

angelology: the doctrine of angels

I. ANGELOLOGY

A. Existence of angels:

1. Angels are found in thirty-four books of the Bible in over three hundred references.
2. Christ taught the existence of angels (Matt. 18:10; 26:53).
3. The angels are a distinct order of creation and have been given a heavenly position, or sphere, above the sphere of man (Ps. 8:5; Heb. 2:7-9 and Rev. 5:11; 7; 11).
4. Angel means "messenger." They are always referred to in the masculine gender.

B. Creation of Angels -- Colossians 1: 15-17

Angels are not a race but a host (or army). They are called the sons of God (Job 1:6), not of other angels. They were created (Job 38:6,7) at some point in time before the creation of the physical world. The angels were created in a state of holiness (Jude 6). They are innumerable (Heb. 12:22).

C. The personality of angels:

1. Intellect (I Pet. 1:12).
2. Emotions (Luke 2:13).
3. Will (Jude 6) -- able to leave their first estate.

D. The nature of angels:

1. They are spirit beings (Heb. 1:14), who are capable of taking on physical form (cp. Rev. 18-19).
2. They do not reproduce (Mark 12:25).
3. They always appear in masculine form except in Zech. 5:9 (feminine gender used two times).
4. They do not die (Luke 20:36).
5. They are distinct from human beings (Ps. 8:4,5).
--They are not the spirits of the dead.
6. They have great power (II Pet. 2:11).

E. The ministry of angels:

1. To God:

- a. Worship (Isa. 6:1-3; Rev. 4:6-11). Worship seems to be one of the primary ministries of angels.
- b. Ministers (Heb. 1:7). The word for “minister” in this text is generally used of a priestly service for God (compare to Ps. 103:20). An example would be Gabriel’s message to Mary (Luke 1:26-33).
- c. Agents of God’s rule (Ps. 103:19-20). Angels are at times used to control the elements of nature (Rev. 7:1; 16:3,8,9). They were used of God to deliver the Law to Moses (Gal. 3:19).

2. To Christ:

- a. Predicted His birth (Luke 1:26-33).
- b. Announced His birth (Luke 2:13).
- c. Protected Him as a baby (Matt. 2:13).
- d. Strengthened him after His temptation (Matt. 4:11).
- e. Prepared to defend Him (Matt. 26:53).
- f. Rolled away the stone and announced His resurrection (Matt. 28:2,6).
- g. At Christ's ascension (Acts 1).
- h. Worshipped Him (Heb. 1:6).
- i. Will return with Him (Matt. 25:31).

3. To believers:

- a. Help believers in general (Heb. 1:14).
- b. Involved in answering prayer (Acts 12:7).
- c. Give encouragement (Acts 27:23-24).
- d. Guardian angels (Heb. 1:14; Matt. 18:10).
- e. Observe Christians' experiences (I Cor. 4:9; I Tim 5:21).
- f. Interested in evangelistic efforts (Luke 15:10; Acts 8:26).
- g. Care for believers at death (Luke 16:22; Jude 9).
- h. They are not to be worshipped or prayed to (Col. 2:18; Rev. 22:8,9).
- i. May have contact with humans without their knowledge (Heb. 13:2).

j. Believers will judge angels (I Cor. 6:3). Either we will condemn evil angels, or we will rule over holy angels.

4. To unbelievers:

- a. Michael is Israel's guardian (Daniel 12:1).
- b. Involved in executing the judgments of the tribulation period (Rev. 8,9 and 16).
- c. Bring punishment to unbelievers (Acts 12:23).
- d. Involved when the Lord returns to establish His kingdom (Matt. 13:39).

F. Classification of angels:

- 1. Archangel -- Michael whose name means "Who is like unto God" (Jude 9). Archangel means "chief" or "ruling messenger" (I Thess. 4:16).
- 2. Elect angels (I Tim. 5:21).
- 3. Principalities, princes, thrones, dominions and powers – apparently represent different categories of angels, and sometimes of only the fallen angels (Eph. 1:21; 3:10; 6:12).
- 4. Cherubim -- or living creatures who defend God's holiness from the pollution of sinful beings (Gen. 3:24; Ex. 25:17- 20; Ezek. 1:1-18). Note also the original purpose for which Satan was created Ezek. 28:14). Two cherubim were fashioned from gold for the ends of the mercy seat on top of the Ark of the Covenant in the Holy of Holies.
- 5. Seraphim (Isa. 6:2-7) -- always worshipping God.
- 6. The angel of Jehovah -- these are usually appearances of Christ in the Old Testament.
- 7. Gabriel (Luke 1:19).
- 8. Possibly the twenty-four elders (Rev. 4:4) who would be rulers in Heaven.

II. THE DOCTRINE OF SATAN

A. His existence:

- 1. Taught in seven Old Testament books and acknowledged by every New Testament writer.
- 2. Christ acknowledged and taught the existence of Satan (Matt. 13:39; Luke 10:18 and 11:18).

B. His personality:

1. Intellect (Matt. 4; II Cor. 11:3) -- he quotes Scripture.
 2. Emotions (Rev. 12) -- anger.
 3. Will (II Cor. 2:26; Isa. 14; Matt. 25:41 and II Tim. 2:26) -- morally responsible.
- C. His nature:**
1. A created being (Ezek. 28:14,15) -- Therefore he must answer to His creator.
 2. A spirit being (Eph. 6:11,12).
 3. Was a cherubim (Ezek. 28:14).
 4. Highest of all angelic beings (Ezek. 28:12).
 5. Limitations:
 - a. He is a creature and therefore, not omnipotent, omnipresent or omniscient.
 - b. Can be resisted by the Christian (James 4:7).
 - c. God has placed certain limitations on him (Job 1:12).
 6. Personality traits:
 - a. He is a murderer (John 8:44).
 - b. He is a liar (John 8:44).
 - c. He is a confirmed sinner (I John 3:8).
 - d. He is an accuser (Rev. 12:10).
 - e. He is an adversary (I Pet. 5:8).
- D. Principle names:**
1. Satan -- adversary (II Cor. 11:14).
 2. Devil -- slanderer (Matt. 4:1).
 3. Serpent -- deceitful (Rev. 12:9).
 4. Lucifer -- son of the morning (Isa. 14:12).
 5. Evil one (I John 5:19).
 6. Dragon (Rev. 12:17).

7. Prince of this world (John 12:31).
8. God of this world (I Cor. 2:4).
9. Accuser of the brethren (Rev. 12:10).
10. Beelzebub -- prince of the demons (Matt. 12:24).
11. Belial (II Cor. 6:15).

E. Satan's fall: (cp. Ezekiel 28 and Isaiah 14)

1. His sin (Isa. 14:5 and 12-15) -- "I wills. . . ."
 - a. I will ascend into Heaven (I will take God's place).
 - b. I will exalt my throne above the stars of God (above the angels).
 - c. I will sit on the mount of the assembly in the far north.
 - d. I will ascend above. . . clouds (the glory of God).
 - e. I will be like the most high. (Satan wanted to be the possessor of heaven and earth.) -His sin was pride (I Tim. 3:6) and it may be characterized as counterfeiting God (like the Most High) (compare Ezekiel 28:17).
2. His punishments:
 - a. Cast out of his original position in Heaven (Ezek. 28:16).
 - b. In the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3:14-15).
 - c. At the cross (John 12:31).
 - d. Barred from all access to Heaven during the tribulation period (Rev. 12:7-8).
 - e. Confined to the abyss (Rev. 20:2).
 - f. Cast into the Lake of Fire (Rev. 20:10).
3. The time:

Since God declared that all things in the universe was good after the sixth day of creation, Satan's fall had to take place sometime after the creation of the universe and before Adam sinned (compare Gen. 1:31 with 3:1ff).

F. Satan's work as related to:

1. God:
 - a. Tries to thwart the plan of God in every area and by every means possible.

- b. Seeks to counterfeit God's program.
- c. Tempted Christ (Matt. 4).
- d. Possessed the body of Judas to betray Christ (John 13:27).

2. Unbelievers:

- a. Blinds their minds (II Cor. 4:4).
- b. Snatches the word out of their hearts (Luke 8:12).
- c. Uses unbelievers to oppose the work of God (Rev. 2:13).
- d. He will gather them to the battle of Armageddon (Rev. 16:13-14).
- e. He deceives them now (Rev. 20:3).

3. Believers:

- a. Tempts believers to lie (Acts 5:3).
- b. Accuses and slanders believers (Rev. 12:10).
- c. Can hinder the work of a Christian (II Thess. 2:18).
- d. Tries to defeat us through demons (Eph. 6:12).
- e. Tempts us to immorality (I Cor. 7:5).
- f. Sows counterfeits among believers (Matt. 13:38,39).
- g. Incites persecutions against believers (Rev. 2:10).

G. Defense of the believers against Satan:

1. Intercession of Christ (Heb. 7:25; John 17:15).
2. Have proper attitude toward Satan (I Pet. 5:8 and Jude 8,9).
3. Be on guard against Satan (I Pet. 5:8).
4. Take a stand against Satan, although at times we should flee (James 4:7 and II Tim. 2:22).
5. Use the spiritual armor (Eph. 6:11-18).

III. THE DOCTRINE OF DEMONS

A. Views on origin of demons:

1. The souls of wicked men who have died (Greeks).
2. Spirits of a pre-Adamic race.
3. Offspring of the fallen angels and the women before the flood (Gen. 6:1-4).
4. Those angels who followed Satan at his fall (biblical position).

B. Characteristics of demons:

1. Spirit beings (Matt. 17:18, cp to Mark 9:25).
2. Know Jesus Christ (Mark 1:24).
3. Know their own end (Matt. 8:29).
4. Know the plan of salvation (James 2:19).
5. Have a system of doctrine (I Tim. 4:1-3).
6. Immoral, wicked, unclean (I Tim. 4:1-3).

C. Activities of demons:**1. In general:**

- a. Attempt to thwart the work of God (Rev. 16:13-16 and Daniel 10:11-14).
- b. Extend the authority of Satan (Eph. 6:11,12).
- c. Demons may be used by God in carrying out His purpose (II Cor. 12:7; I Tim. 1:19; I Cor. 5:5 and I Sam. 16:14).

2. Some particulars:

- a. Can inflict disease (Matt. 9:33).
- b. Can possess humans (Matt. 4:24).
- c. Can possess animals (Mark 5:13).
- d. Spread false doctrine (I Tim. 4:1; Ps. 106:35-38; I Cor. 10:19,20).
- e. Oppose the spiritual growth of God's children (Eph. 6:12).

D. Demon possession:

1. Definition: A demon residing within a person, exerting direct control of that person's mind and/or body.

2. Result: Physical disease or handicaps (Matt. 9:32,33), mental derangement (Matt. 7:15).
 3. Marks of demon possession from Mark 5 (the demoniac of Gadarene):
 - a. Indwelling of an unclean spirit (verse 2).
 - b. Unusual physical strength (verse 3).
 - c. Fits of rage (verse 4).
 - d. Disintegration or splitting of the personality (verses 6 and 7). The demoniac ran to Jesus for help, yet cried out in fear.
 - e. Resistance to spiritual things (verse 7).
 - f. Clairvoyant powers (verse 7) -- knew immediately who Jesus was.
 - g. Alteration of voice (verse 9).
 - h. Occult transference (verse 13) -- the demons left the man and entered into the swine.
- E. Destiny of demons:**
1. Temporarily some are confined. For instance, some who were free during the lifetime of Christ were cast into the abyss (Luke 8:31) and will be loosed to do their work during the coming tribulation days (Rev. 9:1-11 and 16:13-14).
 2. Eventually all demons will be cast with Satan into the Lake of Fire forever (Matt. 25:41 and Rev. 20:10).

SPIRITUAL WARFARE

It seems that Christians never tire of trying to come up with a new way of dealing with life. We are reminded of the Athenians at the Areopagus, who, "Used to spend their time in nothing other than telling or hearing something new" (Acts 17:21). Within evangelical Christianity today, there is a constant parade of novel approaches for dealing with our sins and problems. One of those is what some call "spiritual warfare." Spiritual warfare has become quite the rage in many Christian circles today, despite the lack of biblical support. This is due to several factors: the influence of charismatic elements; pragmatism; the church's surrender to psychology during the last twenty years; and endorsement by respected theologians. Yet, the question is, as always, does this new movement square with the Word of God? We will discover that it not only does not square with Scripture, but that the spiritual warfare movement is anti-scriptural.

THE CHRISTIAN AND DEMON POSSESSION

Definition of demonized:

The spiritual warfare teachers make a big deal out of the Greek word often translated, "demon possessed" in the New Testament. The word itself simply means, "to be demonized." Somehow this definition is supposed to soften the concept of a Christian being possessed by a demon. For example, Neil Anderson says that it means to be controlled by a demon and is a matter of degrees. However, the New Testament never uses the term for anything less than to be indwelt by a demon. It is never used to describe Satan's activity of accusing the brethren, temptation, deception or persecution. So, no matter how we translate the word "daimonizomai," it is always used exclusively of those indwelt by demons.

Can a Christian be demon possessed?

The question must be asked, "Can a Christian be demon possessed; that is, indwelt and controlled by a demon?" C.F. Dickenson, in his book *Demon Possession and the Christian*, devotes serious study to this question. He deals with every major portion of Scripture on the subject and then concludes: "We have found that though there is a great deal of information to consider, and though men adduce evidence of varying weight, yet we could not come to a definite conclusion. . . . We have sought evidence from biblical and theological considerations on whether Christians can be demonized (p149)."

In other words, according to Dr. Dickenson, the same Scriptures that claim to provide everything we need for life and godliness (II Pet. 1:3), is inadequate to deal with this important subject. What's a Christian to do? According to Dickenson, God neglected to include, in His Word, instructions for victory over one of the Christian's most powerful enemies. So where are we to turn? Dickenson reassures us that we can look to experience with confidence. He admits that, "The danger of basing our theology on experience is evident." Yet, since God's Word does not address the subject of the demonization of Christians, the spiritual warfare teachers have felt free to develop a whole system of demonic warfare based on the supposed experiences of people.

What does the Bible say?

Before we examine the faulty spiritual warfare structure we should examine whether the Bible gives us any clue as to the demonization of believers. The following passages need to be studied --

Col. 1:13-14 -- When individuals are saved they are delivered from the domain of

darkness.

Rom. 8:37 -- While in the context of the security of the believer, nevertheless, we find that the Christian is promised victory through Christ.

I Cor. 6:19 -- The Christian is indwelt by the Holy Spirit. It is inconceivable that the Holy Spirit would share our bodies with a demon. During the time of Jesus' ministry on the earth demons feared Jesus and usually avoided Him if possible. Why wouldn't the same be true of the Holy Spirit?

I John 4:4 -- The Christian has the Holy Spirit within him. Demons on the other hand inhabit the world and those of the world.

I John 5:18 -- The evil one cannot touch God's child.

II Thess. 3:3 -- Because of our Lord's faithfulness (not ours) we are protected from the evil one.

I Cor. 5:5 -- In the New Testament we never find any indication that a believer can be indwelt by a demon, nor are we ever given any command or instruction concerning the casting out of demons. This passage speaks of delivering a believer to Satan for the destruction of his flesh. Nothing is ever said about delivering a believer from the possession of the devil.

Why the interest in this subject?

So why do some believe that the Christian can be demonized?

Here are three reasons:

1. Experience -- Stories, some of them quite incredible, dominate the field. The theory seems to be that if someone has had an experience, no matter how absurd or unbiblical, it must be from God. "Story Theology" is the predominate brand of theology today.
2. The influence of psychology -- My problems can't be my fault. There must be a solution, outside of the Scriptures. This is the same view of the Scriptures that the Christian psychologist teaches.
3. Blameshifting -- Anderson says, "Those who say a demon cannot control an area of a believer's life have left us with only two possible culprits for the problems we face: ourselves or God. If we blame ourselves we feel hopeless because we can't do anything to stop what we're doing. If we blame God our confidence in Him as our benevolent Father is shattered. Either way, we have no chance to gain the victory which the Bible promises us" (*The Bondage Breaker*, p.174). Since we can no longer blame ourselves for our own problems demons become handy scapegoats.

I. THE TEACHINGS OF SPIRITUAL WARFARE LEADERS

Neil Anderson is the most popular teacher of spiritual warfare. Anderson was the chairman of the Practical Theology Department at Talbot School of Theology of Biola University. He has written several books on this subject, including: *The Bondage Breaker*, *The Seduction of Our Children*, *Victory over the Darkness*, *Released from Bondage*, and *Walking Through the Darkness*. He also travels the country giving his "Freedom in Christ" seminars. We will deal with

Anderson's teachings as representative of the whole group.

A. Biblical teachings:

Many of Dr. Anderson's concepts are in line with the Scriptures, for which we give God praise. Anderson would be in agreement with the essential doctrines of the faith. In addition, he places special emphases on -

- Right thinking will produce right emotions.
- The greatest deterrent of mental and emotional health
- The believer must understand his identity in Christ.
- Forgiveness is extremely important in the Christian life.

B. Christians can be demonized or demon possessed:

Anderson makes the following statements. "It is my observation that no more than 15% of the evangelical Christian community is completely free from Satan's bondage" (*Bondage*, p.107). "Demonic influence is not an external force in the physical realm; it is the internal manipulation of the central nervous system" (p.111). "Anything bad which you cannot stop doing, or anything good which you cannot make yourself do, could be an area of demonic control" (p.179).

To Anderson, 85% of evangelical Christians are controlled to some degree by Satan. It would be quite an interesting search to attempt to find Scriptural support for Anderson's assertions.

C. Christians can be delivered from demonization:

Fortunately for us, Anderson has discovered a means of deliverance for the demon-controlled Christian. Where did he find his program? Certainly not in Scripture -- remember the Bible apparently is unfamiliar with this problem. He didn't find it even in the traditions of the great saints of the past. As a matter of fact, no one in the history of the church has ever taught the methods developed by Anderson -- which tells us a couple of things:

1. Since this program is not based upon Scripture, and since it is brand new to the church, great caution is in order.
2. If Anderson is correct, then most of the saints of the past, who only had God's Word to guide them, have been hopelessly enslaved to demons -- apparently without realizing it. What a sad thought!

D. Anderson's teachings on what the believer must do in order to be free from demonization. His primary focus is to be contained within the following three concepts:

1. Understanding our identity in Christ --
 Much of what Anderson teaches in this section is biblical, however he deviates in two important areas:
 - a. The authority of the believer.
 The argument runs like this: I am seated in the heavenlies in Christ. Christ has all power and authority. Therefore, I have Christ's power and authority. As a result, all Christians have authority over Satan and his demons.

It should be obvious that the third premise above is not true. Anderson gives Luke

9 and 10 as proof texts. However, not only are these references to the pre-Pentecostal believers (who were not in Christ), but, they are specific instructions to a specific group of people for a specific act. These passages have no reference to the church.

b. Binding, loosing, commanding Satan and his demons.

Anderson admits that there are no instructions in the epistles to cast out demons because (he says) it is the responsibility of every Christian to put on the armor of God, stand firm and resist the devil.

The Scripture used as support is Matthew 12:29, but it is wrong to conclude that Christ was establishing a universal principal for binding evil spirits. By the way, who keeps letting them loose?

2. Freedom from our past --

Anderson suggests a four-prong approach:

a. The "integration of psychology with theology."

b. Freeing the Christian of "generational demonic bondage." He is speaking of genetically inherited demons, spirit guides, Satanic curses, and a genetic pre-disposition to addictive or habitual sin.

Exodus 20:5 is the supposed Scriptural basis, but it is used out of context (see verse 6), but even if inherited sin was the context, Ezekiel 18:19 has rescinded this.

c. Forgive God (*Released*, p.174).

Nothing more needs to be said here. This is nothing short of blasphemy.

d. Forgive yourself.

Nothing in all the Word of God gives us the authority to forgive ourselves.

3. Freedom from Scriptural conflicts caused by demons --

Demonic confrontation is the crux of Anderson's ministry.

Note three unhealthy and/or unscriptural presumptions:

a. Demons (not the flesh) are the primary source of Scriptural failure for the Christian (Gal. 5:16-21).

b. Christians can become demon possessed.

c. Spiritual warfare is an offensive, rather than defensive, campaign including verbal assaults on Satan. "We must learn to bind the strong man before we will be able to rescue his prisoners" (*Bondage*, p.91).

4. Steps to freedom in Christ -- Satan will be defeated only if we confront him verbally (p.84):

Step #1 -- Renounce involvement with satanically inspired occultic practices. (This would include any activity that a family member may have participated in.)

Step #2 -- Choose to live by truth rather than deception.

Step #3 -- Choose forgiveness rather than being bitter.

(This includes forgiving ourselves, p.196.)

Step #4 -- We must choose to be submissive rather than rebellious.

Step #5 -- Live humbly instead of proudly.

Step #6 -- Choose freedom rather than bondage to sin.

Step #7 -- Renounce the sins and curses, which may have been placed on your ancestors (see ex. p.201).

II. EVALUATION OF SPIRITUAL WARFARE

The Scriptures claim to provide everything we need for salvation and sanctification (II Tim. 3:16,17 and II Pet. 1:3). Yet, by the spiritual warfare teacher's own admission there exists no biblical evidence that a child of God can be demonized. If that is the case, then obviously the Scriptures provide no steps to freedom from demon possession. We are now being told that Neil Anderson and C. Fred Dickenson are providing for us what God's Word never does. Where are these men getting this information? From experience -- the same source that the charismatics get their unbiblical teachings.

A. Not only is the spiritual warfare movement derived from extrabiblical sources, but it contradicts much of what the New Testament does tell us about demons.

1. In the epistles there are ten references to demons (mostly relating certain facts), but there are over fifty references to "the flesh" as the primary enemy of the Christian. The New Testament perspective is that the major area of conflict is in the arena of the flesh, not demonic influence.

2. Some are claiming that demons have names that reflect their influence. Names such as, "lust," "murder," "envy," "gossip," etc. Yet, nowhere in the Bible do we find any support for this teaching. Scripture explicitly says that these actions are a product of the flesh (e.g. Gal. 5:19-21).

3. Anderson claims that when we deal with demons it is a "truth encounter," not a "power encounter." However, when Jesus or the Apostles cast out demons it was always a power encounter. Never once did Jesus attempt to reason with a demonized individual. Never once did He call on them to believe the truth. He always forcibly cast demons out of such people. In addition, not a single person in the Gospels ever came to Jesus for deliverance from demons. The obvious reason being that when a demon controls someone, that person has lost his ability to choose right. The spiritual warfare teachers claim that demonized believers are coming to them for deliverance in great droves.

4. The spiritual warfare leaders do not understand the distinction between Jesus and the Apostles and the average Christian. Jesus' encounters with the demons were directly related to His claim to be the Messiah and His offer of the Kingdom. As for the Apostles, there were three occasions in which they cast out demons after Christ's ascension (Acts 8:5-8; 16:16-18; 19:11-12). The ability to do this was given to verify their appointments as Apostles (Mark 16:17; II Cor. 12:12). In the New Testament we do not find Christians casting out demons unless they were Apostles. However, even with the Apostles we do not find the casting out of demons to be a major part of their ministry. Instead, the norm for dealing with the demon-possessed was the presentation of the gospel.

5. It is interesting to realize that it is these very areas -- the ones the charismatics and the spiritual warfare people emphasize so heavily -- that Jesus singles out as proving nothing concerning our relationship to God (Matt. 7:21-23). Later Paul would even teach that satanically inspired people can produce miracles (II Thess. 2:9-12).

6. The bottom line is that this method of sanctification is taught nowhere in the Bible. We surely can trust our Lord to have included a means of demonic deliverance if it had been needed.

B. Some additional UNBIBLICAL teachings:

1. Binding Satan -- based on the misinterpretation of three passages: Matt. 12:29; 16; 19 and 18:18. The context however reveals that Matt. 12:29 was an illustration of Christ's personal power over Satan, not ours. Also, Matt. 16:19 and 18:18 are in the context of fulfilling God's will on earth, including church discipline.

2. Rebuking the devil -- believers are never instructed to rebuke the devil or his demons. The New Testament views rebuking as the sole prerogative of Jesus (Jude 9). As a matter of fact, this is a mark of false prophets (II Pet. 2:4-12; Jude 8,9). Why do people rebuke the devil then? II Pet. 2:12 and Jude 10 says that they do so because they don't understand what they are doing. II Peter 2:10 suggests that they do so because of arrogance.

3. Praying the blood -- This phrase or idea is found nowhere in the New Testament. Christ's blood delivers us from sin.

4. Inherited curses -- four reasons why this is inaccurate:

a. Salvation delivers us from all sin -- including occultic sins. The Bible does not recognize occult sin as a special category that has not been dealt with at the cross.

b. Exodus 20:5 refers to the choice of each successive generation to follow after the sins of their ancestors. Ezekiel 18:10-20 says that we will each be dealt with according to our own sin.

c. Exodus 20:5-6 and Deuteronomy 5:9-10 deals with Israel -- not the church.

d. There is not one example in the Bible of a saved person being under a satanic curse, which had to be "broken" by Christian exorcism or distinct confession.

e. Territorial spirits.

III. BIBLICAL INSTRUCTION CONCERNING DEALING WITH DEMONS

A. That Satan and his demons are actively involved in attempting to destroy our lives is evident throughout Scripture. I Peter 5:8 perhaps sums up Satan's efforts and goals better than any other place in the Bible. The big question is how are we to deal with his onslaughts? Some are teaching today that we are to rebuke or bind Satan. Others tell us that we are to cast demons out of people by claiming the blood of Christ (*The Bondage Breaker*, pp.69,84,85,88,107 and 111). Yet, in the New Testament we are never

instructed or commanded to cast out or bind demons.

B. When it comes to Satan we are taught to play a defensive role. When believers go on the offensive against Satan they are stepping out of their legitimate bounds by becoming involved in situations which the Lord has never intended for them. Rather than instruction concerning exorcism, binding, rebuking, etc., we are taught (in the only three places in the New Testament where instruction concerning dealing with Satan is found) to resist the Devil (I Pet. 5:6-9; James 4:7 and Eph. 6:10-18).

C. Only the Ephesians 6 passage teaches us how to resist by putting on the armor of God. Paul, as a prisoner at the time he wrote the epistle of Ephesians, observed daily the protective armor of the soldiers that guarded him. Using the armor as an illustration, Paul explained to us how we can stand firm against the schemes of the Devil. Six pieces of armor are needed to fully protect the believer against Satan's attacks:

1. The Belt of Truth (6:14) --

The belt was essential to keep the other pieces of armor in place and to secure freedom of movement by tying back the long tunic that the soldiers wore. The truth spoken of here is the objective truth of God's Word. God wants us to be completely dominated and controlled by the truth of the Bible. It is because many Christians are not committed to the absolute truth and final authority of the Word of God that they are ineffective in their spiritual warfare. We must take II Timothy 3:16,17 and II Peter 1:3 seriously. This must be our presupposition.

2. The Breastplate of Righteousness (6:14) --

The vital organs of the Roman soldier were protected by his breastplate. People are in need of two types of righteousness that protect their thoughts, emotions and wills:

a. "Saving righteousness" that is given to us at the moment of conversion (Rom. 4:5). This is the righteousness of Christ and is credited to us without merit on our part when we trust in Christ for the forgiveness of sin.

b. "Personal righteousness" which refers to the righteousness produced in our lives by the Holy Spirit. This takes place in a believer's life as he recognizes his sin and turns to Christ. To choose to live "rightly" is a great safeguard.

3. Shoes of the Gospel of Peace (6:15) --

You will note that we are to have our feet shod with the preparation" of the gospel of peace. This speaks of a readiness, firm footing, mobility and protection that comes from having the gospel of peace. The thing that assures us of ultimate victory against Satan is that we have peace with God (Rom. 5:1,2). Therefore, we can remain steadfast and immovable because our feet are firmly grounded on our immovable relationship with God.

4. Shield of Faith (6:16) --

This speaks not of "saving faith," for these people were already saved, but of a "living faith," a trust in the promises and the power of God. Satan's primary weapon is to get us to distrust God's Word. It is by faith in God and His Word that we are able to handle anything Satan throws in our way. Only by looking away from self to God, placing our trust in Him for life, death and eternity, relying only on

His Word of revelation and promise, is it possible to repel Satan's shower of flaming missiles.

5. Helmet of salvation (6:17) --

I Thessalonians 5:8 clarifies the meaning here. He is speaking not of becoming saved but of the "hope of salvation." That is, we have absolute assurance of our salvation no matter how fierce the battle becomes. Were it not for the fact that in the midst of hardship and persecution the assurance of salvation dwells in our hearts we might easily give up the fight. The helmet of salvation enables us to go into battle with complete confidence, not in ourselves but in our God (Phip. 1:6).

6. Sword of the Spirit (6:17) --

This refers to the short dagger-like sword that was used primarily for defense, not the broad sword that was an offensive weapon. "The sword which the Christian carries is described here as the Word of God. But this is not the Greek 'logos,' but 'rhema.' 'Rhema' refers to a specific word or utterance. In spiritual warfare it is not enough to have merely a general knowledge of the Scriptures; we must also have a specific knowledge of the Scriptures and use this knowledge correctly" (*A Holy Rebellion*, p.145). Note 6:18,19 where this armor is to be bathed in prayer.