

# HEALING AND DELIVERANCE

## Casting Out Demons

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In this series of messages, I have spoken to you about the central role of prayer in your life, and the promise of mercy and healing that accompanies such a life. Today, we begin to look outward, to the supernatural impact we may have, in Jesus' name, on others around us.

Our theme Scripture for this series is Acts 10:38—

*“You know that God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. Then Jesus went around doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.”*

“Demons” are only specifically mentioned in the four Gospels and acts (the first five books of the New Testament). The Old Testament, refers instead to “evil spirits.” Satan, of course, is mentioned by name almost 1300 times in both Old and New Testaments.

What can be confusing, is that evil spirits are sometimes identified as “from the Lord,” as if to say, “God sent an evil spirit.” This challenges our sometimes narrow view of God as an innocent character, unacquainted with evil, or, at least, having nothing to do with it. And, it begs the question: What is God's relationship with evil, and with Satan?

To answer that at least briefly, we need first to thoughtfully read four passages of Scripture.

The first passage is the figurative language of an ancient prophecy—that means this is not textbook language, but poetry, crafting imagery with words; it does not mean that it is unreal or imaginary, but it does require studying the image to find the actual. I will point out several of the pertinent details along the way.

Ezekiel 28

<sup>11</sup> *Then this further message came to me from the Lord:* <sup>12</sup> *“Son of man, sing this funeral song for **the king of Tyre**. Give him this message from the Sovereign Lord: “You were the **model of perfection**, full of wisdom and exquisite in beauty. <sup>13</sup> **You were in Eden**, the garden of God. Your clothing was adorned with every precious stone—red carnelian, pale-green peridot, white moonstone, blue-green beryl, onyx, green jasper, blue lapis lazuli, turquoise, and emerald—all beautifully crafted for you and set in the finest gold. They were given to you on the day **you were created**.”*

<sup>14</sup> I ordained and anointed you as **the mighty angelic guardian**. You had access to the holy mountain of God and walked among the stones of fire. <sup>15</sup> “You were blameless in all you did from the day you were created until the day evil was found in you.

<sup>16</sup> Your rich commerce led you to violence, and you sinned. So I banished you in disgrace from the mountain of God. I expelled you, O mighty guardian, from your place among the stones of fire. <sup>17</sup> Your heart was filled with **pride because of all your beauty**. Your wisdom was corrupted by your **love of splendor**. So I threw you to the ground and exposed you to the curious gaze of kings.

<sup>18</sup> You defiled your sanctuaries with your many sins and your dishonest trade. So I brought fire out from within you, and it consumed you. I reduced you to ashes on the ground in the sight of all who were watching. <sup>19</sup> All who knew you are appalled at your fate. You have come to a terrible end, and **you will exist no more.**”

Clearly, this was no human king. In fact, Tyre was presided over by a prince (addressed in the first part of chapter 28), so who was the “king”? Apparently, he was a spirit king, who guided Tyre’s prince. He was as old as the Garden of Eden, he was created not born, he was a guardian angel, and when he became proud and greedy he lost it all.

The second passage, from the prophet Isaiah, picks up the story from the point of this creature’s expulsion from Heaven, and discloses his name, Lucifer (Morning Star (Venus) or light-bearer), and the nature of his sins.

Isaiah 14

<sup>12</sup> “How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations! <sup>13</sup> For you have **said in your heart: ‘I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides of the north; <sup>14</sup> I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.’** <sup>15</sup> Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, To the lowest depths of the Pit.

Five times, he asserted what he would do, ascending higher and higher, until he would be equal with God. To his five “I wills” God uttered just one: “You will be brought down.” Any question about who got their way?

“Yes,” [Jesus] told them, “I saw Satan fall from heaven like lightning! (Luke 10:18).

To sum up our findings so far: Satan was once an elevated servant of God, a heavenly angel, who was blinded by pride and blindsided by greed; he deceived himself regarding his capabilities and corrupted himself inwardly, paying the awful price of expulsion from his heavenly estate and eventual destruction.

But he hasn't been inactive! Now, here's a backstory, revealing Satan's permits and limits, and who's actually holding his leash. It's a glimpse into the heavenly places, which cover and surround real persons and real events on earth.

## Job 1

<sup>6</sup> One day the members of the heavenly court came to present themselves before the Lord, and **the Accuser, Satan**, came with them. <sup>7</sup> "Where have you come from?" the Lord asked Satan. Satan answered the Lord, "I have been patrolling the earth, watching everything that's going on."

<sup>8</sup> Then the Lord asked Satan, "**Have you noticed my servant Job? He is the finest man in all the earth. He is blameless—a man of complete integrity. He fears God and stays away from evil.**"

<sup>9</sup> Satan replied to the Lord, "Yes, but Job has good reason to fear God. <sup>10</sup> You have always put a wall of protection around him and his home and his property. You have made him prosper in everything he does. Look how rich he is! <sup>11</sup> But reach out and **take away everything he has**, and he will surely curse you to your face!"

<sup>12</sup> "All right, **you may test him**," the Lord said to Satan. "Do whatever you want with everything he possesses, **but don't harm him physically.**" So Satan left the Lord's presence.

Satan thought he was challenging God, but God was setting him up. Initially, it appears that Job was the bait, but in the end Job was the overcomer. Satan was permitted to touch Job's stuff, but not to touch his person.

## Job 2

<sup>1</sup> One day the members of the heavenly court came again to present themselves before the Lord, and the Accuser, Satan, came with them. <sup>2</sup> "Where have you come from?" the Lord asked Satan.

Satan answered the Lord, "I have been patrolling the earth, watching everything that's going on."

<sup>3</sup> Then the Lord asked Satan, "Have you noticed my servant Job? He is the finest man in all the earth. He is blameless—a man of complete integrity. He fears God and stays away from evil. And he has maintained his integrity, even though you urged me to harm him **without cause.**"

<sup>4</sup> Satan replied to the Lord, "Skin for skin! A man will give up everything he has to save his life. <sup>5</sup> But reach out and **take away his health**, and he will surely curse you to your face!"

<sup>6</sup> "All right, do with him as you please," the Lord said to Satan. "**But spare his life.**" <sup>7</sup> So Satan left the Lord's presence, and he struck Job with terrible boils from head to foot.

<sup>8</sup> Job scraped his skin with a piece of broken pottery as he sat among the ashes. <sup>9</sup> His wife said to him, "Are you still trying to maintain your integrity? Curse God and die."

<sup>10</sup> But Job replied, "You talk like a foolish woman. **Should we accept only good things from the hand of God and never anything bad?**" So in all this, Job said nothing wrong.

Round two. Satan was permitted to touch Job's health, but not to take his life. So, according to this passage, who is in charge of your stuff? Who is in charge of your health? Who is in charge of your life? Then, what do you have to fear?

Evidently, Satan is completely at God's disposal. He requires God's permission for anything he wants to do to God's people. God sets the limits, and Satan cannot go beyond them. God is totally in control.

## Jesus' Example

The fourth passage describes a face-to-face encounter between Jesus and Satan. Observe Jesus' manner—calm, not threatened, steady—and observe His method—He relied solely on the Word of God, countering each test with a relevant Scripture.

Luke 4

<sup>1</sup> Then Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan River. He was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, <sup>2</sup> where he was tempted by the devil for forty days. Jesus ate nothing all that time and became very hungry.

<sup>3</sup> Then the devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become a loaf of bread."

<sup>4</sup> But Jesus told him, "No! The Scriptures say, 'People do not live by bread alone.'"

<sup>5</sup> Then the devil took him up and revealed to him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. <sup>6</sup> "I will give you the glory of these kingdoms and authority over them," the devil said, "because they are mine to give to anyone I please. <sup>7</sup> I will give it all to you if you will worship me."

<sup>8</sup> Jesus replied, "The Scriptures say, 'You must worship the Lord your God and serve only him.'"

<sup>9</sup> Then the devil took him to Jerusalem, to the highest point of the Temple, and said, "If you are the Son of God, jump off! <sup>10</sup> For the Scriptures say, 'He will order his angels to protect and guard you.

<sup>11</sup> And they will hold you up with their hands so you won't even hurt your foot on a stone.' "

<sup>12</sup> Jesus responded, "The Scriptures also say, 'You must not test the Lord your God.'"

<sup>13</sup> When the devil had finished tempting Jesus, he left him until the next opportunity came.

Jesus returned from that experience "full of the power of the Spirit" and demonstrated His divine authority.

"So Jesus healed many people who were sick with various diseases, and **he cast out many demons**. But because the demons knew who he was, he did not allow them to speak" (Mark 1:34).

These passages make plain the fact that authority over demons, even Satan Himself, rests in the hands of God alone, and has been extended to humans through God's Word, the Bible. However, the Bible is not a book of magical incantations, which, if you say them correctly—use the right words, say them in the proper order, with the right inflection, or at the proper volume—will work every time. The authority of God's words is only released to the individual whose heart is yielded to God's purposes.

To say it another way, God's words, spoken by the prompting of God's Spirit, accomplish God's will. This is the source of authority over demons: it is delegated authority from God. We now know the source of this authority.

## Delegated Authority

Jesus conferred His authority to His disciples, empowering them to cast out demons also.

<sup>13</sup> *Afterward Jesus went up on a mountain and called out the ones he wanted to go with him. And they came to him.* <sup>14</sup> *Then he appointed twelve of them and called them his apostles. They were to accompany him, and he would send them out to preach,* <sup>15</sup> **giving them authority to cast out demons.** (Mark 3:13-15)

<sup>5</sup> *Jesus sent out the twelve apostles with these instructions: "Don't go to the Gentiles or the Samaritans,* <sup>6</sup> *but only to the people of Israel—God's lost sheep.* <sup>7</sup> *Go and announce to them that the Kingdom of Heaven is near.* <sup>8</sup> **Heal the sick, raise the dead, cure those with leprosy, and cast out demons. Give as freely as you have received!** (Matthew 10:5-8).

Mark finished the story for us: <sup>12</sup> *So the disciples went out, telling everyone they met to repent of their sins and turn to God.* <sup>13</sup> *And **they cast out many demons** and healed many sick people, anointing them with olive oil.* (Mark 6:12-13)

<sup>1</sup> *One day Jesus called together his twelve disciples and **gave them power and authority to cast out all demons** and to heal all diseases.* <sup>2</sup> *Then he sent them out to tell everyone about the Kingdom of God and to heal the sick.* (Luke 9:1-2)

We now know the scope of this authority—over all demons and all diseases—within God's will, in time and space. But authority is only half the package; we also need the power, and the seat of the power is in us, not God. Here's a clue: remember Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane? He prayed, "Not my will, but Yours, be done" (Luke 22:42). What does that look like?

## In the Name of Jesus

<sup>38</sup> John said to Jesus, “Teacher, we saw someone **using your name** to cast out demons, but we told him to stop because he wasn’t in our group.” (Mark 9:38)

This person was “using” Jesus’ name to expel demons, and it worked, because there **is authority in the name of Jesus, like no other name.**

<sup>12</sup> There is salvation in **no one else!** God has given **no other name** under heaven by which we must be saved. (Acts 4:12)

Be cautious: it’s possible to know the name and lack the power. Let’s look a little deeper.

Philippians 2

<sup>5</sup> **You must have the same attitude** that Christ Jesus had.

<sup>6</sup> Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to.

<sup>7</sup> Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, <sup>8</sup> he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal’s death on a cross.

<sup>9</sup> Therefore, God elevated him to the place of highest honor and **gave him the name above all other names,** <sup>10</sup> that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

That’s where the power comes from—the exalted name of Jesus! And it is universally effective. Furthermore, it can be exercised by official deputation; that is, this power can be conferred on others as authorized agents of Christ. Jesus spoke of this at the end of Mark’s Gospel.

<sup>17</sup> “These miraculous signs will accompany **those who believe in my name: They will cast out demons,** and they will speak in new languages. <sup>18</sup> They will be able to handle snakes with safety, and if they drink anything poisonous, it won’t hurt them. They will be able to place their hands on the sick, and they will be healed.” (Mark 16:17-18)

As Luke recalled, the apostle, Paul, demonstrated the proper use of Jesus’ name to expel a demon.

<sup>16</sup> One day as we were going down to the place of prayer, we met a demon-possessed slave girl. She was a fortune-teller who earned a lot of money for her masters. <sup>17</sup> She followed Paul and the rest of us, shouting, “These men are servants of the Most High God, and they have come to tell you how to be saved.”

<sup>18</sup> *This went on day after day until Paul got so exasperated that he turned and said to the demon within her, “I command you **in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.**” And instantly it left her. (Acts 16:16-18)*

I do not have authority over demons, but Jesus does! And I can stand in His authority. I get to represent Him. I get to use the authority of His name to achieve *His* will (not my own). And so do you!

This then is the source of the necessary power: the exalted name of Jesus Christ. And that power is released through those who serve *His* will and purpose.

This power also has a scent. That’s right! People who have it, smell differently than people who don’t. Let me add, that it is a smell that is spiritually discerned. Jesus can smell the difference, and demons can smell the difference. Here are two examples.

### **The Scent of Power**

Matthew 7 (NET)

<sup>21</sup> *“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter into the kingdom of heaven—only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven. <sup>22</sup> On that day, many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, didn’t we prophesy in your name, and **in your name cast out demons** and do many powerful deeds?’ <sup>23</sup> Then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you. Go away from me, you lawbreakers!’*

The people Jesus spoke of thought that their deeds would recommend them for the Kingdom, but they didn’t have the smell of Kingdom people (their hearts had a different fragrance).

Acts 19

<sup>13</sup> *A group of Jews was traveling from town to town casting out evil spirits. They tried to use the name of the Lord Jesus in their incantation, saying, “**I command you in the name of Jesus, whom Paul preaches, to come out!**” <sup>14</sup> Seven sons of Sceva, a leading priest, were doing this. <sup>15</sup> But one time when they tried it, the evil spirit replied, “I know Jesus, and I know Paul, but who are you?” <sup>16</sup> Then the man with the evil spirit leaped on them, overpowered them, and attacked them with such violence that they fled from the house, naked and battered.*

Sceva’ sons couldn’t just take up Jesus’ name as an incantation; they lacked the proper scent.

This scent is the result of a devoted life of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Demons know it, and fear it. Jesus knows it, and uses it.

## Actual Practice

Encounters with demons are not so common for us in the USA, as they are in other parts of the world. I believe that is because of the enduring influence of the Gospel message in the structure and systems of our nation. However, as you may be aware, the roots of Gospel influence suffer atrophy, for lack of regard and protection, and their fruit diminishes. Christian influence will erode, as long as Christians fail to take their faith seriously enough to *live* by it. As that happens, encounters with demons are going to become more common.

What are we to do? How should we respond? The guidelines are simple:

- Get ready
- Know your real enemy
- Stand your ground
- Pray in the Spirit
- Speak the Word in the name of Jesus

You will find most of them described in Paul's letter to the church in Ephesus.

Ephesians 6

<sup>10</sup> *A final word: Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. <sup>11</sup> **Put on all of God's armor** so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil. <sup>12</sup> **For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies**, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places.*

<sup>13</sup> *Therefore, put on every piece of God's armor so you will be able to **resist the enemy in the time of evil**. Then after the battle you will still be standing firm. <sup>14</sup> **Stand your ground**, putting on the belt of truth and the body armor of God's righteousness.*

<sup>15</sup> *For shoes, put on the peace that comes from the Good News so that you will be fully prepared. <sup>16</sup> In addition to all of these, hold up the shield of faith to stop the fiery arrows of the devil. <sup>17</sup> Put on salvation as your helmet, and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.*

<sup>18</sup> ***Pray in the Spirit** at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere.*

As for the final step (speak the Word in the name of Jesus), we have already seen the example of Jesus, facing down Satan in the wilderness. However, in actual use, I have mostly seen what I would call "blind demands," like, "I rebuke you!" and "Satan, I command you to go." These are well-intended, but often ineffective, and if you have practiced "blind demands," you have probably been frustrated by the lack of effect, as I have.

Jesus did not make such frenetic demands; He was calm and confident.



I believe this traces back to the source of the authority—God’s words, aimed at God’s purpose. We know many of God’s words, but may remain uncertain of God’s purpose in a *specific* situation, at a *specific* time. Often, as in Job’s case, ultimate purposes are delayed (Satan is allowed to gain ground temporarily) in order to achieve interim purposes—smaller steps toward the larger goal (when, ultimately, Satan’s plan will be overthrown).

Jesus knew God’s purpose and responded accordingly. If you aren’t sure, just stand your ground in faith; no need to make a scene.

Revelation 12

<sup>10</sup> *Then I heard a loud voice shouting across the heavens, “It has come at last—salvation and power and the Kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ. For the accuser of our brothers and sisters has been thrown down to earth—the one who accuses them before our God day and night. <sup>11</sup> And they have defeated him **by the blood of the Lamb and by their testimony**. And they did not love their lives so much that they were afraid to die.*

But they did die (those martyrs). And this passage is followed by the revelation of the Beast and his awful activity in the earth. Those were interim purposes, preceding the final victory. Do not be afraid of God’s interim purposes! They may bring unpleasantness, or pain, or grief, or loss, but He will see you through and the other side will be glorious.

Trust in God! Cast out the devil. His only remaining power is to distract and deceive. Don’t let him! Know the Word of God. Rejoice and do the will of God.

Luke 10

<sup>17</sup> *When the seventy-two disciples returned, they joyfully reported to him, “Lord, **even the demons obey us when we use your name!**”*

<sup>18</sup> *“Yes,” he told them, “I saw Satan fall from heaven like lightning! <sup>19</sup> Look, **I have given you authority over all the power of the enemy**, and you can walk among snakes and scorpions and crush them. Nothing will injure you. <sup>20</sup> **But don’t rejoice** because evil spirits obey you; **rejoice because your names are registered in heaven.**”*

Is your name registered in Heaven? In the final analysis, that’s all that really matters. Conquering your own sin is far more important than casting out demons.

Have you asked Jesus Christ to forgive you and invited Him to be the Lord of your life?

His Word says, “*Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved*” (Romans 10:13).

If you want to walk in authority and power over demons, recognize that Jesus has already conferred His authority on you (no mere man can do that). Then, come to Him with a mind to renew your trusting dependence on Christ and purpose to see His will, not yours, accomplished.

You don't have to sniff out demons or chase them down. Just determine to stand your ground in the truth of God's Word.