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HOW SATAN INFLUENCES PEOPLE

In the New Testament we read quite a lot about demons. Demons are mentioned very frequently in the gospel accounts, and the references are presented in a matter-of-fact way. This makes clear that people 2000 years ago were quite familiar with the idea that evil spirits would influence human beings fairly commonly. Back then it was recognized that in any average larger environment some people were likely to have demon problems. People accepted that situation as a part of life, without being amazed or astonished because someone in their environment was demon-possessed.

Consider the following references from the gospel accounts.

And His fame went throughout all Syria: and **they brought** unto Him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and **those which were possessed with devils**, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and He healed them. (Matthew 4:24)

The expression "and He healed them" refers to those who were sick. For those who had problems with demons, Jesus Christ cast out the demons.

For a start, the people around those who were demon-possessed recognized and correctly identified the problem such people had. It was clear to them that their relatives or friends (i.e. the people they took to Jesus Christ) were demon-possessed. It wasn't considered unusual or unique; it was just lumped together with a host of other health problems people might experience.

Next, these cases here were just from one local area. When Jesus Christ moved on to another area, the same thing happened again. Once again demon-possessed people were brought to Him for casting out the demons. This happened in every area of the country that Christ happened to visit.

The point is that 2000 years ago multiple thousands of people in the area of Palestine alone were demon-possessed. This state of affairs would also have been true for every other area of the world at that time as well, that amongst every group of people anywhere on earth there were people who were demon-possessed. And at least amongst the Jews in Palestine demon-possession was readily recognized by the general population. People who took care of their demon-possessed relatives understood that these relatives had problems which were caused by one or more demons.

When the even was come, **they brought** unto him **many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits** with *his* word, and healed all that were sick. (Matthew 8:16)

Once again many demon-possessed people were brought to Jesus Christ for Him to cast out those demons. Demon-possession was common and easily identified.

Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, **cast out devils**: freely ye have received, freely give. (Matthew 10:8)

When Jesus Christ sent out His twelve apostles, He instructed them to heal people. And in the context of healing people, Christ anticipated that His apostles would see many cases where a health problem was caused by demon-possession. Christ expected His apostles to be able to discern when a health problem was due to physical causes and when it was due to a problem with a demon. They were to discern when

they should ask God to heal the person, and when they should ask God to cast out a demon.

And he called *unto him* the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and **gave them power over unclean spirits**; (Mark 6:7)

And **they cast out many devils**, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed *them*. (Mark 6:13)

So the apostles did indeed cast out many demons when they went out on this short training mission.

And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, *thou* Son of David; **my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil**. (Matthew 15:22)

Here a Canaanite woman likewise had no difficulty at all in identifying that her daughter was demon-possessed. And her assessment was correct.

So someone being influenced by a demon is not something rare; in the past it happened all the time all over the world. And it was very commonly correctly recognized amongst the Jewish people 2000 years ago. And **today demon possession also happens all the time all over the world**. Satan and his demons are today as active as they have ever been. Satan and the demons have not gone into retirement. But we today don't recognize and identify demon problems nearly as accurately as people did 2000 years ago.

CLARIFYING SOME TERMS

Before proceeding further, let's clarify some terms.

I will use the terms "**demon influenced**" and "**influenced by Satan**" as synonyms. Likewise, I use the terms "**demon-possessed**" and "**Satan-possessed**" as synonyms. I mention this because in our context there is no need to draw a distinction between a demon influencing or possessing a person, and Satan himself influencing or possessing a person. It makes no difference whether Satan himself or just one of his demons is involved. The end result for the person affected is the same.

Next, in the Greek text of the New Testament there are two different groups of words that are translated as "devils" in the KJV. On the one hand there is the one Greek word "**diabolos**"; on the other hand there are the words "**daimon**", "**daimonion**", "**daimoniodes**" and "**daimonizomai**".

The noun "diabolos" is used 38 times in the New Testament, and it is correctly translated as "devil". This word refers specifically to Satan.

The nouns "daimon" and "daimonion" are together used 65 times in the New Testament, and they are also translated as "devil", but these nouns refer to demons in general, rather than to Satan the devil himself. So they should really be translated as "demon" and not as "devil". The adjective "daimoniodes" in James 3:15 means "demon-like" and it is there translated as "devilish". The verb "daimonizomai" is used 13 times in the New Testament, and it basically means "under the power of a demon". This verb is usually translated in the KJV as "possessed with a devil" or as "vexed with a devil" or as "having a devil".

So the New Testament makes a distinction between Satan himself by using the word "diabolos" for him, and the demons in general by using the words "daimon" and "daimonion" to refer to them. While we should be aware of this distinction in terminology in the Greek text, this distinction does not really affect the matter we are examining here.

THREE DISTINCT LEVELS OF INFLUENCE

Now we come to something that is important to understand. There are three distinct levels of Satan's influence on us human beings. Those three levels are as follows:

LEVEL ONE: DEMON-INFLUENCED

LEVEL TWO: VERY BRIEF DEMON POSSESSION

LEVEL THREE: FULL-BLOWN DEMON POSSESSION

Let's take a close look at each of these levels, because we need to learn to distinguish between these three.

LEVEL ONE: DEMON-INFLUENCED

This level refers to people who still have **full control over their own minds all of the time**. They are in control, but they have accepted some of Satan's thinking and Satan's way of reasoning. Frequently they have also accepted a selfish perspective on life from Satan himself. They have typically also accepted a spirit of fear from Satan. In Satan's own words this spirit of fear is identified by the "all that a man has will he give for his life" (Job 2:4) attitude of fear.

Apart from Jesus Christ Himself, every single human being has experienced this "influenced by Satan" level. That includes you and it includes me and it includes every individual who is or who has ever been a part of God's Church. It applied to Abraham when he told Abimelech that Sarah was "his sister" (Genesis 20:2).

It applied to Jacob when he said to his father "I am Esau your firstborn" (Genesis 27:19). It applied to Elijah when he fled because Jezebel had threatened his life (1 Kings 19:2-3). It applied to David when he instructed Joab to see to it that Uriah would die in battle (2 Samuel 11:15). It applied to the Apostle Peter when he said to Jesus Christ "be it far from You, Lord, this shall not be unto You" (Matthew 16:22). It applied to the Apostle Paul when he was still "breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord" (Acts 9:1). It applied to Adam and Eve when they sinned.

Every single one of us has at various times accepted a way of thinking and reasoning and justifying ourselves that originated with Satan. There are no exceptions (I am here obviously excluding Jesus Christ). We have all accepted some of Satan's thinking some of the time.

That is also what the Bible tells us.

Any human being who has ever sinned, has experienced this "level one" of Satan's influence on humanity. And since all of us have sinned (Romans 3:12, etc.), therefore all of us have also at times been affected by this "level one" influence.

Anyone who has been deceived by Satan into believing things that are not true, has experienced "level one" of Satan's influence. The statement that Satan has deceived "the whole world" (Revelation 12:9) refers specifically to this "level one" of Satan's influence.

Anyone who has ever entertained and dwelled on wrong thoughts of lusting and coveting, has been affected by this "level one" of Satan's influence. Anyone who has ever spread any form of gossip has

experienced this "level one" of Satan's influence.

The key identifying sign of this level of Satan's influence is that we retain full control over our minds all the time, even when we are sinning. We have accepted some of Satan's reasoning and then acted on that reasoning, but we were in full control of our own minds even while we were putting Satan's thoughts into words or actions in our lives. Satan had managed to tempt or to deceive us from the outside, but Satan had not managed to take over our thinking; we ourselves remained in control of our own minds.

Even at this level of Satan's influence we can sin very seriously, to the point of missing out on salvation. Also, at this level of Satan's influence we sin, even though there is only minimal input from Satan. For example, the people who will rebel against Jesus Christ during the millennium (i.e. Gog in the land of Magog in Ezekiel chapters 38 and 39) will do so without any direct input at all from Satan, because Satan will be bound and unable to influence any human being at that point in time.

So when the human mind is capable of rebelling against God without any involvement at all from Satan, then the human mind is also equally capable of rebelling against God with only very minimal input from Satan, input on this "level one" of Satan's influence.

Let's move on to the next level.

LEVEL TWO: VERY BRIEFLY DEMON-POSSESSED

This "level two"refers to people who also still have **full control over their own minds almost all of the time, except for occasional very brief periods**. They have typically accepted Satan's attitudes to a greater degree than people who are only on "level one" of Satan's influence. Thus they have more pride, more selfishness, or even more fear than people who are on "level one".

It is their greater degree of pride or fear or resentment or anger or plain selfishness that sets them up for **sometimes losing control over their own minds**. And so when their pride or vanity is offended, or when their feelings of fear or anger or resentment are pushed to the limit by external "trigger" circumstances, then these people are in danger of "losing it".

The most common manifestation of these people "losing it" we refer to as "**they lost their temper**". In those situations we frequently have to physically restrain them from violently attacking the people who offended them or who insulted them, etc. Or they spontaneously launch into **uncontrolled verbal outbursts**, and **nothing is able to appease them** during such an outburst.

It is clear that during such outbursts (both physical and verbal) these people are simply not in control of their own minds!

For people on this "level two" generally speaking this lack of control over their own minds lasts anything **from a few seconds to perhaps a few minutes**. After that they once again are in full control of their own minds. Those people who regain control over their own minds within a few seconds are only in the beginning stages of "level two" of Satan's influence on their minds. And those people who need five minutes or more to regain full control over their own minds are well on the way to becoming candidates for "level three" of Satan's influence over human beings. They are in serious danger.

For those people where their short episodes of a loss of control over their minds, lasting from a few seconds to less than a minute, are not confronted and dealt with, then it is almost inevitable that these

episodes will become longer to perhaps several minutes in duration, and that opens the person up to perhaps later succumbing to "level three" influence by Satan.

Now here is what we need to understand:

Whenever a normally mentally sound person is not in control of his own mind, then that person is always demon-possessed! That is what demon possession looks like, a normally sound person not in control of his own mind!

To make this plain:

When you are looking at a person who has lost his temper, you are looking at someone who is at that point in time demon-possessed. When you are dealing with a person who has gone into an uncontrolled verbal outburst of anger, you are dealing with a person who is at that point in time demon-possessed!

In these cases it is the demon that is controlling the mind of the person. **The demon controls what** the person says **and how** they express their anger and their uncontrolled resentment, etc. And as long as the demon is in control of that person's mind, it is absolutely impossible to reason with the person. Demons are irrational and the people they manage to possess will also be irrational during such episodes.

So understand this!

It is futile to try to reason with someone who is in this brief demon possession state. It is futile to try to reason with someone who has lost his temper. You would be attempting to reason with a demon, because it is the demon that is in control of that person's thinking at that point in time.

This state of demon possession is generally not recognized today (though 2000 years ago the Jews in Palestine would have recognized it correctly) because it is over so quickly. And then the person is back to normal again. And then you are able to reason with them and they will respond in ways that tell you that they are once again in control of what they say and do.

Now we need to understand that around the world **these brief episodes of demon possession happen multiple millions of times every single day**! And they serve a very important role in Satan's scheme of things.

These brief episodes of demon possession are the equivalent of **Satan's "teaser rate"** for the full product. They are Satan's recruitment drive.

Companies try to sell their services to prospective customers by offering a cheaper monthly rate for the first year, like a tease, in the hopes of thereby catching customers who will develop a desire for their product irrespective of costs. Sometimes they call it their "**special introductory offer rate**". And typically it is only available to new customers.

The idea is to give the potential customer the experience of their full product without that potential customer at first having to pay the full price. **The full price only comes into effect later**, once they are hooked on the product. When people only have to pay the teaser rate price, the product seems like really good value for the money. It looks like people are getting a lot for the small price they have to pay. It typically **appeals to people who don't think ahead**.

So the purpose of such introductory offers is to get people to say: "hey, I really like this; this is good". People are supposed to be distracted from the real price that will only kick in later, once they have come

to really like the service.

THAT IS EXACTLY WHAT SATAN WANTS TO ACHIEVE WITH THESE VERY BRIEF EPISODES OF DEMON POSSESSION!

The purpose of these brief episodes of demon possession is to get people to say: "hey, I like this, and I didn't even have to pay anything for it".

GET THE REAL PICTURE

As I mentioned above, on a worldwide basis these brief episodes of demon possession happen multiple millions of times every single day. Let me try to give you a graphic picture of how this happens.

In the oceans there are at various times immensely large shoals of fish that migrate to other areas. For example, every year between May and July there is "the sardine run" off the east coast of South Africa. This is the largest annual migration anywhere on earth, numerically a thousand times greater than the annual migration of wildebeest and zebra in Serengeti. The "sardine run" from Cape Agulhas up the east coast of Africa towards Mozambique is typically from 6-8 miles long, 1-2 miles wide, and around 100 feet deep. It is composed of billions of sardines (a type of South African pilchard).

Such extremely large shoals of fish represent an enormous supply of easy food for marine predators. These shoals typically attract large numbers of dolphins and seals, and even some whales, as well as seabirds like gannets. All of them get into a feeding frenzy when they come upon these large shoals of fish. Let's consider the behavior of gannets. On the internet you can find videos of how gannets behave in such situations, illustrating what I am going to say.

When a flock of gannets comes upon such a shoal as "the sardine run", then they fly 50 or so feet above the water. Then they dive into the sea, flapping their wings during the dive to the very last split-second to gain the maximum amount of speed before entering the water like a bullet. They may be propelled as much as 30 feet into the water. During that time they catch whatever hapless sardines are in the way of their open beaks. They don't care which sardines they catch. They'll take whatever is in their paths.

They then swim to the surface, fly 50 feet or so up into the air, and then repeat the whole process over and over and over again. They endlessly dive-bomb into the sea to catch whatever small fish may be in their way. They only stop when their stomachs are so full of fish that they have trouble trying to gain sufficient altitude for another dive into the sea.

As I said, on the internet you can find videos that vividly show this phenomenon.

Now **that huge shoal of fish is like all of humanity**. The gannets are like the demons, looking for people to possess. And like the gannets, so the demons endlessly "dive-bomb" into humanity, seeking people to possess, even if only for a brief time. As soon as one episode of possession is over, they circle once again to again dive into humanity, seeking whom they might possess this time. And like the gannets, they continue this process endlessly 24/7. They have an endless appetite for possessing people.

Every single day multiple millions of people around the world lose control, either in a physically violent way, or else verbally. And it doesn't last long because the demons have already moved on to find their next victims to devour. In this situation full-blown demon possession is not yet Satan's goal.

This stage is only a part of Satan's "sales presentation" to human beings. And at this stage the people still have too much resistance against any longer periods of demon possession. So the demons curtail these possessions before the possessed people themselves can actually think about what they are doing and what the consequences will be.

That is the real picture of this "level two" of Satan's influence on mankind. And mostly we are oblivious to this demonic feeding frenzy going on in the world all around us.

TWO DIFFERENT RESPONSES

When people experience these "level two" very brief periods of demon possession, they typically respond in one of two ways:

1) **They may feel a certain amount of excitement or even pride.** The reason for this response is that during that brief period of demon possession they actually felt more powerful. They saw that people around them were somewhat intimidated by their behavior.

During such a brief period of demon possession Satan's explicit purpose is to instill a certain amount of fear in the people who witness such an episode, and especially in the people against whom such an episode is directed. And Satan wants the possessed people to feel more powerful during such an episode. Satan wants them to feel that if they allow themselves to again be possessed like that, then **they are more likely to get their own way**. People around them are more likely to give in to their demands.

That is the appeal of Satan's teaser rate! The full price will only become apparent much later.

Satan in effect says: whenever you really want to get your own way, just let me come into you for a very short time and help you, and you will get your own way far more often than when you refuse my offer of help. I can give you power. And my services are free.

And because these periods of possession are so brief, it seems that they are free, that there is no price to pay. Of course that is not true, but the real price is not yet apparent to people. There seem to be no undesirable aftereffects, as far as the people who respond this way can tell. After all, they themselves are again in full control of their own minds. And they have experienced the exhilarating effects of feeling more powerful.

And so some people respond with excitement and pride to such brief episodes. And those people who are actually proud of their "hot temper" are in effect **proud of being demon possessed** for brief periods of time. Such people know that they can call on their particular demon any time without prior notice, though they themselves wouldn't see it that way; they themselves only know that they can explode in a temper outburst without needing any prior warning. They don't realize that it takes demon-possession for them to have these temper outbursts.

This is how Satan wants people to respond.

2) Alternatively, **they may feel a certain amount of fear.** The reason for this response is that they realize that they themselves were in fact not in control of their own minds when they said or did whatever they said or did during that brief episode. They understand that they themselves didn't actually come up with the words they shouted out or with the actions they performed. And that is very scary for them.

They realize that they were in effect manipulated by some outside force. They know that they were taken advantage of, very much like a woman who was made drunk by some man so that he could then rape her. These people know that during that brief period of possession they were "spiritually raped"; i.e. a demon had violated their minds! And that is extremely scary for people with this type of response.

People with this response to "level two" episodes of Satan's influence will say to themselves and to others: there is no way that I would ever say or do something like that. I know it wasn't me that said or did those things. I have no explanation for why I said or did those things, or what came over me to do that or to say that. That just wasn't me.

What "had come over them" was a demon who had taken control of their minds for a very brief period of time.

The person with this response is far less likely to be impressed by Satan's teaser rate. This individual is in fact far more likely to guard his mind much more carefully in the future. This is the individual who is more likely to resist Satan's future attempts at imposing his "level two" influence on human beings.

Now God does not want any human being to ever experience "level two" of Satan's influence. But if it does go so far that someone does experience this "level two" (and worldwide this happens multiple millions of times every single day!), then God would want people to have this response of fear to such an episode, rather than a response of excitement and pride.

Needless to say, Satan does not really want this response of fear at all from individuals who experience his "level two" influence on their lives. This response does not make someone a good candidate for "level three". On this type of individual Satan's teaser rate might have been wasted.

So people can have one of two quite opposite responses to such a "level two" episode.

One more point to note here: For "level two" influence from Satan **the affected person does not need anyone to "cast out" the demon**! At this level the affected person himself potentially still has the mind-power and the mind-control required for resolutely resisting Satan's influence. During the long periods between "level two" bouts the person is in fact capable of setting his own mind to in the future resist losing his temper when he is provoked, and to resist "flying off the handle" when he is hurt or insulted by others.

Episodes of "level two" experiences do not yet require divine intervention from God to deal with the problem. At this stage people still have access to enough power to do so themselves, though it will take a very determined effort.

FACTORS THAT PREDISPOSE TO "LEVEL TWO" INFLUENCE

The core issue with all three levels of Satan's influence revolves around who is in control of a person's mind. Is the individual himself in full control over his own mind, or is an outside force able to impose itself on his mind?

Therefore anything that will weaken a person's own control over his own mind will predispose that mind to being taken over by a demon. Likewise, any individual who does not realize that he must at all times exercise full control over his own mind also becomes a candidate for "level two". Satan also easily preys on naive people, who in the Bible are referred to as "simple ones void of understanding" (e.g. Proverbs 7:7).

Factors that weaken a person's control over his own mind include getting drunk with alcohol or taking

hallucinogenic drugs. Whenever a thoroughly drunk person says or does foolish things that he cannot remember the next day, then he said or did those foolish things while he was demon-possessed; i.e. while he was not in control of his own mind.

He can't remember those things because the thoughts needed to trigger saying or doing those things had not originated in his own thinking; they had originated in the mind of the demon that had possessed him while he was thoroughly drunk. And so those thoughts had not even entered into his short-term memory bank. While he was drunk, his mind had been "raped" by a demon.

Likewise, when people use hallucinogenic drugs, then they become demon-possessed, and the demon then stirs up "an electric storm" in their brains, producing all the weird hallucinations they then experience. So people who want to see the use of hallucinogenic drugs legalized are people who want more ready access to demon possession. Such people obviously perceive this "level two" of Satan's influence as exciting, something that makes them feel good for a short period of time.

You must always retain full control over your own mind! Never engage in any activity that would weaken your own control over your own mind. Besides not getting drunk and not taking hallucinogenic drugs, you should also never allow yourself to be hypnotized. Anyone who attempts to hypnotize you is in effect attempting to get you to hand over control over your own mind to them. And while you are hypnotized the hypnotist attempts to take full control of your mind. That is a very, very dangerous situation to be in.

Yes, such an instance of being hypnotized in the dentist's office or at some social occasion for entertainment purposes may well be harmless in itself. But it will have set a precedent that under certain circumstances you are prepared to relinquish control over your mind, and Satan will take note of that precedent. It is the consequences of such a precedent that hold great danger for you, rather than that one initial experience of being hypnotized.

[COMMENT: Above I have used the expression "thoroughly drunk" for the simple reason that many people can still have a very resolute control over their own minds when they are "mildly drunk", and for such people being only "mildly drunk" may not pose the same risk of "level two" influence from Satan. Here we are not talking about at what stage drinking too much becomes a sin; here we are talking about at what stage too much drinking makes a person more susceptible to "stage two" influence from Satan.]

Anything that leads to less control over our own minds is automatically a factor for predisposing us to "level two" influence from Satan, i.e. it predisposes us to very short term demon possession. Like hungry gannets hovering over a shoal of sardines, so the demons are poised to "dive into us" at a split-second's notice; it takes less than one one-hundredth of a second for a demon to exploit an opening in our minds. Keep this in mind.

You should now also be able to understand why God labels drunkenness as a sin. The reason it is a sin to get drunk is because getting drunk decreases your control over your own mind (i.e. in addition to destroying your liver). And **we always "miss the mark"** when we in any way diminish our own control over our minds. Never, under no circumstances whatsoever, does God want us to voluntarily give up even the smallest portion of control over our minds to someone else. We must always, while we are awake, be in complete control of our minds.

One way to express a person's eligibility for becoming a part of God's Family is as follows:

1. The person must always be in absolute control of his own mind.

2. The person must voluntarily submit the totality of his own mind to the will of God. This must be an active decision by the person himself.

To avoid "level two" exposure to Satan's influence, we must always control our minds.

He that *has* no rule over his own spirit *is like* a city *that is* broken down, *and* without walls. (Proverbs 25:28)

By "rule over his own spirit" Solomon meant "control over his own mind". With this statement Solomon was specifically talking about "level two". This is a reference to people who lose their temper. Solomon recognized that a person who has no control over his own mind is highly susceptible to becoming demon-possessed.

Earlier Solomon had already referred to the positive side of this matter.

He that is **slow to anger** *is* better than the mighty; and **he that rules his spirit** than he that taketh a city. (Proverbs 16:32)

If we are "slow to anger" it means that we ourselves are in control of our minds. We are thinking things through before we take offense or get angry. Our own mental processes are the results of us "ruling over our spirits". Proverbs 16:32 is the antidote to being affected by "level two" of Satan's influence.

So one major key for these "level two" episodes of Satan's influence is this:

They require us to take **spontaneous action**! To possess our minds for such a brief period of time Satan must get us to respond to something negative **without the opportunity to think the matter through**. Such brief periods of demon possession absolutely depend on us responding without having time to evaluate all the relevant factors.

Spontaneous negative responses to anything that might happen are always very dangerous, unless those negative reactions are in response to things that are sinful. Then a spontaneous negative response is okay.

But spontaneous responses of anger and frustration whenever things don't work out the way we would like them to work out are always dangerous. For example, **screams of frustration** because we didn't get the point we wanted to get in some sporting event **are in reality a two or three second demon possession**. Likewise, throwing or breaking the racquet or the bat or the club because we didn't get the point is also a two or three second demon possession of that person's mind. So the next time you witness one of these outbursts of frustration, understand that you have just witnessed a very brief episode of demon possession, Satan's teaser rate for the full product.

We need to understand that "level two" demon possession can be extremely brief, just long enough to vent our frustration and anger **in a totally ungodly way**, i.e. **in a demonic way**!

To be clear: when we scream out in unrestrained anger, then we have allowed a demon to enter our minds for that very brief period of time. That is precisely how demons respond when their purposes are frustrated.

Satan really is "the god of this present age". When this verse (i.e. 2 Corinthians 4:4) tells us that Satan has "**blinded the minds**" of most people on earth, it means that most people never recognize that **they have repeatedly been demon possessed**, always for very short periods of time, just long enough to forcefully violate God's ways of conducting ourselves, just long enough to briefly lose control over their own minds.

And so people put it down to the person having lost his temper, or very briefly having "lost his cool".

Every time we talk about someone having briefly "lost control", it really means that **a demon was in control of the person's mind** for that brief period of time.

All these multiple millions of episodes every day around the world are a part of **the way Satan rules his empire** as "the god" of this present age.

Are you beginning to grasp the magnitude of the influence which Satan and his demons exert today and right now over us human beings? Let's look at another example of "level two" influence by Satan.

EPHESIANS 2:2

Have you really understood the full ramifications of this verse?

Wherein in time past **you walked** according to the course of this world, **according to the prince of the power of the air**, the spirit that **now works in** (Greek "**en**") the children of disobedience: (Ephesians 2:2)

In this verse Paul was drawing a comparison between two groups of people: the one group consists of people who have come into God's Church (i.e. "you"), and the other group consists of rebellious children, which group Paul calls "the children of disobedience".

With the statement "in time past" Paul is referring to what the people had been like before they had come into God's Church.

So Paul's point of comparison is this:

Before all of you came into God's Church you were basically the same as a group of rebellious children.

At that time in your lives Satan had influenced you just like Satan influences rebellious children. **That is the comparison Paul is making here.** And then Paul explains the real problem with rebellious children. Can you see that?

Whenever we present a comparison to other people, either the point of comparison has to be immediately obvious, or else we have to spell out our meaning by becoming more specific.

For example, if we were to say to someone "you are like a bull", then people might ask themselves: what attributes of a bull do you have in mind ... strength, stubbornness, insensitivity, or what? But if we say to someone "you are like a bull in a store that sells fragile bone china dinner plates", then that removes the potential ambiguity from our intended meaning.

So here in Ephesians 2:2 Paul was likewise specific enough with his comparison to rebellious children to show what specifically he was getting at. Paul spelled out that **"rebellious children" are in fact demon-possessed**. It is the attribute of being demon-possessed that Paul had in mind in this comparison.

And while Ephesians 2:2 gives us some extremely valuable insights for principles we need to apply in our child-rearing practices, Paul himself was not thinking about child-rearing at all when he wrote this. Paul himself was thinking about adults who had come into the Church, and who needed a clearer understanding of **what they had left behind** when they came into the Church. They needed to

understand the magnitude of Satan’s influence over their pre-conversion lives.

So here is Paul’s point in this verse:

1) Satan is in control of this present evil age.

2) Before coming into God’s Church all of you conducted your lives under Satan’s influence.

3) **Satan** now, at this point in time, **is working inside of rebellious children**. The Greek preposition "en" means "remaining within, inside of".

4) So here Paul is not speaking about rebellious children being influenced by Satan from the outside, by Satan’s "broadcasts" reaching their minds, although that is also the case. Here Paul is speaking about rebellious children being controlled by Satan "**from within themselves**", i.e. by demons possessing them and in that way controlling their minds.

5) So Paul is telling us that **rebellious children are in effect demon-possessed** while they are being rebellious. That is what "the spirit working inside of those children" means, that demons are working inside of them. Paul’s meaning here should be quite clear!

6) All of you people who have come into God’s Church in Ephesus need to understand that all of you in the past have likewise experienced "level two" of Satan’s influence in your own lives, even as rebellious children are experiencing that "level two" influence right now.

That is basically the point Paul was making to God’s people in Ephesians 2:2. Had you understood that?

So in our context we need to realize that when a small child has an uncontrolled temper tantrum, then at that moment in time that child is in fact demon-possessed. It is the demon controlling the child’s mind who has initiated the tantrum and who maintains the tantrum. Satan really does work within small children at "level two". And parents of small children need to understand this.

What this means is that every single human being who during his childhood experienced one or more temper tantrums has also experienced "level two" of Satan’s influence in his own personal life.

Small children don’t yet understand that they must guard their own minds from unseen outside influences. That is why small children are an easy prey for Satan and his demons; small children have no intuitive resistance to Satan’s influence. And they are the easiest victims for Satan’s "level two" attacks.

That is why for many years I have taken every opportunity to point out that the greatest issue in child-rearing revolves around control over the child’s mind. A small child’s mind is either under the firm guidance of the parents, or it is under the control of Satan. There is no middle ground for the mind of a young child. And so the purpose of godly child-rearing is to help the child to develop restraints to unseen impulses that reach the child’s mind, because initially the child’s mind has no restraints whatsoever.

The parents of small children are always in a battle with Satan over the control of the minds of their small children. The Apostle Paul’s point in Ephesians 2:2 is that whenever a child is rebellious towards his parents, then that is evidence that Satan is working "within" that child.

And so the total number of rebellious temper tantrums that are thrown by small children around the world every single day are a part of those millions of "level two" attacks that take place every single day.

Let’s move on to the final level.

LEVEL THREE: FULL-BLOWN DEMON POSSESSION

This "level three"refers to people who **have lost almost all control over their own minds**. A demon may control their minds anything **from hours to days at a time**. In extreme cases the demon never leaves them during their waking moments.

A major difference between "level two" and "level three" is found in the person’s own perception of his personal situation. With "level two" most individuals (except for those who respond with fear to such a "level two" episode) still do not grasp that they are being manipulated by a demon. Many really believe that it is "their own temper" that they lose, and that they could control it if they wanted to do so.

With "level three" the people involved always know that they have a spirit that is influencing them, and pressuring them to do certain things. They always know that, though they may not always acknowledge this fact to other people because there is a stigma attached to such an acknowledgment.

It is no longer hidden or disguised. By "level three" the people are starting to have to pay the full price, and for them the teaser rate has long expired. By that point in time all joy and all peace and everything good has been removed from their lives. **Their lives have become miserable and pathetic.** They are helplessly under the control of the demon or demons that have taken over their minds.

If "level two" is like a drug dealer offering free samples to potential new customers, then "level three" is the stage where those free samples have produced people who are now thoroughly addicted to those drugs that they had initially received "free of charge". And for them nothing is free anymore.

At this stage people are at Satan’s mercy. But Satan doesn’t have any mercy. And so now they will be afflicted by a host of problems, which Satan can impose on them quite arbitrarily. They have become Satan’s mouthpieces and Satan’s puppets. And **all of their conduct is invariably self-destructive**.

Note carefully! At this "level three" of Satan’s influence the people themselves are in almost all cases no longer capable of getting rid of the demon with their own power. **At "level three" it becomes imperative that a servant of God casts the demon out of these people.** All of the examples that are mentioned in the New Testament were "level three" situations. And the affected people were totally helpless in dealing with the problems themselves. They needed help from outside of themselves.

Let’s now consider some of the ways in which demons will afflict human beings. And let’s also understand the limitations that demons have in this regard.

SATAN’S POWERS AND SATAN’S LIMITATIONS

Consider the examples in the New Testament of people being afflicted by demons. Here is a partial list.

Matthew 8:28-34 = demons made these two men **extremely violent**.

Matthew 9:32-33 = a demon caused the man to be **dumb**.

Matthew 12:22 = a demon caused the man to be **blind and dumb**.

Matthew 15:22 = this woman was "**grievously vexed**" by a demon.

Matthew 17:15-18= a demon caused **suicidal actions** in this child.

Mark 5:2-5 = the demon gave this man **great strength** and caused the man to engage in **self-mutilation** .

Luke 11:14 = a demon caused the man to be **dumb**.

These Scriptures give us an indication of the scope of Satan's powers in afflicting human beings. But they also reveal Satan's limitations. Can you recognize those limitations?

Note carefully!

Satan's powers to harm us human beings are restricted to Satan's ability to influence the functioning of our brains! That's the only power Satan has in his dealings with mankind!

When a demon possesses a man, then all the demon can do is impose himself on that man's brain and interfere with the way that man's brain will function. The demon can put thoughts and impulses into that man's mind. And the demon can also block and interfere with some of the electro-chemical processes that take place in a healthy brain.

We know that those processes in the brain are controlled by thoughts. **Our thoughts produce chemical reactions in our brains.** This is the premise underlying the lie-detector machine. So likewise the demon's thoughts can interfere with what happens in the person's brain. That is what demon possession is all about, getting a person's brain to function in response to thoughts generated in the mind of the demon that has taken over that person.

Let me restate that very plainly:

Demon possession is about getting the chemical and electrical processes in the brain of a human being to function in response to thoughts that were generated in the mind of the demon that is possessing that person.

In other words:

Normally any actions we perform are in response to thoughts we have processed in our minds. For example, when we get up from sitting on a chair and go outside to our car, then that is in response to us having had a thought like "I need to go to the store to buy some food". The things we do are responses to the thoughts we have processed. When a demon possesses a man, then the demon installs itself in the man's brain and from then onwards **the man's actions will be in response to the demon's thoughts**, rather than in response to the man's own thoughts. The demon's thoughts actually initiate the electrical and chemical reactions in the possessed person's brain.

That's what demon possession is like. Now as far as afflicting the possessed people is concerned:

The clear restriction is that Satan cannot directly afflict human beings with diseases that are caused by germs, bacteria, viruses or poisons. Satan can only interfere with the way a person's brain functions and processes information, causing the brain processes to respond to the demon's thoughts, rather than responding to thoughts generated by the demon's "host", i.e. the

possessed man.

You may say: what about a demon causing someone to be blind or dumb? That's where Satan has surely been able to interfere in a physical way in the person's health, right? No, actually that is not right.

When a demon causes a person to be blind, then that demon has not done anything at all to that person's eyes. The demon has only done something to the person's brain.

Likewise, when a demon causes a person to be dumb, then that demon has not done anything to that person's vocal chords or to the mechanics of speaking. Again the demon has only done something to the person's brain, and in that way the demon has taken away the person's ability to speak.

The following comments all apply equally to the abilities to see, to hear, to speak and to all the physical senses. I'll use the ability to see as an illustration.

When we see something through our eyes, then it is actually the brain that does the seeing. The light rays enter the eyes, and then they are converted into electro-chemical impulses which are passed along the optic nerve to the brain via numerous synapses. In the brain those electric impulses are then converted to the images we see. That is how we have sight.

Now when someone is blind, then that can have a range of different causes. If the eyes are destroyed, or certain parts of the eyes don't function properly, then no information is passed on to the brain, and so the person is not able to see anything. But blindness can also be induced in someone whose eyes function perfectly. In that case the light rays that enter the eyes are prevented from reaching that part of the brain where they should be converted into the images we see.

Without getting into any technicalities, the point is that it is easily possible to make someone blind not by destroying his eyes, but by preventing the brain from correctly processing information that has been received by the eyes.

So yes, someone could be blind because his eyes don't function properly. And that is certainly the cause of most cases of blindness today. But someone else whose eyes function perfectly could also be blind, because in his case his brain is not able to process the information that was received by the eyes. Something has blocked the path for that information to reach the correct area of the brain. That is something a demon can do, prevent the signals sent by the optic nerve from reaching their target areas in the brain.

In principle this is also true for all our other senses. A person whose ears function perfectly could be deaf because of a problem in the person's brain. And a person whose vocal chords function perfectly could be dumb because of a problem in his brain. When someone is paralyzed by a stroke, then it is the brain that has been damaged, rather than the muscles in the affected arm and leg. The problem is once again in the brain.

So here is what we need to understand:

Whenever a demon has caused a person to be blind or deaf or dumb or paralyzed, then **these problems are due entirely to the demon having interfered with the normal functioning of that person's brain**, much like a stroke in the brain causes paralysis in the legs. There is nothing wrong with the person's eyes or ears or vocal chords. As long as the demon remains in that person, so long that particular affliction will continue to exist.

Consider the example of the woman who could not straighten up her body for 18 years because Satan

had "bound her".

And, behold, there was a woman which had **a spirit of infirmity** eighteen years, and **was bowed together**, and could in no wise lift up *herself*. (Luke 13:11)

And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, **whom Satan has bound**, lo, **these eighteen years**, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day? (Luke 13:16)

This woman had not been able to stand up straight for 18 years because Satan had done something in her brain. Satan had "bound her", and that "binding" took place in the woman's brain.

What we need to recognize is this:

Such a person does not need to be "healed" by God, because **there is nothing wrong with their eyes or ears or vocal chords or their spine**. Such a person needs to have the demon cast out, and then the specific affliction imposed by that demon will be resolved.

So sometimes we need to ask God to heal a person, and sometimes we need to ask God to cast out a demon. Can you understand the difference? This is extremely important for the following reason.

When a person is afflicted due to physical factors, then we ask God to heal that person by applying the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, in that Jesus Christ was beaten with many stripes, to that person. But when any health problem (be it blindness or dumbness or paralysis or anything else) is caused by demon possession, then we don't ask God to apply the sacrifice of Jesus Christ to that person. When a problem is caused by demon possession, then we ask God to cast out that demon.

Can you understand this distinction?

We don't ever apply the stripes Jesus Christ endured, so that we might be healed, to anything that Satan has done!

Can you understand why it is so important that we try to discern whether some health problem is due to physical factors, or whether it is due to something that a demon has caused? 2000 years ago in Judea people always clearly recognized the distinction between these two situations. And we today likewise need to learn to correctly distinguish between these two completely different causes of health problems.

Demons need to be cast out of people, and **a person should not be anointed for demon possession**. The minister should command the demon to come out of that person, but without any anointing being involved. Dealing with demon possession does not involve the sacrifice which Jesus Christ brought for mankind.

This is made quite clear in the gospels. Notice:

And **they cast out many devils**, and **anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed *them***. (Mark 6:13)

When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and **He cast out the spirits** with *His* word, and **healed all that were sick**. (Matthew 8:16)

Do you see the distinction that is made here between people being demon possessed on the one hand, and on the other hand people being sick? Anointing is for sicknesses, but never for demon possession. This is extremely important to note. **Never should demon-possessed people be anointed!**

We should also understand that **demons like to be anointed**! They'll ask for anointing, knowing full well that **no anointing is going to make them leave that person**. Demons like to make a mockery of Jesus Christ by getting themselves anointed. So we ministers need to "try the spirits" (see 1 John 4:1) and discern those situations where a health problem is due to demon influence. 2000 years ago that was a very common situation, and all the New Testament ministers readily distinguished between demon problems and ill health due to physical reasons. We need to do the same.

When a health problem is due to demon possession, as in the above New Testament examples, then the casting out of the demon achieves a spontaneous healing. When a demon is cast out of a person's brain, then that brain will again spontaneously function normally, and the demon-caused health problems have disappeared.

The process is shown in Matthew 9. Notice:

As they went out, behold, they brought to him a dumb man possessed with a devil. And **when the devil was cast out**, **the dumb spake**: and the multitudes marveled, saying, It was never so seen in Israel. (Matthew 9:32-33)

All that was needed was that the demon had to be cast out. And once that demon was cast out, then everything that particular demon had caused was resolved! In this case the man again being able to speak was the automatic consequence of the demon being cast out.

Now you might ask: but what about a demon giving a possessed man super-human strength? Surely that shows that demons can affect more than just the brain, right? No, this doesn't show that either.

Consider Samson. Now I picture Samson as a very muscular man. However, no matter how big Samson's muscles might have been, there is no way that Samson's strength came from his muscles. The strength was in Samson's brain, because God had done something to that brain. I don't know how God did that, but Samson's strength resided in his brain.

It was Samson himself who believed that he would lose his strength if his hair was ever cut. That was a thought in Samson's mind. And so God accepted that; and when Samson's hair was cut, then God took that strength away from Samson.

Likewise, when a demon is somehow able to give certain people super-human strength, then that is also due to the demon having been able to do something in that person's brain. When such people exhibit enormous strength, that is not the strength of the demon, because demons simply don't have physical strength ... demons can't get stronger by doing push-ups and sit-ups.

Likewise, when a demon-possessed person lifts up 1000 pounds (for argument's sake), then it is not somehow the demon's strength that is doing that lifting. **Demons don't have physical strength.** The strength to lift that 1000 pounds is due to something the demon was able to do in the man's brain, even as Samson's ability to pick up the city gates of Gaza (see Judges 16:3), which weighed in excess of 1000 pounds, and to then carry those gates away, was due to something that God had done in Samson's brain.

Demons do not have any physical strength! The physical strength in a demon-possessed person comes from the physical body of that person. But something has been changed in that person's brain.

When you understand all these things, then that should give you a whole new perspective on the expression "**the power of the air**". The power of the air is the power to install itself in a human mind, and to then control all of the processes in that human mind simply by thinking certain thoughts. All of the

metabolic processes in that brain will then be in response to the demon's thoughts, rather than in response to the possessed person's own thoughts.

So what about the powers Satan had when he was dealing with Job.

SATAN'S POWERS IN THE BOOK OF JOB

I assume that you understand about the three "hedges" that God placed around Job, even as God places those same three hedges around you and around me when we try to obey God faithfully and in full integrity. If you don't yet understand that, I suggest that you read my 2007 26-page article entitled "The Real Significance of the Book of Job".

Satan referred to these hedges around Job and his family and his possessions in Job 1:10. Those hedges provide protection from Satan. However, those hedges do not prevent Satan's "level one" influence from reaching our minds. Nor do those hedges prevent us from being exposed to situations that could lead to "level two" of Satan's influence in our lives.

What those hedges do is protect us from Satan harming us. But they do not shield us from exposure to Satan's temptations.

Now the only way Satan could potentially harm us is by using other people to harm us. Satan can't do the harming himself. He can only achieve his intentions by working through individuals whom he is able to possess.

THAT IS WHY DEMONS ARE SO FANATICAL ABOUT WANTING TO POSSESS HUMAN BEINGS!

Can you understand that? They need to possess human beings just to be able to "do things".

At no point in his life before Job 1:10 had Job ever been shielded from Satan's temptations. Job had always resisted every temptation that Satan had thrown at him. And because Job had always resisted every temptation perfectly, therefore God called Job "a perfect and an upright man" (Job 1:8). God never lies! When God called Job "perfect", then that is what God meant.

Job's problems only started after Job 1:10, and not before Job 1:10. So here is what we need to understand about Satan's dealings with Job.

Satan couldn't make any headway at all against Job. All that Satan could do initially is falsely accuse Job of being utterly selfish (Job 1:9, 11). Satan is selfishness personified, and he knows that God hates selfishness. So Satan was challenging God to prove that Job's faithful obedience was not motivated by selfishness.

Notice how God responded to this challenge from Satan.

And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, **all that he has *is* in your power**; **only upon himself put not forth your hand**. So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD. (Job 1:12)

What I have explained in the past is that with this statement God was removing two of the three hedges from around Job. Only the hedge around the person of Job himself remained intact after Job 1:12. And that explanation is correct.

What I did not clarify in the past is that in Job 1:12 **God did a whole lot more than just remove two out of three hedges around Job**.

With the expression "all that he has is in your power" God was also temporarily conferring **additional power** on Satan. In other words, in this unique case of Job, God actually gave Satan additional powers, powers Satan normally does not have, for the explicit purpose of putting Job through the most grueling test Satan could think up.

To be quite clear:

From the time of Adam onwards until today Satan has not normally had the power to send fire from heaven (we'll come to Job 1:16). And neither has Satan during that same period normally had the power to send great winds and storms and hurricanes (we'll come to Job 1:19). From the time of Adam to the start of the Book of Job Satan had never had these powers to control and to manipulate the elements. And after the Book of Job right up to today Satan has also never had these powers over the elements.

Satan can never in his normal existence initiate a violent storm or send fire from heaven! **He can never do that!** So in order to bring on these violent forces of nature, **Satan must first receive that power from God**. Without receiving specific power from God, Satan is no stronger than Mickey Mouse ... and Mickey Mouse has never been known for great strength or great powers!

Satan's only power consists of taking over the brain functions of human beings and thereby manipulating human beings to do his will. But if human beings resist all of Satan's attempts to manipulate their minds, as Job had done perfectly up to that point, then Satan has zero power over them. And he has no powers whatsoever over any physical elements.

He doesn't even have the power to manifest himself, a power that God has given to His holy angels. The only option is for Satan to possess another individual, so that Satan can then manifest through that individual. It is because of this inability to manifest in any way, a power that God has granted to the holy angels but not to Satan, that therefore Satan constantly seeks human beings to possess.

He and all the demons crave to manifest themselves. But the best they can do in that regard is to possess some human being's brain, and then manipulate that human being's body and speech and actions to manifest their own minds. Satan and all the demons are perverse exhibitionists who crave attention. That is why they seek to possess people.

By the way: when people claim to have seen something floating across the room, that doesn't necessarily mean that something did actually float across the room. Such an experience can also be created in someone's brain without anything physical actually taking place. That's like the witch at Endor seeing something that Saul could not see. And, as already mentioned, it is the brain that sees rather than the eye.

It is important for us to grasp that Satan and the demons do not actually have any physical powers at all!

Anyway, what we see in Job 1:12 is **God temporarily granting Satan greater powers** to increase Satan's ability to afflict Job. Satan already knew that throwing temptations at Job wouldn't do it. So now Satan was simply going to destroy everything that God would allow him to destroy.

We need to also understand that right after Job 2:10 God immediately took away again from Satan all these extra powers which God had briefly granted to Satan. And since that time until today Satan has never again had the power to send fire from heaven or to send destructive storms. Those powers Satan only had for a very brief moment in time during the lifetime of Job.

Let’s continue with the Book of Job.

Even though God had given Satan additional powers to destroy everything that Job owned, Job remained faithful to God (Job 1:22). This proved that Satan’s accusation regarding Job being selfishly motivated was false. At no point through this first lot of trials had Job shown any selfishness whatsoever.

So that line of attack didn’t work either for Satan. Therefore Satan then made a completely different false accusation against Job. Satan claimed that if God would take away Job’s good health and afflict his body with pain and suffering, then Job would "curse God to God’s face" (Job 2:5). So now notice God’s response to this accusation.

And the LORD said unto Satan, **Behold, he *is* in your hand; but save his life**. (Job 2:6)

With this statement **God did two things**:

1) God immediately took away from Satan the special powers God had given temporarily to Satan in Job 1:12. So with immediate effect from Job 2:6 onwards Satan was once again not able to bring fire from heaven or violent storms of destruction upon anyone on Earth. The purpose for which God had temporarily granted those powers to Satan had been completed, and Satan’s accusation was proved to be false. Today Satan does not have any kind of power over any of the elements whatsoever. Satan himself cannot do anything that involves the use of physical power.

2) At the same time God gave Satan some different additional powers, powers which Satan also never has at any other times. Normally Satan cannot inflict physical diseases on anyone. He just doesn’t have that power.

[COMMENT: As an aside, here is an example of understanding the mind of God and the mind of Christ. See if you can understand the way Jesus Christ would reason. The very fact that demons are "cast out", but for sicknesses people "are anointed" (see again Mark 6:13) proves that those sicknesses cannot possibly be caused by Satan. IF those sicknesses were caused by Satan, THEN God would most assuredly not want us to anoint people for those sicknesses. Anything God would want us to anoint someone for cannot possibly be caused by Satan. Can you follow? This is exactly the same type of reasoning as was presented by Jesus Christ in Matthew 22:32 ... that "I am the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob" proves that there must be a resurrection. Anyway, just something to think about.]

The only health problems Satan can normally put upon people are those that are caused by interfering with a person’s brain activities, by having all of the chemical processes in a person’s brain respond to thoughts that originate in the mind of Satan or the demon possessing that person, and by preventing certain electro-chemical messages getting through to specific parts of the brain.

So when Satan then afflicted Job with extremely painful boils from head to toe, then that is an affliction that Satan is normally not able to put upon any human being. That is why with all the people who were afflicted with demon problems in the New Testament, not a single one of those demon-possessed people was covered with boils from head to toe. That form of affliction is never again used by Satan because normally Satan simply does not have the power to afflict anyone with boils. Most boils are caused by staphylococcal bacteria, and Satan can’t infect anyone with harmful bacteria. Satan can’t really deal with bacteria.

For the explicit purpose of testing Job, God gave Satan the power to afflict Job with any sickness of Satan’s choice. This was another temporary additional power God gave to Satan here in the Book of Job. After Satan had afflicted Job with boils, Satan disappeared from the picture. What this means is that

after Satan had selected to afflict Job with boils, God immediately again withdrew from Satan that special power of putting any health problem of his own choice upon Job, or upon anyone else for that matter.

Today Satan cannot afflict anyone with boils. Satan simply doesn't have that power.

It is a huge mistake, one that Satan would pressure all readers of the Bible to make, to believe that the special powers God gave to Satan in the Book of Job for a very brief period of time, are somehow powers that Satan has all the time. That is simply not the case!

Satan's only power today is to take over the running of a human brain, taking over the mind of a human being, to such a point that this possession regulates all the thought-processes, expressed in electro-chemical reactions in the brain, that take place in that person's mind. Apart from that, Satan doesn't have any powers that could affect us human beings.

KING SAUL AND THE WITCH

One example of demon possession in the Old Testament we should also look at involved King Saul going to consult a demon-possessed woman, a witch, at Endor. The account is recorded in 1 Samuel chapter 28.

This event happened the night before King Saul and his sons were killed in battle with the Philistines. By then Saul had been king for 40 years. By way of reference, at that point David was 30 years old.

We should note that both individuals in this incident (Saul and the witch) had been demon possessed at various times. King Saul was demon-possessed at various times after God had rejected him. This is referred to as "an evil spirit from the LORD troubled him" (1 Samuel 16:14). The witch at Endor also had "a familiar spirit" (1 Samuel 28:7). So both individuals had prior demon experiences.

In this incident Saul asked the demon-possessed woman to "bring me up Samuel" (1 Samuel 28:11). The woman then has a vision, in which she saw a demon that impersonated Samuel (1 Samuel 28:12). We should note that **King Saul himself did not see anything at all throughout this entire episode**. There was no vision for anyone else to see. **The whole thing happened in the brain of the possessed woman.** She is the only one who saw anything. Externally there was nothing for anyone to see.

And so Saul said to the witch "what did you see?". Notice how the woman described the scene.

And the king said unto her, Be not afraid: for **what did you see?** And the woman said unto Saul, **I saw gods** ascending out of the earth. And he said unto her, What form *is* he of? And she said, An old man comes up; and he *is* covered with a mantle. **And Saul perceived** that it *was* Samuel, and **he stooped with *his* face to the ground**, and bowed himself. (1 Samuel 28:13-14)

Saul did not see anything at all. So he asked the witch "what did **you** see"? The woman describes a scene of demons arising out of the earth, simulating the idea of supposedly arising out of graves. Saul then assumed that one particular man had arisen out of his grave. So Saul asked her to describe the man whom the witch had seen. She then provides a very vague description, without mentioning any specific identifying features. She says "I saw an old man covered with a mantle coming up (i.e. out of the grave)". That description could have fitted 1000 different "old men". Being "covered with a mantle" was a very convenient way of hiding the impersonating demon's own identity.

So note carefully:

The demon involved in this account was not even able to impersonate Samuel's actual physical appearance. "The mantle" very conveniently covered that up. And, as mentioned already, the whole thing only happened in the woman's brain. There was nothing for anyone else to see. The demon that possessed the witch was able to create a vision in the woman's brain. And the appearance of the person the woman saw in that vision was sufficiently vague and disguised to fit 1000 different old men.

The statement "Saul perceived that it was Samuel" tells us that Saul drew this conclusion based on the description the woman had given him. Saul still had not seen anything. And when Saul then "**stooped with his face to the ground**", he was in effect bowing before a demon. But that looking down to the ground also ensured that Saul would not realize that there wasn't anything for anyone to see at any time.

So once Saul was in this position of not being able to see anything at all, **only then did the demon speak to Saul**. But demons can't speak in a way that human beings can hear; demons cannot create sound waves that can reach our eardrums. The only way that any demon can speak so that human beings are able to hear him is for that demon to speak through a human being.

So how did the demon in this witch at Endor speak to Saul? Simple. The demon spoke through the woman's mouth, **impersonating the voice of Samuel**, whom Saul had last seen about 13 years earlier. The demon used the woman's vocal chords to speak to Saul.

Note that the demon needed to have Saul look downwards, so that Saul would not see that the voice he heard was coming out of the woman's mouth.

To pull off the impersonation, the demon obviously had to say things that Saul would have expected Samuel to say. So the demon then acts like Samuel might have acted.

So when it says "and **Samuel** said ..." (1 Samuel 28:15), and "then said **Samuel** ..." (1 Samuel 28:16), and "... because of the words of **Samuel**" (1 Samuel 28:20), then this is recorded **from Saul's perspective**. All that speaking was done by a demon impersonating Samuel's voice sufficiently well for Saul to believe that he had spoken with Samuel. The whole idea that it would even be possible to get advice from the dead had been put into Saul's mind by Satan.

The point is that in this whole incident there was nothing for anyone to see. It was just King Saul and a demon-possessed woman. First a demon made the woman see something by manipulating the woman's brain, and then that demon used the woman's vocal chords to speak to Saul, pretending to be Samuel.

One point to note about demons is that they never ever bring really good news. The only news they ever bring is bad news. (That's also the reason why demons inspire gossip, to spread bad news.) So here in this incident the demons already knew that Saul's 40 years were up and that David had been anointed 13 years earlier and that Saul would die in battle the next day. And this information, that Saul would die the next day, the demon presented in a way that seemed appropriate for Samuel to have stated this. So Saul was fooled into believing that he had spoken to Samuel.

Let's move on to our time.

WHAT ABOUT THE FUTURE?

We are living in the time of the end. When Jesus Christ returns there will be a show-down between God

and Satan, even as the events in the life of Job represented a show-down between God and Satan.

Regarding the events leading up to the show-down at Christ's second coming, we are told in Matthew chapter 24:

For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and **shall show great signs and wonders**; insomuch that, if *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect. (Matthew 24:24)

When Satan had destroyed all of Job's belongings and Job's children, Satan had done so with "great signs and wonders", including fire from heaven and a mighty storm.

So perhaps God will also very briefly give Satan some extra powers at that final show-down for this present age? However, whatever "signs and wonders" God may allow Satan to perform in the context of Christ's second coming in no way means that Satan could perform those same "signs and wonders" at will, at any time of Satan's own choosing. It doesn't mean that at all!

We need to understand that Satan has a perverse and depraved mind! In analogy, if Satan had nuclear bombs at his disposal, in no way would Satan wait until the very last moment before using those nuclear bombs at his disposal. Satan would be using them all the time, and not wait until he is almost totally defeated.

If Satan really always had the power to perform those "signs and wonders", then he most certainly would be performing those "signs and wonders" all the time, without holding back till the very last moment.

The very fact that Satan will only perform those "signs and wonders" at the time just before Christ's second coming proves that Satan can't perform those "signs and wonders" right now! If Satan had those powers right now, then he would also use them right now.

Satan never holds back from using any kind of power that is put at his disposal. He has a perverse mind! It is like the demons who, upon being cast out of a man and then given explicit permission to enter into some pigs, **immediately** caused 2000 pigs to die (see Mark 5:8-13). Satan does not understand the concept of using restraint with powers and resources at our disposal. If Satan had the power to kill any human being, then he would do so in the blink of an eye without any restraint whatsoever.

Satan is a spirit being, and he has no powers whatsoever in the physical realm, none at all. Satan cannot lift anything up, and he can't put anything down. He can't take clay and make bricks, and he can't mix dough and make bread. He can't do anything at all in the physical realm, because God has not given him the power to manifest in a physical way. And Satan most certainly cannot perform miracles!

The only power that Satan has is the ability to think, and the ability to "broadcast" those thoughts. The way for Satan and for the demons to obtain any real power is for them to take over the brain functioning of physical beings (i.e. a human beings), and to then have those brains respond to the thoughts that they, Satan and the demons, impose on the brains of the people they have possessed.

Then Satan and the demons can perform actions in the physical realm, by having the people whose brain functions they have taken over perform those actions. But Satan and the demons themselves are utterly incapable of performing anything at all in the physical realm, in which we human beings live our lives.

The only other way that Satan can do anything in our physical world is for God to give Satan certain powers for specific limited periods of time. So if God wants Satan to have the power to perform certain "great signs and wonders" just before Christ's second coming, then it means

that God must specifically give that power to Satan at precisely the time that God wants Satan to use that power, and not before then. God can never trust Satan with anything!

Now let's consider how to identify when a health problem is caused by physical factors and when it is caused by a demon, as was the case so very commonly in New Testament times.

EXAMINING THE CAUSES OF HEALTH PROBLEMS

As already mentioned earlier, it is important for us to understand the difference here. We should never anoint someone who has a demon.

The way to distinguish between these two possible causes of health problems is as follows:

1) **Is the health problem due to physical causes** like germs, bacteria, viruses, toxins, poisonous plants, a bite from a snake or a spider, an accident, etc.? Whenever it is clear that the health problem has a physical cause, then it is assuredly not caused by a demon. For example, demons cannot cause leprosy, a disease that was common in New Testament times. Leprosy always has a physical cause. And so we don't find any cases in the New Testament of demons being cast out of lepers.

Likewise, whenever the cause of a sickness or disease is immediately obvious, then no demon is involved. Satan cannot manipulate viruses and germs and bacteria. So when viruses or germs are clearly the cause of any health problem, then obviously those problems are not caused by demons.

Likewise, when a sickness is due to any organ in the body becoming diseased, then that is also not due to Satan's influence. Thus, a disease of the heart, lungs, kidneys, brain, liver, etc. has nothing to do with any demons. This includes diseases of the brain, like Alzheimer's disease and dementia in general, where brain tissue has died or become non-functional. In all of these situations the person could be anointed.

2) **If the health problem involves the mind and how the mind thinks** and reasons, then, with one group of exceptions, that health problem has assuredly been caused by Satan. However, this does not automatically mean that the person must therefore also be demon-possessed, not at all. We'll look at that point in a moment.

The exceptions for health problems that involve how the mind works are those mind conditions that are caused by a physical breakdown of the brain, i.e. they are caused by a diseased or an injured brain. Thus, if a person has problems with how the mind works as a result of traumatic brain injury or due to congenital brain damage, or as a result of diseases like dementia and Alzheimer's disease, where brain cells are progressively dying off, then these problems are certainly not caused by demons. However, while in these cases the mind problems are certainly not caused by demons, this does not mean that demons may not attempt to then take advantage of such people with diseased or damaged brains. That would be like the lions in Africa hunting down the wounded animals first.

But when a person with an otherwise healthy brain suffers from anxiety, depression, mental disorders, emotional disorders, any phobias, insecurity, suicidal thoughts, addictions, etc., then those things are evidence of Satan's influence in the life of that person. And for these things a person should not be anointed.

The key here is that Satan will always seek to exploit a mind that is weak. So when anything has weakened a person's mind, then Satan will assuredly attack that mind. Thus, physical factors may in

some way weaken a person's mind. But that weakened state is likely to then be exploited by Satan. In other words, a physical cause for a problem can in some situations lead to demon influence as a consequence.

Now for some of the conditions I mentioned above medical experts can actually find what they believe is the physical cause of these problems. And almost invariably all of those so-called "causes" involve either an over-supply or else an under-supply or even an absence of certain neurotransmitters in the brain.

In other words, these experts tell us that someone suffers from one of these mental disorders because there is too much or too little of one or more chemicals present in the person's brain. So because the person's body produces too much or too little of some biochemical substance, therefore the person supposedly suffers from this condition.

But that picture is not correct!

Exposure to all three levels of Satan's influence affects the way we think, with full-blown demon possession obviously having the greatest influence on the thoughts that are processed by the possessed person's brain.

Now the point is this: **when we think different thoughts, then different chemicals are produced in our brains**, or those chemicals are then produced in different ratios. It is the thoughts that are processed by our brains that determine what chemicals will be released and in what quantities, and what neurons will fire together.

Now when Satan is able to take over a person's mind so that Satan's thoughts trigger all of the chemical reactions in that person's brain, then Satan will absolutely ensure that chemical imbalances will result. Earlier I mentioned that demon-possessed people always engage in self-destructive behavior. That is also true for brain activity.

So an imbalance in neurotransmitters is very commonly due to Satan's influence. The person is not necessarily possessed. But the person has accepted some of Satan's ways of thinking.

Thus these imbalances can be caused by "level one" or by "level two" or by "level three" influence from Satan. It always gets back to a matter of cause and effect. When we **accept** some of Satan's ways of thinking, then that alters the biochemical reactions within our brains.

The same is true when we **reject** some of Satan's ways of thinking, i.e. when we first came to repentance and then came into God's Church. That change in our thinking also changed the chemical processes in our brains, but that time for the better. Other things being equal, real godly repentance should produce an improvement in a person's health, because the person's ways of thinking have just been made better, with the consequence that the chemical processes in the brain have also changed for the better.

A merry heart makes a cheerful countenance: but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken. (Proverbs 15:13)

These two different ways of thinking produce different chemical reactions in the brain, with one leading to good health and the other leading to poor health.

All the days of the afflicted *are* evil: but he that is of **a merry heart** *has* a continual feast. (Proverbs 15:15)

The merry heart produces chemical reactions in the brain that lead to good health.

A merry heart does good *like* a medicine: but a broken spirit dries the bones. (Proverbs 17:22)

A merry heart actually "does good" to your health because it produces chemical reactions that are good for your health. A broken spirit leads to imbalances in brain chemicals, which are bad for your health.

So as far as neuroscientists finding imbalances amongst a person's neurotransmitters is concerned: Those imbalances are not the cause of the person's mental disorder. It was **the person's wrong ways of thinking** that produced the imbalances amongst the neurotransmitters. And those wrong ways of thinking came from "the prince of the power of the air". The imbalances are a consequence, not a cause.

The cause for all mental disorders is a wrong way of thinking, a way of thinking that originated with Satan. That wrong way of thinking can already be picked up at "level one" influence. That wrong way of thinking is certainly picked up by repeated exposure to "level two" influences. And that wrong way of thinking becomes firmly entrenched with "level three" exposure.

Now **when a wrong way of thinking causes a health problem**, as it sooner or later will do, then that is not something to be anointed for. Anointing is a request for God to do something supernaturally for us, to intervene and change something in our situation. But nothing can change for us if we continue providing the cause of that health problem; i.e. if we continue to engage in the wrong ways of thinking.

The only way to solve that type of health problem is for us to eliminate the cause of the problem. The only way for us to solve these mental disorders is for us to change the way we think, so that the chemical processes in our brains can change for the better. We ourselves have to do something to achieve a cure for such problems.

To be specific:

If the mental disorder is the result of "level one" and/or "level two" exposure to Satan's influence, it means that we ourselves still have enough control over our own minds to resolve to change our ways of thinking, and to resolve to resist giving in to any future "level two" situations. In plain terms: with "level one" and "level two" the solution is for the person to repent! "**Repent**" means "**to change the way we think**". And when we do that, then the chemical processes in our brains will change for the better, and that will give us sufficient strength to resist Satan's future attempts to control our minds.

If the mental disorder is the result of "level three" exposure to Satan's influence, then the person needs help from the outside. Ideally the demon should be cast out by a servant of God. When that is not possible (e.g. the person has nothing to do with God's Church), then various helps from other people can at times provide sufficient assistance to the possessed person, that they may cope some of the time.

Think of when King Saul of Israel was demon-possessed (i.e. when he had "an evil spirit", see 1 Samuel 16:14). Whenever David played the harp, then Saul was "refreshed" sufficiently to get the demon to leave Saul (1 Samuel 16:23). In this case soothing music gave the man sufficient strength of mind to be able to resist the demon's pressure on his mind, and the demon then left Saul. Listening to David playing on the harp was equivalent to focusing the mind on a different subject. And in making the effort to focus on the music David was playing, Saul managed to wrest control over his mind away from the demon.

With any mental problems it is always helpful to force the mind to think about a completely different subject. Force the mind to think about something else that will require attention and concentration. If the person is actually willing to put his mind to the new subject, then that will often break the demon's hold

on the man’s mind.

Think of it like a wrestling match. When the demon controls the man’s mind, that is like the demon having the man in a headlock. When the man then actively forces his own mind to think intensely about a completely different subject (music, cooking, doing mental maths, playing tennis, running, gardening, swimming, solving puzzles, etc.), then that is like breaking the headlock and being once again in control of the match.

Now the point in King Saul’s case is this: once the demon had actually left the man, then the man should have engaged in activities to strengthen his mind, so that when the demon would later return, then he would be able to resist the demon from entering his mind. Obviously King Saul didn’t do that.

The best possible way to strengthen the mind is to get on our knees and to beseech God for help. A demon-possessed person can’t bring himself to get on his knees before God. But in those cases where the demon sometimes leaves the person, the person actually has the opportunity to develop some resistance to future attacks before the demon once again tries to "dive-bomb" into his mind. Most people in that type of situation never make use of that opportunity, which is very unfortunate.

This was explained by Jesus Christ in Matthew 12.

When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walks through dry places, seeking rest, and finds none. Then he says, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he finds *it* empty, swept, and garnished. Then goes he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last *state* of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation. (Matthew 12:43-45)

Once the demon leaves a person, whether cast out or whether for any other reason, then **the affected person must immediately take action**! It is inevitable that those people who do not take evasive actions will again become demon-possessed. That is what Jesus Christ was pointing out.

A formerly possessed person cannot leave his mind "empty, swept and garnished" without guaranteeing that the demon will return. The formerly possessed person must **fill his mind with solid defenses** against future attacks from marauding demons. Demons always try to go back to their old haunts.

So if the demon is cast out of a person whose mental disorder was due to "level three" influence from Satan, then that person has the immediate responsibility to prepare to resist future attacks on his mind.

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. (James 4:7)

Both the submission to God and the resistance towards Satan need to take place in a person’s mind. Resisting Satan involves **resisting the mental pressure that Satan puts on people**. Keep in mind that mental pressure is all that Satan himself can ever do to us.

Satan himself cannot harm us physically in any way, other than conditions that are caused by the way our brains work. And if we do indeed resist Satan’s attacks on our brains completely, then Satan himself cannot actually do anything at all to us! All he can then do is try to influence other people to do things to us (i.e. to make life difficult for us). But Satan himself is then powerless to do anything to us.

But we must always guard our minds! The Apostle Peter made the same point.

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walks about, **seeking whom**

he may devour: Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. (1 Peter 5:8-9)

Do you understand what Satan is actually doing when he is seeking people "to devour"? What exactly is Satan looking for?

Satan is constantly trying to look at the minds of human beings. Now Satan can't actually look into our minds the way God is "a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Hebrews 4:12). As Paul said in the next verse: "all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with Whom we have to do" (Hebrews 4:13). But **that is not so for Satan**. Satan can't actually see our thoughts, because thoughts can only be "discerned" by God alone.

So when Satan "walks about", he is looking for **the consequences of our thoughts**; i.e. Satan looks at what we say and what we do, and he also looks at our "body language", especially when we are totally in private. Satan understands that "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks" (Matthew 12:34).

These things, what we say and how we say it and what we do and our facial expressions and our body language, these things tell Satan the state of our mind.

These things tell Satan a great deal about us, even as they would tell us a great deal about someone, if we were able to constantly watch them 24/7 without their knowledge. And so even though Satan can't actually "read" our thoughts, in many instances he nevertheless still has a fairly accurate picture of what is going on in our minds.

So Satan is looking for minds that he can infiltrate. He does this by exposing us to some of his thoughts, i.e. to temptations. Exposure to Satan's thoughts causes metabolic activities in our brains, in the same way that our own thoughts cause metabolic activities in our brains. Those metabolic activities in turn bring Satan's thoughts into our conscious awareness. We now have a wrong thought, a temptation, and typically we have no idea how that thought came into our minds. It was a "level one" attack from Satan.

Peter's admonition to us is that we must then actively resist that wrong thought which seemed to have come into our minds from nowhere. Conscious, active and resolute resistance to a temptation then triggers further metabolic activities in our brains, which will help to strengthen our resolve to resist that temptation.

A major key for resisting wrong thoughts from Satan is, as already stated, to take active control of our minds by engaging in specific positive activities, which will then focus our minds on doing things that are true, honest and just (see Philippians 4:8). Actively doing positive things forces the wrong thoughts out and the right thoughts into our minds. Do something that requires your close attention, like playing golf or tennis or swimming or gardening or baking a cake or playing a musical instrument or go for a walk or a jog or work on reconciling your bank statements or do a woodwork project or study the Bible, etc.

Any of these activities are the equivalent of "changing the subject". In a conversation when someone asks you a question about something that you don't really want to discuss, then you sometimes try to just change the subject, right? You've probably done that at various times in the past. You should deal with wrong thoughts Satan puts into your mind the same way, just change the subject, and often that will get rid of the wrong thoughts.

But when we do deal with wrong thoughts by just changing the subject, keep in mind that usually we have to stay with that changed subject for a while, long enough to get Satan to "flee from us" (James 4:7 again). Changing the subject sends the message to Satan that "I'm not interested in those wrong thoughts".

WHY DEMONS FEAR BEING CAST OUT

Satan is the author of competition. Satan is also ruthless and doesn't have any positive feelings for anyone else, not even for the demons that obey his rule over them. On human terms, Satan is like a ruthless gangster who would sell his own mother if there was a reward on her head.

Satan is also the author of the spirit of competition, which is just one particular manifestation of selfishness.

Notice what Jesus Christ said about Satan:

And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, **Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation**; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand: And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then **his kingdom** stand? (Matthew 12:25-26)

Jesus Christ showed that Satan has organized his demons into a kingdom; and Satan rules that kingdom with an iron fist. So Satan does not just let his demons go here, there and everywhere. Satan controls which demons go to which areas. That's what is meant by Satan not being divided against himself. If Satan did allow his demons to just go wherever they chose to go, then that would bring his kingdom "to desolation".

Now it is also clear that **demons** that possess any human being **fear being cast out**! Notice:

And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? **are You come hither to torment us before the time?** (Matthew 8:29)

And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with You, Jesus, *You* Son of the most high God? **I adjure You by God, that You torment me not**. (Mark 5:7)

The demons know that at Christ's second coming they will be bound for 1000 years, and after a short period of release they will then be bound for all future eternity. That will be torment for them. But back then the demons also knew full well that they were not going to be bound at Christ's first coming. So **the demons in Matthew 8:29 assuredly did not mistakenly believe that Christ was coming to bind them right then and there**. They knew that would not happen at that time. Yet they still feared being cast out. Why?

The fear of those demons was not "our final destiny is closer than we thought". No, the demons feared being cast out of a human being for other reasons. Why that fear? Couldn't they just go and possess the next person down the road ten minutes later? Why this fear?

It is also rather weird, to say the least, for a demon to say to Jesus Christ "I adjure You **by God**" (Mark 5:7). Why would a demon ever appeal to God for support? The point is that being cast out of a man amounts to torment for a demon.

So here is my speculation:

I suspect that Satan runs his kingdom like an ultra-competitive franchise operation! He rewards his demons based on performance. So when a demon has done extremely well in performing thousands of "level two" possessions, with a good number (from Satan's point of view) leading to "level three" possessions, then Satan rewards that demon by giving him a franchise over a certain territory of this

earth.

He has now been given the authority by Satan to conduct total possessions within his franchise area. Within Satan's kingdom that demon has risen to the "prince of Greece" or "prince of Persia" status (see Daniel 10:20), or his franchise may just be over a few cities. But he has achieved a certain amount of status enabling him to possess someone full time. That is like a promotion for that demon.

I suspect Satan also has a rule that says: "You had better get a really good hold on that person's mind. If for any reason you are ever cast out of that person, then you will forfeit the franchise I have given you. You will then no longer have your own territory to control. So make sure that you are never cast out of anyone whom you possess. It is only if the possessed person dies that then you will not lose your territory."

To lose the territory he had "worked so hard for" is a tormenting thought for that demon. In Satan's kingdom the only office that is permanent is Satan's own position. But all the other positions are based on performance, to promote competition amongst the demons. Satan's system is like telling the a cabinet minister: "if you mess up, then you will be demoted to the position of junior clerk in the lowest-level office of your department. And then you will once again have to work your way up from there. So never take your position for granted."

And any demon that is cast out has in Satan's eyes "messed up". So it is a tormenting thought for a demon to face the prospect of being cast out of a human being, meaning that the demon will no longer have the means to manifest himself through the words and deeds of the person he had possessed.

I suspect that this is the reason why the demons named "Legion" in Mark 5 pleaded for permission to go and possess a herd of 2000 pigs. Normally it is impossible for demons to possess animals. And they knew that Christ would certainly not let them possess any clean animals, let alone any other human being. But they hoped that Christ might make an exception when the animals were unclean and unfit for human consumption.

The intention of the demons, I believe, was to immediately lead all the pigs to their death. This the demons did do. Their reasoning might have been: technically we weren't really "cast out"; technically speaking we just switched to a different host. And when that new "host" (i.e. the pigs) died, then their deaths was the cause why we had to come out of them. So the normal consequences for being "cast out" should not really apply to us.

Therefore we should still be eligible for retaining our franchise for this particular area. Mark 5:10 shows that the demons pleaded with Jesus Christ to not "send them away out of the country", i.e. please don't make us forfeit our franchise for this area with Satan. Jesus Christ obviously understood quite clearly what the demons meant when they asked not to be sent out of that country.

Anyway, **this is just a speculation**, so take it with a grain of salt. But there must be a reason why demons feel tormented at the prospect of being cast out of a human being, when in many cases they can almost immediately possess another human being down the road. Back then the demons all knew that they still had another 2000 years for possessing people, before they would be bound for 1000 years. That is why I suspect that there must be more to the demons feeling torment at being cast out.

IN CONCLUSION

Do you now have a clearer understanding regarding how Satan rules his empire and how he seeks to influence human beings? Let's summarize some of the main points:

1) Satan seeks to influence us on three different levels. Satan’s intention is to lead as many people as possible to "level three" via a sliding scale of exposure to Satan’s influence.

2) "Level one" is "demon influenced". Every human being (apart from Jesus Christ) has been affected by this level of Satan’s influence. The statement that "Satan has deceived the whole world" refers specifically to this level of influence.

3) The key for "level one" is that the affected person always remains in control of his own mind, even when sinning in response to "level one" exposure. At no stage in "level one" is some outside force in actual control of the affected person’s mind.

4) "Level two" is "very brief demon possession". This may last anywhere from a second or two to several minutes. This level of Satan’s influence is evidenced when people are not in control of their own minds for very short periods. Examples include: people losing their temper, unrestrained verbal outbursts of anger and resentment, angry uncontrolled screaming, rebellious disobedience in young children, a drunk person saying utterly stupid or perverse things, experiences under the influence of hallucinogenic drugs, etc.

5) The key for "level two" is that the person is in control of his own mind almost all of the time, except for those very short periods of time. At this "level two" stage Satan does not yet exact a price for those brief episodes of demon possession, when the people very briefly relinquish control over their own minds.

6) Worldwide these brief "level two" episodes happen multiple millions of times every day. Most are never recognized for what they really are ... very brief episodes of demon possession.

7) To keep things simple, I have not tried to distinguish any stage that might be placed between "level two" and "level three". However, in practice in many cases these "level two" episodes become longer and longer, eventually lasting a few hours at a time in some people. This is a clear progression towards "level three". Since this situation has no distinguishing features that are not present in "level two" or in "level three", I have not tried to turn it into a separate category in its own right. But we should be aware that when these episodes of "level two" start to become longer for someone, then the person is approaching "level three".

8) "Level three" is full-blown demon possession. At this stage the person is demon-possessed for anything from hours at a time to many days at a time. In extreme cases the demon never leaves them while they are awake.

9) It is at this stage that Satan starts to collect the price for demon possession. The price is that all joy and all happiness and all pleasure has been taken from their lives. Their lives have become filled with misery, pain and suffering. Nothing is capable of giving them any joy. Their frame of mind and their demeanor reflects Satan’s own frame of mind. All their behavior becomes self-destructive.

10) The key for "level three" is that the person has almost no control at all over his own mind. So in discussions with people at "level three" any reasoning that is presented by them will have originated in the mind of the demon that is dwelling within them. It has become impossible for them to present or to accept sound, logical reasoning.

11) So Satan’s influence on human beings progresses as follows:

A) It starts with exposing all human beings to Satan’s thoughts and attitudes **from the outside**. Those thoughts came from outside of our human minds. Think of this level as **Satan sending us an endless stream of junk mail**. It fills our mailboxes, but it didn’t originate with us. And some of it sounds quite

good to us.

B) This **then** progresses to **a little bit of influence from the inside**, achieved by a demon periodically very briefly taking over the mental processes in a human mind. Think of this level as us allowing a demon to **sometimes answer the phone on our behalf**, because it seems that in some situations that demon just knows better how to deal with certain undesirable callers.

C) If left unchecked, this will in some cases progress to **total influence from the inside**. By this point the demon has taken over the total identity of the possessed person. Think of this as **full-blown identity theft**. It is as if the demon has established bank accounts and lines of credit in the possessed person's name, and even forged identical photo I.D. and fingerprint profiles. The demon is now in complete control of the possessed person's life.

12) We need to understand that God has not given Satan and the demons the power to manifest themselves in any way that could be discerned by human beings. The angels of God can appear in human form, but Satan and his demons cannot do that.

13) This inability to manifest themselves in any way whatsoever is extremely frustrating for the demons. They have no powers whatsoever in the physical creation. Whatever powers they may have had in this regard in the past, God has taken away from them. That is extremely frustrating and humiliating for all the demons, to the point of almost being "painful" for them. It is like Satan and the demons want to shout out to the whole world "here we are ... look at us", and no human being can see them or hear them. And so they are ignored.

14) It is this almost painful situation that drives demons to possess a human being. To possess a human being is like a demon finally having his own house and thereby establishing an identity for himself. And most important of all, possessing a human being empowers the demon to finally "be heard" and also "to do stuff". The fact that what they then say and do through the people they possess is utter rubbish is immaterial to them. Just to be able to control the mind of a human being gives the demons a mental "high"; it is like an intoxicating experience for the demons.

15) Most of the demons have become thoroughly stupid! That's what a permanent state of rebellion against God will do to any thinking mind, stultify that mind. And so demons make the people they possess do stupid and self-destructive things. Think of that as the demons expressing their personalities.

16) Modern science has shown us that the thoughts we think produce electro-chemical reactions in our minds. What we should understand is that **thoughts are the link between spirit and matter**; they represent a non-physical activity, which activity is then in the human brain converted into microscopic chemical reactions. In other words, our thoughts are generated by the spirit in man, and in our brains they are then converted into physical material chemical reactions, thereby making the transition from spirit to matter.

17) In demon possession the demon thinks the thoughts which produce the chemical reactions in the human brain. Those chemical reactions then produce a feedback to the possessed mind, thereby influencing the thinking of the possessed person. So this process looks as follows:

A) thoughts in a demon's mind **>>>** chemical reactions in a human brain

B) those chemical reactions in a brain **>>>** influence the human host's mind

C) this produces changed thoughts in the possessed person's mind

D) in this way the possessed person's own thoughts have been changed.

18) If we think different thoughts, then there are changes in those reactions in our brains. Those electro-chemical reactions in our brains lead to us having "experiences". All of our physical senses are experienced not at the organ of origin (i.e. not with the eye or the ear or the nose or the hand, etc.) but by the brain interpreting messages that are sent to it from these organs.

19) In effect our lives are controlled by the messages that are received by and interpreted by our brains. Normally we are in control of those messages that reach our brains; i.e. those messages are the result of thoughts we ourselves think, and of things we see, hear, taste, touch, smell and do. Our thoughts are generated by the spirit in man.

20) Demon possession is the process whereby a demon installs itself into a person's brain. Once installed in place, it is the thoughts of the demon that then produce the electro-chemical reactions in the brains of possessed people. In that situation the demon can also stop the messages that are sent to the brain by various parts of the body, preventing the brain from responding to those messages.

21) The first ability, i.e. to use the thoughts from the demon's mind to replace the host's thoughts in running the body, enables the demon to speak through the possessed person and to have the possessed person think just like the demon thinks.

22) The second ability, i.e. to interfere with messages that are sent to the brain and to replace them with messages of the demon's choosing, enables the demon to afflict the host with any number of mental and emotional health problems, as well as things like blindness, deafness, paralysis, etc. All these things can be achieved by the demon's thoughts changing and interfering with the electro-chemical reactions in the person's brain.

23) So the health afflictions that a demon can impose on a human being are limited to things that can be achieved by interfering in the processing of information within the human being's brain. Demons can never afflict a human being with sicknesses or diseases that are caused by germs and viruses or poisons.

24) It is of the utmost importance that ministers never anoint people who are demon-possessed. Anointing is an appeal to the sacrifice Jesus Christ brought for us human beings. And that sacrifice can never be applied to anything that a demon has caused.

25) So sicknesses that have a physical cause, which is the case most of the time in our world today, can be anointed for. And demon possession and any health problems caused by demons need to be dealt with by casting the demon out. Ministers need to recognize when a demon is involved in a health problem that is brought to the minister.

26) Whenever a demon is cast out, or whenever a demon-caused problem has been resolved, then the person involved needs to take immediate positive action to prevent a recurrence of the problem, i.e. to prevent the demon coming back with seven other more perverse demons in tow.

27) The New Testament makes clear that it is possible for many demons to simultaneously possess one person. When that is the case, then that person will in time also manifest "multiple personalities", with each demon wanting to have a chance at presenting his identity. We need to understand what we are dealing with, if we ever come across someone with multiple personality disorder, now more frequently known as dissociative identity disorder.

28) Lastly, we need to be sure that we never get to the point where we fear Satan. We need to always

remember that Satan’s influence is restricted exclusively to trying to change the way we think, to conform with his way of thinking and to impose his thinking on our minds. When we resolutely resist Satan, then he will flee from us.

Well, that’s about it. Some of the things I have presented in this article may well still need to be further examined or modified? So look upon this article as a start to a better understanding of just how Satan seeks to influence us, without intending it to be the final word on this subject.

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