and falling spiritually. Satan would do anything he can to trip us up with his lies and deceptions (John 8:44). His demons put thoughts in our mind that we'll never have victory but will always be defeated, that God doesn't care about us because our sin is so great, that what we are going through is our own fault and we deserve to suffer, that Jesus isn't God, that we are inferior to others and a failure. Whenever we get a thought that doesn't line up with God's truth as revealed in His Word, a thought Jesus wouldn't have entertained, make sure you reject it.

LESSON FOR TODAY: The way to have victory over Satan's lies and deceptions is by knowing God's truth. 1) Ask God to show you any lies you believe, then 2) confess them as sin and replace them with the truth of God's Word. Find Scripture passages and write them down to carry with you and use them when attacked. Make sure 3) you take back any access any demons have claimed through these lies. Also 4) spend time each day reading and learning God's Word, including marking and memorizing passages which speak to you.

SANDALS of PEACE (Ephesians 6:15) The Romans needed sturdy sandals on their feet for marching and fighting. They would walk in sand, on sharp rocks, and through streams of slippery stones. They could be attacked at any moment so they needed something that would help them stand firm no matter where they found themselves. Their enemy would pick a location to fight that was advantageous for them but not for the Romans. They would do anything to gain an unfair advantage!

LESSON FOR TODAY: Our enemy still does the same thing to us today. He does anything he can to gain even the slightest advantage over the Christian. He tries to choose the footing that will give him victory and take away our peace. When he gets us on his ground he presses the attack. We can be on his ground when something that happened at that place in the past opened the door to demonic control.

Some event may have happened on the land or in the home or room where you live. It could be a violent act, an occult activity, a curse, a dedicating of the property to the powers of darkness or similar acts. Sometimes when we go into a certain neighborhood or home there is a 'sense' of evil, a discomfort in our spirit. In a store that sells New Age materials you may 'feel' different in your spirit, a discomfort. This is the explanation for supernatural apparitions that happen in 'haunted' homes – demonic activity may be present. Some countries and even continents are in extra darkness and bondage and it can be sensed by believers. The message we get is from God's Holy Spirit Who is warning us against evil. (See Mark 5, Causes)

LESSON FOR TODAY: Our solution is 1) to pray, taking back any access the enemy may claim to the property and asserting our right as children of God to claim and use it. Put any other claims under the blood of Jesus and dedicate it to Him for His honor and glory. Then 2) claim the place for Jesus and dedicate it to Him alone. A sign, picture or cross on the wall can be a good visual reminder to all of the ownership of the property by the Lord Jesus Christ.

Pray, even anoint your house and property, inside and out. Walk around your boundaries praying out loud, claiming your property for God and forbidding any demons to have any access to it. Dedicate it to God and invite His presence through all of it. Take back any access any demons may claim to the property and put that access under the blood of Jesus. Break this claim in Jesus' name.

Ask God to put an angelic hedge of protection around it. Do the same in all the rooms of the house, especially the basement (if you have one) or any other dark area. Anoint each room with oil by dipping your finger in any oil and putting a cross on the door, walls, etc. Pray as you did when you walked around the property. If there is one particular part of the house that seems to have demonic presence in an especially strong way, put a night light there so there is always light in to room. You could do that to all the rooms. Demons hate light, and they hate hearing Jesus praised, so you can play praise music in various places 24 hours a day. It can be really soft – they will hear it!

LESSON FOR TODAY: Another way we can find ourselves having poor footing and a harder time standing against Satan, is when we have something in our possession that gives demons access to the place where we are. When the Jews took possession of Canaan under Joshua they were told to not keep any of the objects they captured. Even animals and children were to be destroyed. They had been dedicated to Satan and were claimed by him. Those who used these things would be opening themselves up to the demonic powers to whom they had been dedicated. That's why Paul had the people in Ephesus burn all their occult books (Acts 19:17-20). Today we must watch for things like literature from other cults and religions, Ouija boards and other occult paraphernalia, pagan objects from primitive cultures, objects from Masonic or other secret societies, some Native American artifacts or the like. Pornography, drug or alcoholic supplies, music with a black or evil dimension and similar items can also be used as points of entry by demons.

LESSON FOR TODAY: The solution is 1) to remove and destroy such objects as God leads you as being openings for demonic access. Ask for forgiveness for having them, cleanse the room from their presence, 2) take back any access the enemy may claim and dedicate the space as well as yourself to Jesus. Ask Him to reveal to you anything else that may need to be dealt with.

SHIELD of FAITH (Ephesians 6:16) The equipment mentioned so far (helmet, breastplate, belt, sandals) form an inner wall of defense. There is an outer wall of defense as well – a large shield every Roman soldier carried. He would hold this in front of him for outer protection. Other soldiers would stand or walk alongside him as they all held up their shields forming a wall in front of them, sometimes above them as well. When enemies would throw balls of burning tar at the Romans this outer wall of defense would provide much-needed protection. They would be severely wounded or killed if the hot tar hit them.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Paul says this is like our faith – our outer wall of protection. Having faith in God's sovereign control no matter what is happening is key to our spiritual health. The greater your faith the larger your shield, the smaller your faith the smaller your shield. People with little faith get hit by whatever Satan throws at them: fear, guilt, greed, pride, anger, lust, etc.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Satan attacks us through his demons even if we don't open the door through sin. He attacks everyone in God's army, especially leaders like pastors and missionaries. They don't have to have done anything to open a door – just standing with Jesus will draw attacks because Satan is committed to opposing God's kingdom in any and every way he can. Satan can't attack Jesus directly so he takes his hate and anger out on God's children. That's why the Jews have experienced such persecution through the years. While we were in Satan's army, or even when we were neutral and ineffective for God, demons didn't need to waste time and effort on us. But when we become committed to serving Jesus and building His Kingdom we have spiritual enemies sworn to do anything they can to destroy us. Sometimes these attacks are direct, other times they take a more indirect approach. Our marriage, finances, children or health may be attacked to discourage us and cause us to cease to actively participate in the cause of Christ. This is what happened to Job. These attacks can also take the form of opposition from other people. There may be a person who does what he can to make life difficult for you. Satan attacked Job because he was effective in his faith

and Satan wanted to stop that. That seems to be the cause of Paul's demonic 'thorn in the flesh' attack as well (2 Corinthians 12).

LESSON FOR TODAY: How can we tell what is a normal problem of the flesh or life in a fallen world from what is an attack of the enemy? If it brings a long, ongoing battle, and especially if you are having trouble having victory over it, you should seek for deeper causes. Or if it is a very new, very sudden attack that threatens to overwhelm and defeat you, that can be a sign of demonic attack. If it is something large that comes from nowhere, like a gigantic wave that threatens to wash you away, then suspect spiritual causes as well.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Pray for a hedge of protection around yourself, your property and your family, as Job did (Job 1:45, 10-11). Turn to God's Word for guidance: "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble. Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and He will come near to you" James 4:6-8. "All things work together for the good of those who love God" Romans 8:28. "There is no testing taken you but such as is common to man. God will not allow you to be tested beyond what you can bear, but with the testing will make a way of escape so you can bear it" 1 Corinthians 10:13).

LESSON FOR TODAY: Our defense against these attacks of Satan when our sin isn't the cause is for us to 1) keep our faith strong, keep our eyes on Jesus only (Matthew 14:28-31). Also, 2) pray for His protection for you, your family and your church (Job 1:4-5).

SWORD of the SPIRIT - WORD OF GOD (Ephesians 6:17) So far all the equipment Paul has mentioned has been defensive. Its purpose is to protect the soldier from enemy attack. However, none of it will bring victory, none will defeat an enemy. There is no defensive equipment to protect their backs so retreat was not possible. They could only move forward. They needed an offensive weapon to do that. For the Romans that was their short sword. It is with skillful use of it that the Romans conquered their world.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Paul saw this piece of equipment as so important that he makes sure we know what it stands for – he clearly identifies it as the Word of God (Ephesians 6:17). God's Word is our only way to defeat Satan. Jesus quoted the Bible when attacked (Matthew 4:1-11). The Word is God's sword for us: "For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart." (Hebrews 4:12-13) Make sure you know the Bible and memorize verses so you can quote them when you need them. Quoting Scripture resets our mind to the truth, lets our mind explain reality to our emotions and is God's authority to Satan and demons for it is much more powerful than our words! It is the truth that brings freedom (John 8:32).

USE THE WORD OF GOD Knowing and using God's Word, the sword of the Spirit, is key for victory in our daily struggles (Joshua 1:8; Psalm 77:12; 1 Chronicles 28:9; Matthew 22:37-38; 1 Corinthians 2:16; Philippians 4:8). That's how Jesus defeated Satan (Matthew 4:1-11). Satan tries to plant doubts about God's word in man's mind. That is how he got to Eve. She misquoted God's Word and Satan added to God's Word (making God seem like He was keeping something good from her). Satan was undermining God's Word, and he won! We must be skillful in the use of our sword for Satan can deceitfully twist and misquote God's truth so as to use it for his benefit.

Here are some good verses to memorize to help you through life.

THE BIBLE, GOD'S WORD The Word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. Hebrews 4:12

GOD'S TRUTH FREES "If you hold to my teaching, you are really My disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." John 8:32

SUBMIT TO GOD, RESIST SATAN God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble. Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and He will come near to you. James 4:6-8

GOD IS GREATER THAN SATAN The One who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. 1 John 4:4

GOD WILL MEET ALL OUR NEEDS My God will meet all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:19

RENEW YOUR MIND WITH CHRIST Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is -- His good, pleasing and perfect will. Romans 12:2

POWER OF PRAYER The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. James 5:16

AUTHORITY OVER DEMONS Jesus replied: "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you." Luke 10:18-19

RESISTING SATAN Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men." Matthew 16:23

SIN AS OPENINGS TO DEMONIZING Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me and lead me in the way everlasting. Psalm 139:23-24

CURSES Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree." Galatians 3:13

ANCESTRAL & CHILDHOOD OPENINGS Therefore if anyone is in Christ, He is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! 2 Corinthians 5:17

OCCULT OPENINGS Do not turn to mediums or seek out spiritists, for you will be defiled by them. I am the LORD your God. Leviticus 19:31

NEW AGE OPENINGS Such men (who preach a Jesus other than the Jesus I preached) are false prophets, deceitful workmen, masquerading as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. 2 Corinthians 11:13-15

DELIVERANCE FROM DEMONIZING Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God ... This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God. 1 John 4:1-2

PROMISES SPECIFICALLY RELATED TO SPIRITUAL WARFARE:

Our Adversaries Will Be Defeated: Deuteronomy 32:43; Philippians 1:28; Deuteronomy 33:27

Victory is Promised: 1 Corinthians 15:57; 1 Chronicles 29:11; Proverbs 21:31; 1 John 5:4, 18; Rev. 12:11; 15:2; Romans 8:37; 2 Corinthians 2:14; John 16:33

God Promises to Fight for Us: 1 Samuel 14:47; Jeremiah 1:8

No Weapon Formed Against the Believer Can Prosper: Isaiah 54:17

Jesus Is Constantly Praying & Interceding on Our Behalf: 1 John 2:1; Hebrews 7:25

God Is Always with Us: Matthew 28:20; Hebrews 13:5; Matthew 18:20; John 14:16, 21; Revelation 3:20

Confession Means Cleansing & Forgiveness: 1 John 1:8-9; Thessalonians 5:23-24; 1 Timothy 4:5; Luke 11:13; 2 Timothy 2:21; Jude 1; Romans 8:33-39; Titus 3:4-5

God Hears & Answers Prayer: Matthew 7:7; Luke 11:9; Jeremiah 33:3

We will never Be Separated from God: Romans 8:35-39; John 10:27-29; 3:36; 5:24

God Will Meet All Your Needs: Philippians 4:19; Psalm 84:11; Romans 8:32; 1 Samuel 12:24

No Need to Worry: Matthew 6:25,34; 1 Peter 5:7; Isaiah 40:11; Matthew 5:38-39; Psalm 37:1-9; Jude 24

God Promises His Care & Protection: Deuteronomy 33:27; Genesis 17:1; Jeremiah 23:24; 32:7

Everything Will Work Out Right in the End: Romans 8:28

You Won't Ever Face Anything You Can't Handle with God's Help: 1 Corinthians 10:13

Peace Is Available No Matter What: John 14:27; Romans 5:1; Colossians 1:20; Isaiah 26:3; Philippians 4:6-7; Matthew 11:28-30; 2 Timothy 1:7

Trials Are Allowed to Bring Spiritual Growth: Psalm 119:67,71,75; 94:12; Isa. 48:10; Rom. 5:3

The Believer Has Nothing to Fear: Proverbs 3:25; Isaiah 14:3; Psalm 34:4; Joshua 1:9; 10:8; 23:9-11; Leviticus 26:8; Exodus 14:13; 1 Samuel 17:45-47; 2 Samuel 22:33-35,40-41

We Are Assured of Eventual Triumph Over Our Adversaries: Acts 2:39

Victory Is Guaranteed Us: 1 Corinthians 15:57; Romans 8:37; 1 Chronicles 29:11; 1 John 5:4, 18; 2 Chronicles 32:8; Revelation 3:5; 21:7

God Will Help Us Carry Our Burdens: Nehemiah 4:10; Matthew 11:30; Psalm 55:22

God Promises Comfort: Psalm 23:4; Lamentations 3:22-23; Matthew 5:4; 11:28-30; John 14:16, 18; John 14:16, 18; Romans 15:4; 2 Corinthians 1:3-4; 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17

God Will Give Us Courage: Proverbs 38:1; 1 Corinthians 16:13; 2 Timothy 1:7

Guidance Is Promised: Psalm 32:8; Isaiah 30:21; 58:11; Luke 1:79; John 15:13

God Will Help in Your Sorrow: Proverbs 10:22; Isaiah 53:4; John 16:22; 2 Corinthians 6:10; 1 Thessalonians 4:13; Revelation 21:4

Wisdom Is Promised Those Who Ask: James 1:5; 3:15-17; Luke 16:8; 21:15; 1 Cor. 2:5; 3:19

Rejecting Wrong Thoughts: 2 Corinthians 10:5; Psalm 139:23-24; 141:3-4; Isaiah 26:3-4; Romans 12:2; Ephesians 4:22-24; Philippians 3:18-21

Power of the Word of God: Ephesians 6:17; Hebrews 4:12; Isaiah 55:11; 59:21; Psalm 119:81, 105, 111-112; Proverbs 30:5; Lamentations 2:17; 3:37; Matthew 24:35; John 5:24; 8:51; 15:7; Rom. 10:17

God's Promise of Angelic Intervention: 2 Kings 6:17; Psalm 34:6-7; 91:11; Daniel 6:22; 10:5-14; Acts 12:15

PRAYER (Ephesians 6:18) After having described the equipment God provides for His people, Paul talks about prayer. Any soldier must be in direct communication with those he serves in order to be of use to them. Paul connects the section about our armor with the section on prayer by the use of “and” showing they go together (Ephesians 6:18).

LESSON FOR TODAY: The importance of a good, solid prayer life cannot be overemphasized (Matthew 7:7; Luke 11:9; Jeremiah 33:3). Fasting can be an important part of prayer as well when God directs it. (See 2. Jesus' Temptation, Matthew 4)

LESSON FOR TODAY: God does promise ultimate victory for His people, not always immediately in this life but enough for now and the rest in the future (1 Corinthians 15:57; 2 Corinthians 2:14; 1 John 5:5).

PRAYER OF THE ARMOR OF GOD

Heavenly Father, I desire to be obedient by being strong in the Lord and the power of Your might. I see that this is Your will and purpose for me. I recognize that it is essential to put on the armor that You have provided, and I do so now with gratitude and praise that You have provided all I need to stand in victory against Satan and his kingdom. Grant me wisdom to discern the tactics and deceptions of Satan's strategy against me. I delight to take the armor You have provided and by faith to put it on as effective spiritual protection against the spiritual forces of darkness present in the world today.

I confidently take the **belt of truth** that You offer me. I take Him who is the truth as my strength and protection. I reject Satan's lies and deceiving ways which seek to gain advantage against me. Grant me discernment and wisdom to recognize the subtle and sneaky methods in which Satan seeks to cause me to accept his lies as truth. I desire to believe only the truth, to live the truth, to speak the truth and to know the truth. I worship and praise You that You lead me only in the ways of truth. Thank You that Satan cannot stand against the truth.

Thank You for the **breastplate of righteousness** which you offer me. I eagerly accept it and put it on as my protection. Thank you for reminding me again that all of my righteousness comes from You. I embrace that righteousness which is mine by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is His righteousness that is mine through justification. I reject and repudiate all trust in my own righteousness which is as filthy rags. I ask You to cleanse me of all the times I have counted my own goodness as being acceptable before You. I bring the righteousness of my Lord directly against all of Satan's workings against me. I express my desire to walk in righteousness before God today. By faith I appropriate the righteousness of Christ and invite Him to walk in His holiness in my life today that I might experience His righteousness in total context of ordinary living. I count upon the righteousness of my Lord to be my protection. I know that Satan must retreat from before God's righteousness.

Thank You, Lord, for the **sandals of peace** You have provided. I desire that my feet should stand on the solid rock of the peace that You have provided. I claim the peace with God which is mine through justification. I desire the peace of God which touches my emotions and feelings through prayer and sanctification (Philippians 4:6). Thank You that as I walk in obedience to You the God of peace promises to walk with me (Philippians 4:9). I thank you that, as the God of peace, You are putting Satan under my feet (Romans 16:20). I will share this good news of peace with all others that Your Spirit will bring into my life today. Thank you that You have not given me a spirit of fear but of love and power and a sound mind (2 Timothy 1:7). Thank you that Satan cannot stand against Your peace.

Eagerly, Lord, I lift up the **shield of faith** against all the blazing darts that Satan and his hosts fire at me. I recognize that You are my shield and that in Your incarnation and crucifixion You took the arrows of Satan which I deserved. By faith I count upon You to shield me from above and beneath; on my right and my left; in front of me and behind me, that I might be protected, walled in, and encapsulated by You that Satan may gain no way to hurt me or keep me from fulfilling Your will today.

I am willing that any fiery darts of Satan You wish to touch me should do so, but I shall look upon them as refining fires permitted in Your sovereign control and by Your love for my refining and Your glory. Thank You, Lord, that You are a complete and perfect shield and that Satan cannot touch me apart from Your sovereign purpose.

I recognize that my mind is a particular target of Satan's deceiving ways. I take from You the **helmet of salvation**. I cover my mind and my thoughts with Your salvation. I recognize that the Lord Jesus Christ is my salvation. I fill my head with Him. I invite His mind to be in me. Let me think His thoughts, feel His love and compassion, and discern His will and leading in all things. Let my mind be occupied with the continuing, daily, saving work of my Lord in and through my life. May You meet and defeat all Satanic thoughts in my mind.

With joy I take hold upon the **sword of the Spirit**, which is the Word of God. I affirm that Your Word is the trustworthy, infallible Word of God. I choose to believe it and to live in its truth and power. Grant me the love for Your Word which comes from the Holy Spirit. Forgive and cleanse me from the sin of neglecting Your Word. Create in me a hunger and thirst to study and know Your Word. Enable me to memorize it and to meditate upon its truth. Grant me proficient recall and skill in using Your Word against all of Satan's subtle attacks against me, even as my Lord Jesus Christ used the Word against Satan. Enable me to use Your Word not only to defend me from Satan, but also to claim its promises and to wield the sword strong against Satan to

defeat him, to take away from him ground he claims and to win great victories for God through Your Word. Thank You that Satan must retreat from Your Word applied against him.

Thank You, dear Lord, for prayer. Help me to keep this armor well-oiled with prayer. I desire to pray at all times with depth and intensity as the Holy Spirit leads me. I trust the Holy Spirit to enable me and to intercede for me and through me. Grant me great supplication and burden for others in God's family of blood-washed saints. Enable me to see their needs and to assist them through prayer as the enemy attacks them. All of these petitions, intercessions, and words of praise I offer up before the true and living God in the name and worthy merit of my Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. (Adapted from "Prayers for Spiritual Warfare" by Phillip Kayser and Mark Bubek)

LESSON FOR TODAY: Did the Ephesians use their armor and have victory in their spiritual warfare? Yes and no. Yes, for they didn't fall back into the sins that opened them to demonizing in the past. But also no, for Satan changed his tactics and attacked from within the church instead and this was much more successful (see Revelation 2:1-7; Church at Ephesus). Deceptions and lies from false teachers brought confusion and often disunity among the believers. Satan still attacks from without and within today. It is the subtle attacks within we must be aware of for they often take us by surprise. That makes them more dangerous and deadly. We must know God's Word thoroughly and apply it to all things in life to avoid being deceived.

SPIRITUAL WARFARE TRAINING. Answer the following questions. Send the answers to me if you want and I'll offer comments and suggestions.

1. Describe the way demons are organized.
2. Who provides our armor for spiritual warfare? What is our responsibility concerning it?
3. What is the helmet of truth and why do we need it?
4. What is the breastplate of righteousness and why do we need it?
5. What is the belt of truth and why do we need it?
6. What are the sandals of peace and why do we need them?
7. What is the shield of faith and why do we need it?
8. What is the sword of the Spirit and why do we need it?
9. What are some special Bible verses that help you have victory in your life?
10. What is the place of prayer in spiritual warfare?
11. Which piece of equipment is your weakest? What can you do to use it better?

8. COLOSSIANS

Colossians is very similar to Ephesians. Both letters were written at the same time, to the same geographical area and contain the same truths. Colossians does not have the section on armor that Ephesians has (Ephesians 6:10-18) because it is written to teach truth and counter the heresy of Gnosticism. Paul strongly affirms Jesus' sovereign control over everything in heaven and earth, for He created and is in authority over angels and demons as well as everything else (Colossians 1:15-20). Those influenced by Gnosticism felt Jesus was inferior to angels and demons, so Paul makes sure he corrects this misconception. Satan uses deception to promote these kinds of false philosophies (Colossians 2:8). When the believers in Colossae started believing these untruths they found themselves in bondage again (Colossians 2:8).

LESSON FOR TODAY: Satan is still more successful through deception and lies than direct attack (John 8:44). Direct attack makes the church stronger, like in China and third world countries

today. *Deceptions and partial truths weaken the church, like is often true in the USA and Europe today. We must be convinced that Jesus is totally God (Colossians 2:9) and has all wisdom and knowledge (Colossians 2:3).*

The other two letters written from Paul's first Roman imprisonment, **Philemon** and **Philippians**, don't deal with the issue of spiritual warfare in a direct, obvious way.

9. 1 TIMOTHY

Two years after writing his letters from prison, after he was released and started traveling again, Paul wrote a letter to Timothy called 1 Timothy in our Bibles. Timothy was in Ephesus, that important center of the early church, and was struggling with difficulties in pastoring and leading the people. His youth and shyness, combined with the domineering nature of some people, made leading the church difficult for him.

Church discipline. He refers to two people living in unrepentant sin who have been disciplined by being denied church fellowship (1 Timothy 1:18-20). This is similar to the event in Corinthians (1 Corinthians 5:1-5). The purpose in denying them Christian fellowship and allowing them to be open to the attacks of the world is to remind them of what they had when following Jesus so they will repent and turn from their sin. Eternal salvation isn't in view here, but fellowship with God and other Christians in this life is the issue.

Satan tempts with pride. When Paul gives Timothy guidance about whom to choose for church leadership, one of the important traits is that the person not be a new believer, "or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil" (1 Timothy 3:6). "Conceited" is the Greek word *tuphoo*, literally "to raise a smoke." It refers to someone who is self-centered and focused on themselves. Satan fell because of pride (Isaiah 14, Ezekiel 28) and it is one of his most successful tools today. Those who are given positions of authority or leadership in church are more susceptible to pride, so Paul warns that anyone who isn't spiritually mature must not be put in positions where they may be tempted to be proud. Paul continues on to say "He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap" (1 Timothy 3:7). Satan has traps. His plan is to deceive us so destruction comes. Lust for Bathsheba by David was used by Satan to bring destruction to David (1 Samuel 11 – 24).

Satan and demons use deception. Paul also warns Timothy that demons have deceptive 'spiritual' teachings that seem right to those who aren't spiritually attuned. The purpose is to lead them to abandon the faith (1 Timothy 4:1). Both 1 and 2 Timothy have much to say about false teachers and false teaching. Clearly Satan was behind it all, as he is today..

If one isn't following God, then they are following Satan. If believers have any sin in their lives, demons will somehow make sure others become aware of it and use it to slander the person and the name of Jesus (1 Timothy 5:14). When we don't follow God we are following Satan and his forces, whether we realize it or not (1 Timothy 5:15). There is no neutral ground, no middle territory. It is either one or the other.

10. 2 TIMOTHY

A couple of years later, about 64 AD, Paul wrote his second and last letter to Timothy. It was the last inspired correspondence he ever wrote. It contained Paul's final words to the one who was closer to him than any other human being, his son in the faith, Timothy. In it he warns Timothy of the traps Satan and demons use to capture people and trick them into doing his will (2 Timothy 2:26). Anyone not doing God's will is actually following and serving Satan (1 Timothy 5:15).

C. PETER'S WRITINGS (Epistles)

1. 1 PETER

Although he wrote most of the letters in the New Testament, Paul isn't the only one whose correspondence was inspired and kept for our benefit in God's Word. Peter wrote two epistles which contain good advice about spiritual warfare. The first was written in 63 AD, about the same time Paul was writing his letters to Timothy.

Satan used Peter to tempt Jesus to avoid the cross (Matthew 16:23; Mark 8:33). Satan asked God for permission to "sift Peter as wheat" (Luke 22:31) by leading him to deny he knew Jesus so he would feel tremendous guilt and remorse. But Jesus said He prayed for Peter, that his faith wouldn't fail and that he could strengthen his fellow Christians (Luke 22:32).

Peter certainly knew from firsthand experience that the battle with Satan and his demons was real! Therefore, he knew what he was talking about when he wrote: "Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings. And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen" (1 Peter 5:8-11).

LESSON FOR TODAY: Peter challenges his readers to be "self-controlled" (sober, paying attention) and "alert" (awake, watchful), both strong commands to prepare themselves for the sure-to-come battle with Satan. Satan is like a "roaring lion" looking for anyone he can "devour" (assault, destroy, make ineffective by severing the vital union between them and God). As with Peter (Luke 22:31-32), Satan tries to destroy our faith so we will be open to fear, sin and discouragement. Therefore, we are commanded to "resist him" and remain "firm and steadfast" in faith. God uses these very attacks to strengthen our faith and help us grow (1 Peter 5:10). He does not stop the attacks or make us immune to them, but He provides strength so we can stand up against them (1 Corinthians 0:13).

2. 2 PETER

A year later Peter wrote what seems to be a strange statement. He says God did not spare the angels when they sinned but sent them to hell, putting them in gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment (2 Peter 2:4). Jude said they are kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day (Jude 6). It seems many demons are bound by God in some lower and most terrible 'hell' because they are too evil to be released so God spares the world their influence. They will be judged and condemned to hell for all eternity (Revelation 20:1-3, 10).

D. MISC WRITINGS (Epistles)

1. JAMES

Another writer, besides Peter and Paul was James, the half-brother of Jesus (same mother, different father). Chronologically, his was the first inspired book written in the New Testament and

was addressed to Jewish Christians. James taught them about living for God, and spiritual warfare was an important part of that life.

James' words are quite interesting because they are the first written words about spiritual warfare in the New Testament. He starts talking about sin which comes from within man (James 4:1-3) then the influence of the world from without (James 4:4). He affirms God's great grace to those who are humble (James 4:5-6). Following this he gives three strong commands and two great promises. Command one is to submit to God (James 4:7), total and complete surrender to the Lordship of Jesus Christ (Romans 12:1-2). There can be no victory in the Christian life without this first requirement. This means that all sin must be confessed (1 John 1:9; James 5:13-16).

Following this comes the second command: resist the devil (James 4:7). "Resist" means to not give in, compromise or yield but to stand fast. It has the idea of a difficult struggle but remaining firm. How do we resist him? The same way Jesus did – we quote Scripture (Matthew 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13) and we use God's armor (Ephesians 6:10-18).

LESSON FOR TODAY: When we resist the enemy, God promises he will flee (James 4:7). "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7). James says he "will" flee – he has to because God makes him. Sometimes God drives him away instantaneously, other times it is more gradual as the person learns and grows in their faith. That is why continued counseling after spiritual warfare deliverance is so important. Demons may fight, stall and do what they can to resist, but ultimately they must obey when God sends them away. The only exception is if God allows them to stay because He wants to use them for our growth and His glory, like with Paul's "thorn in the flesh" (2 Corinthians 12:7-10). When God doesn't remove the source of the demonizing, He promises to give special grace so we can hold up under it. It becomes His chosen tool to make us more like Jesus.

Peter concludes this passage with another command and promise. "Draw near to God" (James 4:8) means to keep Him and His greatness in the center of our focus. When we do this His promise is "He will draw near to you" (James 4:8). Don't sit back and expect Him to come wait on you, move in His direction and He will move in yours!

LESSON FOR TODAY: Don't focus on Satan or demons, nor let them keep your main emphasis from being on God and Jesus (Philippians 4:8-9). Too many live in fear of what demons are doing or may do. That gives them the power, attention and worship on which they thrive. We can't ignore them to the extent we let them do anything they want, but we must make sure God is always foremost in our thoughts and motives. When we move towards God He moves more than half way to move towards us. Don't become so preoccupied with spiritual warfare that you become distracted and lose your focus on Jesus.

2. HEBREWS

Writing 20 years after James, soon after Paul and Peter wrote their last epistles, the writer of Hebrews states that Satan holds the power of death, but that Jesus became a man so that he could destroy Satan and the consequences of death which sin brings (Hebrews 2:14-15). God has conquered death and Jesus is forever victorious over it (1 Corinthians 15).

3. JUDE

Writing about 5 or 6 years after Hebrews and 2 Peter, Jude writes something similar to what Peter had written (see 2 Peter 2:4 above) about some demons even now being chained awaiting judgment (Jude 6).

A few verses later, when talking about the danger of slandering others, Jude uses the archangel Michael as an example for he did not bring a slanderous accusation against Satan when he was disputing him for Moses' body. Instead, he said, "the Lord rebuke you" (Jude 8-9).

LESSON FOR TODAY: While we aren't to fear demons, we must have a healthy respect for their power which is greater than ours, especially the higher-ranking demons who have power to cause much destruction. Our warfare against them must be done carefully, preferably with others praying for us, and always in an attitude of total dependence on God.

4. 1 JOHN

John, the brother of James and close friend of Jesus, wrote the final 4 books in the Bible. 1 John was written about 90 AD, 25 years after Peter and Paul wrote their last works and were martyred. He complements his readers for "**overcoming the evil one**" (1 John 2:13-14). They didn't dethrone or destroy Satan, but kept their faith in Christ despite the opposition of the enemy.

John also gives some very helpful advice for us in our warfare today when he tells his readers to "**test the spirits**" (1 John 4:1). "Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God" (1 John 4:1). When a demon is behind a teaching or philosophy, it will not recognize that Jesus is God who came in the flesh to be the payment for our sins (1 John 4:2-3). We do not have to fear them because God is greater than they are and He lives in us, making us greater than any demon (1 John 4:4-6).

LESSON FOR TODAY: In other words, don't believe everything you hear for it isn't all true!

*"**Test the spirits**" implies there is more than God's Spirit speaking to us. Satan tries to promote his 'truth' indirectly through worldly people and teaching or directly through demons influencing our thoughts and actions.*

***Just what does it mean to "test" the spirits?** Test means to examine, prove, scrutinize so as to discover the source behind what is being heard (1 Thessalonians 5:21-22). This is necessary because "many false prophets have gone out into the world" (1 John 1:1b). The truth is that MANY spiritual teachers today are false teachers, even among those claiming to be 'Christian' teachers (John 8:42-44). They pretend to be God's spokesmen sharing Bible truths, but they are fakes (2 Corinthians 11:14). They undermine the sovereignty and lordship of Jesus (2 Peter 2:2). Often Satan and his demons are behind these people and false teachings.*

***What are some of these deceptive voices we hear?** From those without the church we hear things such as: "It's all about you." "You deserve ..." "Follow your heart." "Anything is OK if it's done in love." "I am my own truth." "There are no absolutes." "God made me this way." "I'll be happier if I change my gender." "Sex any time, with anyone of any gender or marital status is OK." "Give people all the money they want and all our problems will be gone." "If my mate isn't making me happy, I need to find a new mate." "Abortion is sometimes the best thing for the mother and fetus."*

The false prophets within the church are even more deadly. "Jesus was just a man whom God used." "God wants everyone healed, healthy, wealthy and happy." "We need certain gifts or experiences to prove we are Christian." "God loves everyone, so everyone will go to heaven." "There is no hell." "You can lose your salvation so be careful how you live." "The Trinity isn't true, but that really doesn't matter." "The virgin birth is false but isn't important." "Jesus isn't coming back, its up to us to change the world."

*It's not just voices from others that we hear, the most deceptive voices can be those **voices within our own heads**. Satan did this with Jesus when He was tempted after forty days in the wilderness (Matthew 4). Paul says Satan sows deception in the hearts of people (2 Corinthians 11:3). Ananias obviously listened to Satan's voice instead of God's when saying he was donating all*

he received for the sale of his land when it was, in fact, only part of the amount (Acts 5:3). He can put thoughts into a person's mind (Mark 8:33). In addition, Satan can take thoughts out of a mind (Matthew 13:19). As with Adam and Eve, Satan's communication with man is always deceitful and destructive. He can and will speak directly to a person much as the Holy Spirit does (1 Peter 5:8).

Some of the things spoken to our thoughts and feelings include: "Jesus was just a man whom God used." "God wants everyone healed, healthy, wealthy and happy." "We need certain gifts or experiences to prove we are Christian." "God loves everyone, so everyone will go to heaven." "There is no hell." "You can lose your salvation so be careful how you live." "The Trinity isn't true, but that really doesn't matter." "The virgin birth is false but isn't important." "Jesus isn't coming back, it's up to us to change the world." Any many more.

These lies come well packaged and promoted in ways they can be easy to believe. Hearing them over and over can desensitize us to them as well. Be care what you listen to – don't believe everything you hear.

How to test the spirits. 1. Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God (**1 John 4:2**). "Acknowledge" means "confess" (1 John 1:9), "admit." Affirming belief in Jesus as 100% God and 100% man is basic to our Christian belief and repeated often by John (John 1:1-14; 1 John 1:1-2; 2:1-2; 3:22; 2 John 7, 9). Jesus is the only way to God (John 14:6; Acts 5:12). Those who belong to God will be known by what they believe about Jesus' Person. But it is more than a head knowledge of the facts of the incarnation. Even the demons know that is true (James 2:19).

2. If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved (**Romans 10:9**). "Believe in your heart" is what our response must be to knowing Jesus is God. Then we will "declare with your mouth" what we believe in our heart. When we do this we show we are His children (Luke 10:16; John 8:42). If a person doesn't believe and declare this, they don't belong to God (1 John 4:3). In fact, they are opposed to God, they are "anti-Christ" (1 John 2:18-19). These people are liars (1 John 2:22) and we must not trust what they say.

The test of the voices we hear is to make sure the source behind them believes that Jesus is God. He is God incarnate: totally God and totally man. It also means believing that Jesus is Lord of our lives and serving Him alone. Those who come to Him in faith have His Spirit in them. That doesn't mean everything they say or do is perfect, but it does mean that when God is speaking through them we can trust what they say.

Those who aren't believers but are pretending to speak for God are false prophets and to be avoided. That doesn't mean that unbelievers never know or speak truth. In areas like science, math, medicine, government, etc., they can know and teach truth. After all, all truth is God's truth. The problem comes when they teach things that contradict, even slightly, God's Word.

To summarize, remember two words: 1. INCARNATION. Jesus is God Himself come to earth as a human being. And 2. REGENERATION. Putting faith in Jesus and His provision of salvation gives eternal life. Do you believe these things? Do the sources behind the voices you hear believe these things?

LESSON FOR TODAY: This verse, 1 John 4:4, is one every believer should memorize and use often. Quoting Scripture is our "sword of the Spirit" (Ephesians 6:10-18) and that is how Jesus had victory over Satan's temptation (Matthew 4:1-11). This is a great verse to counter fear and remind us of where the real power lies!

Along the same line of thought, John reassured those he is writing to that believers are free from the condemnation that sin brings (1 John 5:18; Romans 8:1). That doesn't mean believers don't

sin, they do – but the sin has been paid for so Satan cannot use it to destroy them as long as they confess the sin and cleans themselves from it. Even if someone doesn't do so, Satan still doesn't have free reign to harm them. When someone is a child of God, Satan and his demons can only do what God allows them to do (Job 1, 2). "Harm" is the Greek word meaning "to assault, in order to sever the vital union between Christ and the believer." Satan cannot separate us from Christ – nothing can do that for the believer (Romans 8:31-39).

5. REVELATION

The final book in the Bible, Revelation, written by John 6 years after 1 John, has much to say about spiritual warfare as might be expected. In it the battle between God and Satan, which started before the world was created and which included the human race when Adam sinned (Genesis 3:15), comes to a fitting conclusion.

John uses many terms for Satan. He calls him the "devil" (6 times), "evil one" (6 times), "liar and the father of lies" (3 times), "murderer" (1 time), "thief" (1 time), "wolf" (1 time), "deceiver" (1 time), "ruler of this world" (3 times), and "he who is in the world" (1 time).

In addition, John talks about territorial spirits, high ranking demons who oversee control of certain countries or geographical areas. In Revelation they are referred to as a "synagogue of Satan" (Revelation 2:9; 3:9) and "dwelling place of unclean spirits" (Revelation 18:2). They will be the power behind the rise of the nation called Babylon (Revelation 17-18).

LESSONS FOR TODAY: Demons influence and control the nations (Daniel 10:13,20; Ephesians 6:12) and mislead them so they can be destroyed (Isaiah 9:14). It must always be kept in mind, however, that God is in sovereign control. They can do nothing without God's permission (Job 1:6-12).

Because they cannot get at God or Jesus directly, Satan and demons attack those closest to God today – His children. He focuses his power and leads those he influences to hate and harm Jews and Christians (Revelation 2:10; 13:7, 14-15; Daniel 12:7).

LESSON FOR TODAY: Satan does all he can to attack God's people. Sometimes the enemy is permitted to exercise authority over the physical possessions of the child of God (as in Job's first trial), sometimes over his physical body (as in Job's second trial and in Paul's case), and sometimes this authority extends as far as the physical life of the individual is concerned. But usually, it is the hand of God which is at work behind the scenes, working to accomplish His own ends, using whatever means He chooses.

Because Revelation records the final, ultimate defeat of Satan and his forces in their battle against God, it is only natural that the first skirmish in that long-standing battle be remembered and everyone reminded of the results. "Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they were defeated and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world - he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him" (Revelation 12:7-9; see also Daniel 12:1).

This passage clearly details Satan's defeat in heaven, sometime in the very beginning, probably before man was created. He was defeated in heaven and this earth became his domain (Ephesians 6:12; John 14:30; 16:11; 12:31). Now in Revelation his defeat on earth is chronicled. It is accomplished by Satan being defeated under the feet of the church (Romans 16:20) and by God's holy angels (Revelation 20:1-3, 10).

This final defeat will be total and complete. Satan and his forces will be thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone and will be tormented day and night forever and ever (Revelation 20:10). Their defeat will be swift and final. They won't even be granted the dignity of standing before the throne of God to undergo a personal judgment. His judgment was made complete on the cross. He only awaits the carrying out of that sentence. With that God's great promise at the start of this battle in Genesis 3:15 to "crush Satan's head" will be complete. He will be the victor, and us with Him!

LESSON FOR TODAY: Always remember who the ultimate victor in this battle will be. Our faith is based on that, so is our courage and confidence today. We have nothing to fear. There will be total victory someday. Then we will live in that victory forever. Forever!

SPIRITUAL WARFARE TRAINING: Answer the following questions. Send the answers to me if you want and I'll offer comments and suggestions.

1. What does James mean when he says we are to "resist" Satan?
2. How are we to do this?
3. Why is 1 John 4:4 such a useful verse in spiritual warfare?
4. What does Revelation say about the future of Satan and demons?
5. How should knowing this affect our daily lives?
6. What are some new truths you have learned from this section about spiritual warfare in Acts and the Epistles?
7. How can these things help you in your own daily life?

ACTS & EPISTLES REFERENCES TO THE SPIRIT WORLD

<u>ACTS</u> 5:3,16 8:7,9-11,18-24 10:38 13:6-12 16:16-19 19:12-20 26:18	4:8-9 5:19-21	4:1-3 5:9-15	5:18-21
<u>ROMANS</u> 8:15,38-39 16:20	<u>EPEHSIANS</u> 1:21 2:2 3:10 4:26,27 6:10-20	<u>2 TIMOTHY</u> 1:7 2:14-26 3:1-17	<u>2 JOHN</u> 1-13
<u>1 CORINTHIANS</u> 2:6-8 5:5-7 7:5 10:7-21	<u>COLOSSIANS</u> 1:13-17 2:6-15,20	<u>HEBREWS</u> 2:14-18	<u>JUDE</u> 1:6-9
<u>2 CORINTHIANS</u> 2:4-11 4:4 6:14-17 11:3-4,1`2-15 12:7-10	<u>1 THESSALONIANS</u> 2:18 3:5	<u>JAMES</u> 2:19 3:13-18 4:1-8	<u>REVELATION</u> 2:9-10,13, 24 3:9 9:1-21 11:7 12:1-17 13:1-18 14:9-11 15:2 16:2,13-16 17:1-18 18:1-24 19:2,20 20:1-10 21:8 22:15
<u>GALATIANS</u> 1:6-8	<u>2 THESSALONGIANS</u> 2:1-12 3:3	<u>1 PETER</u> 3:22 5:8-11	
	<u>1 TIMOTHY</u> 1:20 2:14 3:6-7	<u>2 PETER</u> 2:1-22	
		<u>1 JOHN</u> 2:12-14,18-23 3:7-12 4:1-6	

IV. CHURCH HISTORY

A consideration of spiritual warfare through the Bible wouldn't be complete without at least a quick overview of what has transpired in the centuries since the New Testament was written. How others interpreted and applied these passages on spiritual warfare can give us insight and encouragement as well. We can find wisdom and practical suggestions from those who have already fought the battles we are now fighting.

I am indebted to "Can A Christian Have an Unclean Spirit?" Copyright © 1999-2002 by Gary Hal Graff, Christian Services Publishers, for their excellent research into spiritual warfare in church history. This is an excellent, well-written book and worth reading.

A. CHURCH FATHERS (100-500 AD)

Spiritual warfare continued to have a **very important role** in the lives of the early Christians in the first few centuries of the church. Writings that have been preserved from those times speak of believers and unbelievers being demonized (Ignatius, Barnabus, Hermas, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Minucius Felix, Hippolytus, Origen, etc.). Deliverance came in response to prayers in Jesus' name. The power of casting out demons was long regarded in the early church as a direct gift still bestowed by the Holy Spirit, apart from any human ordinance. Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Origen and others speak of deliverance as being practiced by laymen, even by soldiers, and women, by means of prayer and invocation of the name of Jesus. Striving to live a life pleasing to God was important to grow in faith and remain free from demonic oppression.

Demonizing was common throughout the Roman Empire and, although many means were tried to bring freedom, few were successful. It soon became evident that Christians had power others did not. God used this to help them gain a hearing and spread their message through the known world. This thing happened in Jesus' day.

Justin Martyr (AD 110-165) used this fact when he wrote a formal defense of Christianity to the Roman Senate in AD 150, defending the Christians and petitioning for the awful persecution to stop. He wrote "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." The only technique mentioned by him is the use of the invocation of the name of Jesus. For the next two centuries following Justin, every Christian writer wrote about the reality of demonizing and of the common practice of Christian deliverance ('exorcism' as they called it) in their days.

LESSON FOR TODAY: It is still true that victory over demonizing is not a complicated process of ritual, special words by 'gifted' persons, emotional church meetings, etc. It is the power of Jesus in each of His children that is greater than Satan's power and which can bring freedom to the oppressed. Of course, the access the demons claim must be broken and any open doors closed, but that, too, is done by Jesus' power.

One early church writer, **Minucius Felix** (? - AD 210) wrote that demons suffer pain when subjected to the words and prayers of Christians. The words of truth tormented and burned them. That is especially true when we quote Scripture.

LESSON FOR TODAY: That is still true today. Touching a person who is demonized, even in tenderness, can bring terrible pain to the demon who is indwelling them. Therefore, laying on hands, quoting Scripture and playing praise music all can contribute to a speedier victory over that which oppresses a demonized person.

As the early church continued to grow and expand despite (or perhaps because of) persecution, Satan was developing another approach that would ultimately prove more successful in slowing the growth and strength of the church – **false teachings**. Many of Paul’s writings, especially the letters written towards the end of his ministry, warn against this as it had already started in his day. Slowly but surely teachings from other religions found their way into Christianity. Over the centuries these caused a large segment of the church to develop into what became the Roman Catholic Church of the Middle Ages. This brought in rituals and new teachings about spiritual warfare as well.

Before long church practices that were a means to an end became an end in themselves. The water used for baptism was thought to be invested with special properties instead of just being a way of showing the new birth had occurred. This water then became used in rituals used to bring about deliverance. To become holy water the water itself as well as some salt that was added were both put through a formal ritual of spiritual deliverance to purify them. Then the resulting salted ‘holy’ water was thought to have power over demonizing.

Spiritual warfare continued to be a theme in the writings and teachings of the church leaders of the time (Clement of Alexandria, Cyprian, Lactanius, Cyril of Jerusalem, Ambrose, John Chrysostom, Jerome, Augustine, John Cassian, etc.). Some believed that all non-Christians were demonized and therefore had to be exorcised before being baptized and joining the church. The established church then said a new convert had to go through a three-year period of preparation called ‘catechism’ during which they met several times a week for prayer, fasting, spiritual deliverance and instruction.

As the **pre-baptismal spiritual deliverances** were performed, various rituals were also performed simultaneously, such as the signing of the cross, which was also believed to have exorcistic properties. Later, exorcised salt and oil were used too. And since the church by this time had come to believe that unclean spirits lived in water, the baptismal waters themselves had to be exorcised.

Since it was believed that demons entered a person in order to enjoy the lusts of sensual pleasure, the opposite kind of treatment was often required to drive them out. Hence, in order to be free from demons, the most useful help was **abstinence, fasting, and suffering of affliction**. They felt the physical sufferings the person experienced would also bring pain to the demons and cause them to want to leave. This developed into extreme forms of self-torture in the name of spirituality and characterized much of the church during the Middle Ages.

Some felt if even this pain wasn’t enough, then prayer was called for. “But inasmuch as some, being of a more malignant kind, remain by the body that is undergoing punishment, though they are punished with it, therefore it is needful to have recourse to God by prayers and petitions” (Pseudo-Clementine Literature - A.D. 200-250)

LESSON FOR TODAY: It is common to think we need to suffer to pay for our sin. We learn that as little children when we receive punishment for wrong deeds. During this time in history monasticism and other forms of self-denial and punishment were common. People are always trying to do what they can to help with their salvation, cleansing or victory. But only the blood of Jesus saves and cleanses. Demons love to inflict pain, and often they are behind the self-denial or painful acts done. So instead of them helping remove demons, they actually ‘feed’ the demons’ lust for pain. Never think you can do anything to help God with what only He can do!

Instead of believing all believers could have victory over demons by Jesus' power in prayer, as the early church had believed, many started feeling that the ability to command demons to be gone was a special gift given to some believers. Some still believed **every believer had authority to pray** for this in Jesus' name, though. But by the middle of the third century (about AD 250) the order of Exorcist had been added to the church. Now the ability to cast out demons was no longer viewed as a gift bestowed by God but rather as an appointment made by the church. The church, they felt, had the authority to give the ability to remove demonizing to whomever it chose. They felt only those with this bestowal could have authority over demons.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Many Christians feel that they must find a 'deliverance minister' to have victory over demonizing. No one person has the power to bring deliverance unless God wants it. Some are more experienced and trained in spiritual warfare and know better how to overcome Satan and his forces, and their counsel can be very helpful. The gift of discernment is a great aid in giving insight as to what is needed to be free from demonizing. But no one, no matter how gifted or well trained, can force a demon to go if there is a legitimate claim they can make to access the person. Unless the victim learns what is allowing the demonizing and closes the doors that give access, casting out one demons just means he will return with many more (Matthew 12:44-45).

Hilarion (AD 291-371), who lived at this time, was famous throughout the Mediterranean world for his faith and power to work miracles of healing and spiritual deliverance. He gives one case in which a young Christian woman became possessed. A youth of Gaza fell in love with her, but she would have nothing to do with him. So, he went off to Memphis to learn the arts of a magician. At the end of a year's instruction, he returned and buried an engraved plate and magical formulas beneath the woman's house. Thereupon the maid began to show signs of insanity, to throw away the covering of her head, tear her hair, gnash her teeth, and loudly call the youth by name. When the maid was brought to Hilarion, the spirit within her began to talk and howl. He asked how it dared to enter into the body of one who belonged to God. The demon claimed to have done so to preserve the virginity of the girl, an idea which seemed a bit outrageous to Hilarion. He then put the girl through the process of "purgation" (spiritual deliverance), and when she was well, he rebuked her for having permitted the spirit to enter into her "by her conduct." Thus, he assumed that she was in some way responsible for the spirit's entrance.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Unless God allows the demonic attack for reasons of His own, like with Job and Paul, demons cannot have access to demonize a person from within unless the person has an open door. This could be through sin in their life, a generational opening, a curse or through demonized property. God allows the demonizing in the person's life so they will see the sin/opening and close the door, thus growing spiritually and becoming more like Jesus.

Hilarion also believed that it was possible for a spirit to make a Christian sick, and this included the "saints," himself as well. Furthermore, he held another common belief of that day, that it was possible for the saints (particularly the ascetic hermits who lived in the deserts) to be physically attacked and beaten by evil spirits. He claimed that such had happened to him several times.

One of Hilarion's exorcistic techniques was demonstrated in another case. A prominent and wealthy man of Aira (by the Red Sea) who was demonized was brought to him, bound with iron. When the man saw Hilarion, he broke free, grabbed him, and held him mid-air. Hilarion nevertheless cured him by praying for the man's release. In yet another case, an officer of the emperor Constantius came to Hilarion because he was possessed. From a very early age he had compulsions to groan, howl, and gnash his teeth. The spirit spoke perfectly in foreign languages which the man did not understand. Hilarion cured him with a simple command in the name of Jesus.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Demons need an open door to demonize, but sometimes without one they will attack anyway. The person can resist them by rebuking them in Jesus' name and they

will have to leave (James 4:7) unless they have a legitimate claim to work against the person, an open door. If the demon does not leave, then it is necessary to seek the access he claims.

Before entering the Middle Ages, let us **summarize** what we have learned about the church fathers. As to the question of whether or not a Christian could have an unclean spirit, the vast majority of early church leaders and believers felt that it could be so. Instead of being something all believers could do, “exorcism” (spiritual deliverance) became an office granted by the Church. Gradually rituals replaced prayers for deliverance in Jesus’ name. Essentially what happened during the first five centuries is that deliverance from demonizing slowly moved away from its original New Testament forms, setting the stage for the developments of the latter Middle Ages and the Renaissance periods.

As the Roman church developed, it moved away from the clear teachings in the Bible about salvation, Christian living and victory over demons. These were replaced with rituals performed by priests. The church’s apostasy was seen in spiritual warfare as well as its theology and doctrine.

B. MIDDLE AGES (500-1300 AD)

Spiritual warfare continued in the time period AD 500-1300 as attested to by Benedict of Nursia, Gregory the Great, and others.

Pope Gregory I (Gregory the Great, AD 540-604) tells us of a priest who became possessed as he attempted to cast a spirit out of a woman. He points out the man was doing the deliverance in his own strength and not in Jesus’ power. Pope Gregory notes another case in which a cleric became possessed: “One day two brethren were sent to buy something for the needs of the convent. One was younger and seemed cleverer; the other was older and should have supervised the first. As they went on their way he who should have looked after the younger man committed a larceny, unwittingly, with the money which had been given to them. As soon as they had returned to the convent and on the very threshold of the house of piety, he who had committed the theft fell to the earth, seized by an evil spirit, and suffered great torments. When the evil spirit had left him he was questioned by all the monks who had hastened to the spot; he was asked if he had not misappropriated the money received. He denied it and was tormented a second time. When the evil spirit had again left him he was again questioned but again denied and was once more given over to torment. He denied eight times and eight times was tormented. At the eighth falsehood he confessed the sum of money which he had stolen. He did penance, prostrated himself, admitted his sin and the evil spirit returned no more as soon as he had accomplished the expiation.”

LESSON FOR TODAY: This is an example of how demons gain access through sin, but lose that access when the sin is confessed (1 John 1:9).

Though there are references to a “**Book of Exorcisms**” used by the church in the fifth century, there is no trace of what it contained. However, there is a record of a formula being used by the beginning of the eighth century: “I come against you, most unclean damned spirit; you are grown old in evil, the substance of crimes, the origin of sin; you delight in deceits, sacrileges, defilements and slaughter. Invoking the name of our Lord Jesus Christ we rebuke you and adjure you through his majesty and power, passion and resurrection, advent and judgment, that in whatever part of the members you are hiding, you manifest yourself by your own confession, and that, shaken by spiritual flames and invisible torments, you flee from the vessel that you believe yourself in possession of, leaving it purged for the Lord after having been your dwelling-place. ... Depart, depart, wherever you are, and seek no more to enter bodies dedicated to God. May they be forbidden to you forever, in the name of the Father and Son and Holy Spirit, and in the glory of the

Lord's passion, by whose blood they are saved, whose advent they await, whose judgment they confess."

LESSON FOR TODAY: Written prayers can be helpful for they give an example of how to pray. This is why Jesus gave the Lord's Prayer to the disciples. However, it is never the exact words that make a difference, just the power of God in response to a faithful believer calling out to Him. Do not put faith in any certain words, phrases or prayers. God hears your heart, not the words that come out of your mouth.

In the first part of the Middle Ages the **possessed were generally treated well**. The techniques of spiritual deliverance of the first five centuries included breathing into a person, readings and word formulas, holy water, signing of the cross, salt, oil, bodily hardships, etc. In time other methods were introduced. These included the use of sanctified ointments, the spittle of the priests, sacred relics, visits to shrines, and concoctions (as, for instance, a mixture of lupin, henbane, bishopswort, garlic, ale, and holy water). Eventually the relics began to be used as tools of deliverance from demonizing with the spirits providing the expected reactions (complaints, aversion, despair, etc.). These, along with the shrines, could be considered as a form of Christian talismans. This practice originated from the suggestion of the spirits themselves and not from the influence of some ancient civilization, as the literature of Babylon. However, this use of concoctions sounds very much like a throwback to the practice of sorcery.

C. RENAISSANCE PERIOD (AD 1300-1500)

As civilization moved out of the dark ages and into a time of awakening, many changes in and out of the church started taking root. However, the mere rebirth of the naturalistic approach did not signal the end of spiritual warfare, which actually continued to be the prevailing school of thought concerning man's maladies for several centuries to come. Indeed, the greatest excesses in the area of spiritual warfare were yet to come.

Prior to the fifteenth century there were two types of demonizing recognized: willing and unwilling. The former referred to the practice of witchcraft, as the participants willingly subjected themselves to temporary demonizing. The latter referred to cases in which the subjects were unwillingly demonized, which was thought to be some sort of divine punishment for sins. However, in the course of time this distinction was dropped so that all cases of demonizing were regarded as being willing, the consequence of practicing witchcraft. All subjects of demonizing were then regarded as witches.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Never judge or look down on someone who is demonized as someone extra sinful or rejected by God. Paul, David and many other fine believers experienced demonic attacks. God allows them for His glory and the person's growth.

By the **latter part of the fifteenth century**, Europe had sustained several natural disasters, such as storms, floods, and pestilences (the Black Plague, etc.). In reaction, society seized upon the idea that it was witches who had caused these disasters. Before long, witches were also accused of causing the personal problems of individuals. Therefore, to purge the world of this civil menace, Pope Innocent VIII passed legislation in 1484 A.D. to eradicate witchcraft. This launched the witch hunts which soon became the joint effort of Catholics, Protestants, and secularists. These hunts were to last about two centuries. It has been estimated that several hundred thousand people perished in these hunts, many of whom were first tortured. While there must have been some true demonic activity involved in all this witchcraft, most of what happened was an overreaction which

took many innocent lives. This fixation on witches carried over to New England in the early days of the USA when many were thought to be witches and killed.

LESSON FOR TODAY: By pushing to an extreme, Satan makes people react against any thought of him working in any way. People still react against any mention of Satan and demons, thinking only of extremism and overreactions. It's a great way for Satan to cover his work while he keeps on with deceit and subtle influences in other ways.

Still, there were true cases of demonizing that continued to appear during this time. Here is a **case from the sixteenth century**: "The latter (a girl) was possessed by the demon who often threw her to the ground as if she had the falling sickness. Soon the demon began to speak with her mouth and said things inhuman and marvelous which may not be repeated The girl had always shown herself patient, she had often prayed to God. But when she had called upon the name of Jesus to deliver her, the evil spirit manifested himself anew, he had taken possession of her eyes which he made start out of her head, had twisted her tongue and pulled it more than eight inches out of her mouth, and turned her face towards her back with an expression so pitiful that it would have melted a stone. All the priests of the place and from round about came and spoke to her, but the devil replied to them with a contempt which exceeded all bounds, and when he was questioned about Jesus he made a reply of such derision that it cannot be set down."

Epidemics of demonizing have broken out in various times and places throughout the world. The Renaissance period had more than its fair share of them. These outbreaks might involve only a handful of people or entire masses, spreading through towns, cities, and even regions. Some were among unbelievers, others among believers. One example of what happened in the Middle Ages is found in a 1916 East African outbreak. That form of demonizing is called the "mpepo sickness" and effected only women. In the mpepo state the women were found speaking in unlearned languages, such as English or Swahili, and in deep bass voices. They also exhibited compulsions for food and pepper, and for bright clothing. When requested, a demonizing spirit would relate its life story using "the most filthy language;" then the subject would fall into a rage, and then into convulsions. When the drums were played the possessed would dance in a "wild and terrifying manner" until exhausted. An outbreak of this type could spread throughout entire regions. Christian natives were not only immune but could cure some of the possessed by their "words," by prayer, and by having the subjects lead a "sober" lifestyle.

LESSON FOR TODAY: Territorial spirits control certain geographical locations (Daniel 10:13). When someone enters their territory, even a believers, they can and will attack. They have great power over the areas they have kept in darkness and do all they can to keep out the light.

LESSON FOR TODAY: I would not go so far as to say that all instances of tongues speaking today are demonic, but here is an example of when it is. I have been told that Mormons practice speaking in unknown languages (tongues) and that certainly isn't God's Spirit filling them. Beware!

During this period the world witnessed the **spread of sadistic techniques of spiritual deliverance**, such as torture and execution, which were formerly applied to individuals who were demonized, but now were applied to large numbers of mostly normal people in the general populace. Beyond this it appears that Medieval methods continued to be used, although a few new methods were introduced. The use of drugs to move the bowels and thus produce deliverance essentially epitomizes the depths of degeneration to which Christian deliverance fell during this period.

LESSON FOR TODAY: When man turns from God's Word as the only authority and source of truth he turns to superstitions, rituals and external actions instead. These have no power to deliver; in fact, they open the door even more to demons because of the fear behind them and because of the rejection of Jesus as our protector and deliverer. Follow only God's Word. Do only

what He leads through His Word. There are no 'magic' rituals, special words or prayers or even group activities that replace His power. Deliverance can come in the midst of a highly emotional church service, but it can come just as quickly in a quiet moment of private prayer. Externals don't assure deliverance, praying in God's will to Jesus is the only way. Don't put faith in a person (deliverance minister), ritual or church, only Jesus.

D. REFORMATION PERIOD (1500-1700 AD)

The Reformers were split over the topic of whether or not a Christian could have an unclean spirit, with Luther siding with the traditional theory that they could and Calvin rejecting the possibility.

Martin Luther (AD 1483 – 1546) believed that lunacy, idiocy, and insanity were caused by the "possession of devils". He also believed that dumbness, deafness, lameness, pestilence, fever, and other serious illnesses were also caused by these spirits. Once Luther's students asked him specifically if Christians were subject to witchcraft. It was asked: "Can good Christians and God-fearing people also undergo witchcraft?" Luther replied: "Yes, for our bodies are always exposed to the attacks of Satan. The maladies I suffer are not natural, but devil's spells." However, he tempered this belief with the idea that such could not happen without divine permission, and cited the case of Job.

When Luther related his belief that Christians were not exempt from the attacks of the enemy, he spoke from personal experience. As intimated above, he himself was often severely attacked emotionally, spiritually and physically. He also suffered from severe bouts of depression. "He [the devil] vexes me often so powerfully, and assaults me so fiercely with heavy and melancholy thoughts, that I forget my loving Lord and Savior Christ Jesus, or at least behold Him far otherwise than He is to be beheld."

LESSON FOR TODAY: We are people of extremes. Some deny Satan's power today and others see a demon behind every action and thought. It can be easy to blame everything on demons. While they probably are responsible for more than we realize, focusing on them gives them the attention they want. Focusing on their ability to impact our lives is form of worship, a recognition of their power and activity. It keeps our focus off Jesus and puts it on them. They love that and feed off of it. That is an extreme to avoid!

Luther wrote: "We cannot expel demons with certain ceremonies and words, as Jesus Christ, the prophets, and the apostles did. All we can do is, in the name of Jesus Christ, to pray the Lord God, of his infinite mercy, to deliver the possessed persons. And if our prayer is offered up in full faith, we are assured by Christ himself (John 16:23), that it will be efficacious, and overcome all the devil's resistance. I might mention many instances of this. But we cannot of ourselves expel the evil spirits, nor must we even attempt it."

One clergyman, Andrew Ebert of Frankfurt, wrote to Luther in 1536, asking how to exorcise a girl who had long been mentally ill. For a while, she appeared to be getting better, but then suddenly got worse. She was seen chewing up and swallowing coins, and also spoke a dialect of German she had not previously known. A Catholic priest came to town and tried to cast out the spirit using herbs, holy water, and ritual commands, but failed. Luther wrote back advising prayer for the girl, but warned against using rituals and commands, since the spirits laugh at and scorn the use of these methods. He also warned of being deceived by trickery and fraud, claiming to have run into many such cases. So, he advised an inspection of the coins that were supposedly being eaten.

LESSON FOR TODAY: That is very wise of Martin Luther. Don't take everything at face value. Demons are very skilled at 'magic,' as we see in Pharaoh's court with Moses (Janees and

Jambres, Exodus 7:11-12, 22). Don't believe everything you hear, or everything you see, even if done by someone claiming to be a Christian (Matthew 7:21-24)!

John Calvin (AD 1509 – 1564) accepted most of the popular beliefs concerning spiritual warfare, as the belief in the existence of demonizing, and of the physical power of the devil (but only towards those who had given themselves over to him). He also accepted the common Protestant belief that the Catholics were under the power of the devil. Among his labors, he sought to defend the belief in the existence of good and evil spirits which the secularists were trying to deny.

As to **how they brought about deliverance**, the Lutherans used only prayer, while the Calvinists used nothing at all.

E. ENLIGHTENMENT PERIOD (AD 1700-1800)

The Enlightenment was a movement of the eighteenth century in which reason was further exalted as the solution to all man's problems. It was also marked by a skepticism of anything that the mind of man could not understand. This belief has grown and spread until it finds far-reaching acceptance even today. But God had His own movement during the Enlightenment period, springing from the Church of England through the ministries of the Wesley's, which came to be known as the Methodist movement. This revival was marked by spontaneous demonstrations of the power of God.

John Wesley (AD 1703 – 1791) lived at a time when the laws against witchcraft were being repealed. In 1768 he publicly opposed such changes, stating that to give up the prosecution of witchcraft was like giving up the Bible. During the powerful revival meetings of the Wesley's, miracles of healings and of spiritual deliverance occurred spontaneously. Thus, John Wesley held that the age of miracles had not entirely come to an end. He debated this issue with literary opponents, challenging them to prove either by scripture or by reason that such an age was over.

Wesley had enemies who opposed him and his movement, most of whom were Catholics. But as it happened, several of these became demonized as they spoke out against him. This is an example of God allowing a person to be demonized as a judgment of God. They opened the door by rejecting God's truth and attacking God's people. When it came to the casting out of spirits, Wesley agreed with Luther in using only prayer, avoiding rituals and ritualized commands.

In a letter of November, 1762, John Wesley says: "The short of the case is this. Two young women were tormented of the devil in an uncommon manner. Several serious persons desired my brother and me to pray with them. We, with many others did; and they were delivered. But where in the meantime were 'the exorcisms in form, according to the Roman fashion'? I never used them; I never saw them; I know nothing about them."

Wesley believed that sickness and misfortune could be caused by evil spirits. He attributed nearly all accidents as well as calamities of nature to the devil. The only difference between his view and that of Luther's is that his does not seem to attribute all sickness and misfortune to the enemy, but mixes in with it the element of natural occurrence. He believed Christians could be possessed as well. Of course, this could only happen by "divine permission." Epilepsy was often the result of demonizing. He gives several cases of such disease, where the afflicted person believed that he or she was possessed by an evil spirit, and who were partially or completely cured by spiritual deliverance.

It is clear from several cases of Wesley's writings that he believed that Christians were subject to the attacks of the enemy and that they could even have unclean spirits within them. Here is one. "A ten-year-old Christian girl, named Elizabeth Booth, experienced pain in the chest for three

days. Every successive day thereafter she experienced some kind of fit or spell, such as a fit of rage, or a fit of violent laughter, or a spell of being 'stretched out and stiff as a carcass.' These spells usually lasted about an hour, and then ended as abruptly as they began. In the intervals she would be 'in great heaviness of soul,' and would pray and plead for God's mercy. If her faith increased, so did her fits. Often she would go into one of these fits right in the middle of her 'rejoicing and praising [of] God.' A couple of months later she grew worse, often trying to throw herself out a window or into a fire. She was especially enraged against both the Bible and Wesley, and often told of his whereabouts, even though he was not present. But still in the intervals, she would break out into 'vehement prayer.' Then the spirit began to speak through her. She also started having visions, as of heaven, of hell, or of the future. But three months later all the symptoms disappeared spontaneously and did not return."

LESSON FOR TODAY: Demons share hosts, so it often seems like they are gone when they are just tormenting someone else, only to return to the first host. For whatever reason this demon was not able or not allowed to return to this girl. Perhaps he was assigned elsewhere, or God had mercy on her.

The change of the tide (16th-19th centuries)

As we know, the attributing of all human ailments to Satan and demons did not retain its position of prominence in the West. Eventually, the tide changed, with spiritual warfare losing popularity, and the naturalistic interpretation coming in. But this whole process took three or four centuries.

The Catholic Church had been sustaining harsh criticism from the Protestants and the secularists for many of its practices. This led to a movement in the church known as the Counter-Reformation. One thing it produced was the Roman Ritual (1614) which was a manual of authorized church "exorcism." Besides being a guide for priests as to how to perform "exorcism," the Ritual was also a guide to determine whether a state of demonizing existed. For instance, to be classed as possessed, a subject had to be able to speak in unlearned languages and display clairvoyant and other ESP powers.

Another product of the Counter-Reformation was that several local, diocesan, and provincial synods forbade the use of "exorcism" without the express permission of the local bishop (as the Church of England had done). These latest developments greatly reduced the use of spiritual deliverance in the Catholic Church. However, the Jesuits of England continued to practice deliverance without much change (as did their counter-parts, the Puritans of England).

Spiritual warfare becomes the minority view in the 18th and 19th centuries. As a result of prominent voices speaking out against spiritual warfare, and of various churches moving against or limiting the use of spiritual deliverance, and of the great advances in the naturalistic sciences, spiritual warfare gradually lost ground and became the minority view. The tide had now changed from supernaturalism to secularism.

LESSON FOR TODAY: It was at this time that Satan was able to go 'underground' and hide his work, as he continues to do today. Man, in his pride, thinks he is too wise to believe in anything like Satan or demons. This covers his tracks while at the same time opening people to more of Satan's work through their pride.

F. 19TH CENTURY (1800-1900 AD)

During the 19th century there was not much emphasis on spiritual warfare. Other causes were found for such problems, making them more of a natural instead of supernatural order. Justinus Kerner (AD 1786 – 1862), however speaks of Christians who were possessed for various amounts of time and showed times of normalcy but also times of extreme perversion and oppression. Many in the Catholic church were also becoming demonized. Some were delivered others went to mental hospitals where they gradually found relief.

G. 20TH CENTURY (1900-2000 AD)

1. “EXORCISM” IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Today, with proper authorization, “exorcism” may be practiced for Roman Catholic Church members, non-Catholics, and those who have been excommunicated. Also, the tradition of “baptismal exorcism” has been retained, but the exorcism of salt and water was discontinued in 1969. The Catholic Church has not only maintained its traditional practice of exorcism, but also its belief that a Christian can have an unclean spirit.

However, Catholic exorcism of the possessed has become more theory than reality, simply because nowadays demonizing is rarely recognized. Demonizing is not recognized unless the subject speaks in unlearned languages and displays clairvoyant or other ESP powers. Modern Catholics admit that according to this definition few if any of the New Testament cases of demonizing would have been recognized as such. So, the Church awaits the formation of a more practical definition. As a result, all disturbed people are sent to the psychiatrists, not the exorcists.

Today the Church’s exorcism continues to be governed by the Roman Ritual even though it was formulated in 1614. The exorcism itself is about seven pages long, consisting of prayers, scripture readings, responses, ritual commands, mini-sermons, signings of the cross, and the use of holy water. If in its recitation, progress is being made, priests are encouraged to continue repeating the ceremony for as long as it takes to cast out the spirit, for several hours or more, if necessary. Just as exorcism has become rare in the Catholic Church, so has the exorcist.

2. DELIVERANCE IN EASTERN ORTHODOX CHURCH

The Eastern Orthodox Church (comprised of the Greek Orthodox, the Russian Orthodox, and the Orthodox churches of the other Eastern European countries) is, of course, very similar to the Roman Catholic Church in most forms, including the practice of deliverance of those who are demonized. Thus, it still believes in the reality of demonizing and in the practice of spiritual deliverance of baptismal candidates. It has its own manual of authorized spiritual deliverance. This manual contains twenty-one forms of “exorcism” for various occasions. However, the Church differs from the Catholics in that it has retained the office of the exorcist.

3. DELIVERANCE IN THE PROTESTANT CHURCHES

In most Protestant churches of modern times spiritual deliverance is not practiced. Not only do most deny the existence of spiritual warfare, but many also deny the existence of demons and some even the existence of Satan himself. When it comes to the treatment of disturbed people,

most Protestant churches send them to psychiatrists, as do the Catholics. Thus, mental illness is interpreted psychologically.

However, there are a few Protestant churches or groups which have retained the spiritual interpretation of mental illness. One is the Anglican Church (the Church of England), whose beliefs concerning spiritual warfare (and most other topics) are very similar to the Catholics. Besides this church, there are local churches within charismatic or Pentecostal denominations which have rediscovered the Biblical beliefs and practices about spiritual warfare and spiritual deliverance. More and more non-charismatic evangelical churches are working in the area of deliverance, but they are still a small percentage.

Thus, in the twentieth century we could say that Christian spiritual warfare and deliverance still exist, but just barely. There are many encouraging signs, though, that more and more evangelical Christians and churches are learning what the Bible teaches about spiritual warfare.

The twenty-first century will see an upsurge in intensity and frequency with which spiritual warfare is practiced. This will be greatly needed, for the attacks of the enemy are becoming greater in number and strength as well. It will get much worse before it gets better. As the return of Jesus gets closer so warfare will increase. We must be trained, equipped and prepared.

The rest of this story has yet to be written, but the end is quite clear as we see in the book of Revelation. God wins (He already has)!

SPIRITUAL WARFARE TRAINING. At the end of each major section in this paper you will find questions to help you remember and apply what you have learned. You can look back through what you have read for the answers if need be. You need a Bible, a notebook and a pen to do these questions.

1. What are some of the Biblical ways Christians throughout history have conducted spiritual warfare?
2. What can you learn and apply from what they did?
3. What are some of the unbiblical ways Christians throughout history have conducted spiritual warfare?
4. What must you avoid in your spiritual warfare?

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FOR SPIRITUAL WARFARE VICTORY

1 John 4:4 You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.

Luke 9:1-2 When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.

Luke 10:17-20 The seventy-two returned with joy and said, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name." He replied, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

Colossians 1:13 For He has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son He loves.

Rev 12:7-11 And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. The great dragon was hurled down — that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him. Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: "Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ. For the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down. They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.

Hebrews 2:14-15 Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death — that is, the devil— and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.

Philippians 4:13 I can do everything through Him who gives me strength.

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

2 Corinthians 10:5 We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

John 1:1-5 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. ... The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.