

## **CHAPTER 8**

### **RESISTING DEMONS – AN INTRODUCTION**

*<sup>8</sup>Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.*

*1 Peter 5:8 (NASB)*

*<sup>1</sup> Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him.*

*Zechariah 3:1 (NASB)*

*<sup>1</sup> Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.*

*Matthew 4:1 (NASB)*

*<sup>11</sup>to keep Satan from gaining the advantage over us; for we are not ignorant of his designs.*

*2 Corinthians 2:11 (NIV)*

*<sup>27</sup> and do not give the devil an opportunity.*

*Ephesians 4:27 (NASB)*

*<sup>13</sup> For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. <sup>14</sup> No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. <sup>15</sup> Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will be according to their deeds.*

*2 Corinthians 11:13-15 (NASB)*

*<sup>38</sup>You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.*

*Acts 10:38 (NASB)*

*<sup>1</sup> But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, <sup>2</sup> by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron, <sup>3</sup> men who forbid marriage and advocate abstaining from foods which God has created to be gratefully shared in by those who believe and know the truth*

*1 Timothy 4:1-3 (NASB)*

Most Christian writers and preachers avoid the subject of demons entirely. They may address dozens of other themes, but demons won't be one of them. That may be because they don't understand demons or don't even believe in them. Or, perhaps, it is because they fear being criticised for being 'simplistic' or 'old-fashioned' if they take demons seriously and accept literally what the Bible says about them.

On the other hand, some people become obsessed with demons and over-emphasise them, over-state the extent of their power and say inaccurate things about how to resist them. They also put forward wild ideas and theories about 'spiritual warfare' which don't come from the Bible but from their own experiences, or what they have heard other men say or just from their own imaginations.

Both groups are probably unconsciously compensating either for the silence and neglect, or the errors and excesses, of the other camp. I hope to make neither of these mistakes. Instead, my aim is to approach this study of demons in a calm, balanced, orderly and biblical way, without either exaggeration or complacency and without under-stating, over-stating or mis-stating anything. That is a tall order and you must be the judge of whether it has been achieved.

In particular, I intend to take seriously *and literally* everything the Bible says about the nature, objectives and activities of demons. I shall not rely on my own experiences and opinions or on those of any other men *as a basis for any doctrine*. Nevertheless, I will refer to some of my own experiences, and those of people I know, but only to *illustrate or explain* what the Bible teaches, not in order to *prove* any point.

It is very important that we never present any such experiences or opinions as a *basis* for any doctrine or belief. When it comes to doctrine, whether concerning demons or any other issue, we must rely solely on what the Bible says and on nothing else and on nobody else, no matter how famous or “important” they may be.

If the Bible doesn’t say it then it is just some man’s opinion and has no authority. It may be a sensible point, and even helpful, but unless the Bible says it, it does not have any authority and can only be treated as an opinion which we need to weigh and assess to decide whether to accept it or not.

The Bible has a fair amount to say about demons, including *what* they do and *why* and also *how* they go about it. That said, it has even more to say about the problems caused by our own *flesh* nature, which draws us to sin and also the influence of the *world system*, which seeks to squeeze us into its mould and to get us to conform to its standards.

That is why I began this book by addressing the flesh and the world first rather than starting with demons. It is important to get our theological foundations properly laid and get everything into proportion and within its wider context so that demons are seen as one of the three battles we have to fight, not the only one.

Although I will admit that demons possibly cause us fewer problems than we cause for ourselves through our own flesh, the fact remains that the Devil and his demons are a major menace and are widely under-estimated. They deceive, distract, demoralize, divide, discourage, intimidate and obstruct us in far more ways than most of us realise.

Even those of us who are willing to accept that demons are active in our lives are usually unaware of how significant and extensive their influence really is. More importantly, whether you believe their influence is small or large, the point is ***we are commanded to resist them***. The Bible says so and there is no getting away from that. As with any other command, it creates a clear duty, which we have to obey. It’s not optional.

But we can’t obey it by merely ignoring demons because ignoring is not the same as resisting. Indeed, it is the opposite of resisting them. Therefore, we are obligated to do all we can to *learn how to resist* demons. And to do that we need to study what the Bible says about them.

Any failure to carry out such a study is a major omission on our part, for which we will pay a high price in terms of yet more victories for the demons and defeats for ourselves. However, instead of facing this

issue squarely, the majority of Western Christians think, say and do little or nothing about demons. Many even go so far as to say explicitly that they don't believe demons exist at all.

Others would not go that far but, for all practical purposes, they may as well not believe in demons, because ignoring them produces the same end result. That is, if all we do is to ignore demons, we give them uncontested access to our lives and let them do their wicked work, unrecognised and unresisted as if we were a security guard who sleeps in his cabin all day and doesn't bother to patrol the site.

Some might ask *why* God allows the demons to be at large and to cause all this trouble and be such a continual hindrance to us. Why doesn't He just send them to the Lake of Fire now, or even chain them up, as He will do in the future, during the Millennium? (That, by the way, is what Revelation 20 is actually talking about, not the present day.) The Bible doesn't give us a full answer to that question.

But, what we can say is that God *does intentionally allow them to be active*, just as He allowed Satan to cause havoc in the life of Job. He was an exceptionally righteous man, with whom God was pleased. Yet, God still gave Satan express permission to attack Job, albeit that He laid down strict boundaries which Satan was not allowed to cross.

At least one of God's purposes in giving the demons such ongoing freedom, while they wait to be sent to the Lake of Fire, is that *He actually wants them to oppose us*, (though not to defeat us.) But, we might ask, why would God want that? Why would He tell us to resist them and, at the same time, allow them to attack us?

The answer has to do with the wider purposes that God has for our time on this Earth as disciples. He wants to use it to enable us to grow in character and, in particular, to learn how to be what the Bible calls '*overcomers*'. That is someone who '*overcomes*'. This is a major theme in the Scriptures, but one which very few people ever notice and even fewer preach on.

For example, you will note that in Jesus' seven letters to the churches in the book of Revelation, *overcoming* is very important to Him. It plays a major part in determining the rewards and crowns etc that Christians will receive at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Please refer to my Book Four for a full discussion of this.

The point is, however, we cannot be overcomers unless there is something to overcome. That is where the demons come in. Evidently, God does not consider the ordinary difficulties of this life, by themselves, to be an adequate testing ground for us. Therefore, at least one reason why He permits the demons to oppose us, in addition to us facing all our normal problems, is to provide us with some heavy-duty opposition.

They create opportunities for us to learn through the struggles we face. Those battles also show God what we are made of. The demons' ongoing attacks and schemes create a lifelong series of tests of our character, in particular of our courage, faithfulness, effort, endurance, perseverance and determination.

It may assist to think of it in terms of this analogy. Consider a boys' school football team. My son played in a number of them when he was younger. I fully supported his team, and him in particular, and I always wanted him to do well and to win. However, my support for him did not prevent me from allowing the other team to go on to the pitch to oppose him and his team.

They would tackle my son, take the ball from him, mount attacks of their own and even score goals against his team. Sometimes he might even be fouled. But I did nothing to stop it and I never intervened. One could then equally ask me the same question that we have asked of God. That is why did I allow that opposing team to get anywhere near my son and his team?

Why did I not repeatedly run onto the pitch myself to stop those other players from tackling my son? Why not bar them entry to the school altogether? Indeed, why were they ever invited to play in the first place? The answer, of course, is that if I had not allowed those players from the other school to go on to the pitch and oppose my boy, he would never have developed the skills of a footballer.

So, in opposing my son, they were actually helping him, in the long term, though neither he nor they would have seen it that way at the time. More to the point, they were also serving my purposes and my plans for my son's life. If they had not been there, it would have been like it used to be at home, in the evenings, when my son and I would play football on our own, just the two of us.

I would usually be in goal and he would run around on our large garden tackling imaginary players and then take shots at me. Sometimes he would get past four or five of these non-existent players before shooting. But it wasn't the same as when there were real opponents in a genuine contest.

But you might say that where that analogy falls down is football is just a game, whereas the demons can cause us real harm, because they fire live ammunition and are not merely playing. That is true. In His wisdom, God has allowed us to be exposed to more than just a game. It is a real war in which people get hurt. Nevertheless, the purpose is the same.

It develops our characters and turns us into overcomers, provided we actually engage in the war as combatants, rather than stay out of it or sleep through it. My argument, in conclusion, is that we all need to take demons seriously and resist them, as we are commanded to do. They really do exist and, as we have just seen, they even have a useful purpose from God's perspective.

If we don't take them seriously we have no chance of resisting them. But, at the same time, we must always remember to avoid the errors of *fearing* them, which we never need to do, and/or of becoming *obsessed* with them. What we need, as always, is *balance*. We must be concerned but not afraid, confident but not complacent, and vigilant but not obsessed. Plus we must believe everything the *Bible* says, but not necessarily what *people* say.

**Our battle against Satan and his vast army of demons has to be fought at both a personal, one to one level and also at a cosmic level, "*in the heavenly places*".**

When we speak of resisting demons we need to be clear in our minds that there is a difference between resisting the particular demon or demons allocated to harass and obstruct you personally at what we might call "ground level", and resisting that same demon, or even the whole demonic realm, operating at a higher level in what the Bible calls the "*heavenly places*".

*<sup>12</sup> For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.*

*Ephesians 6:12 (ESV)*

But what are the “*heavenly places*” and where are they located? The short answer is they are situated within the “*second heaven*”. The Bible speaks of three heavens. The first heaven is just the atmosphere which touches the surface of the Earth and extends upwards. The third heaven is much higher and is Heaven itself, where God currently lives.

Therefore, the second heaven is in between those two. It is not touching the surface of the Earth but is higher up in the upper atmosphere approaching what we call Space. It is there, up above us, where this aspect of spiritual warfare takes place. It may sound odd, but there it is. So, the “*heavenly places*” are located in the upper atmosphere, but *what* are they?

The Bible clearly shows they are the arena where conflict takes place between on the one side, Jesus, the angels *and the Church* and, on the other side, Satan, his senior lieutenants and all the demons. Therefore, not all of our resistance to the demons takes place at ground level within our homes, churches and workplaces. Some of it occurs at a much higher level where conflict, arguments and disputes are worked out and each side wins or loses particular battles.

In case you are not convinced that the heavenly places involve confrontation, and that it is a form of conflict in which we are meant to be involved, note that word ‘*wrestle*’ in Ephesians 6:12 above. Wrestling is not a gentle, passive, relaxing activity. Neither is it peaceful.

Indeed, with the possible exception of boxing, it is hard to think of anything more exhausting than wrestling. It uses every muscle and nerve and it is no coincidence that the Holy Spirit chose that word to describe the way we are supposed to act within the heavenly places. We are not there as tourists but as part of a war in which we ourselves are assumed to be taking an active part as combatants.

When you try to picture the heavenly places, which you need to do in order to operate at that level in prayer and proclamation, you must see it as a place of conflict. And see that conflict as involving you. Therefore, proclamation needs to be seen as something which can, at times, be warlike, aggressive and confrontational.

See yourself as being engaged in a wrestling match over an issue in your life or another person’s life or over the well being of your children, or your church, or even of your nation. The key point is there is a place in the Christian life for warlike prayer. We are not meant to be one club golfers and so we need a full range of clubs in our golf bag. That range of options will include supplication, praise, worship, thanksgiving, and confession of sin, but also aggressive, warlike proclamation at appropriate times.

Some of those battles fought out within the heavenly places are on a large scale affecting whole nations and worldwide movements and issues. But some of them are on a much smaller scale, affecting only you, your family, your church or your workplace.

That is true, despite the fact that the battle is being fought at that very high level with you and your prayers and proclamations making a difference within the heavenly places. So, the issues over which you are “wrestling” may be personal or local but the arena within which your “wrestling match” takes place is not local. It is high above us in the heavenly places. And that fact needs to become real to you and feel real.

The words you speak, if said in faith, help to determine the outcome of conflicts which then have their outworking in your life at ground level, not only at a national or international level. One could view the heavenly places as being a bit like the House of Commons in the UK or the House of Representatives in the USA. Many battles are fought in those chambers and sometimes the right side prevails but at other times evil prevails. It depends on the numbers who turn up on each side and the determination and warlike spirit of those taking part.

Moreover, not every argument or speech in the House of Commons is about national or international issues. Much of it is about local issues affecting only one MP's constituency or perhaps even the life and welfare of one individual constituent. And I believe the battles in the heavenly places operate in the same way affecting not only whole nations, but also single individuals.

The thing I am trying to get across, which most of us never realise is *we are part of the arena or forum* where these battles take place. That is to say it is not just Jesus alone who is seated in the heavenly places. *So are we – the Church*, and that includes you if, and only if, you are willing to take this seriously and act upon it.

***<sup>6</sup> and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,  
Ephesians 2:6 (NASB)***

Therefore, each of us, if we know this, and believe it, and are willing to act upon it, are *entitled to take part in those battles* being waged at a strategic level, high above the Earth in the heavenly places. That must be so because, in so far as Jesus is seated in the heavenly places, **so are we**.

This has to mean something and it makes us far more than mere spectators watching Jesus and the angels fight for us. Otherwise, the Holy Spirit would not have used the word 'wrestle' in Ephesians 6:12 as we saw earlier to describe what we do there. Spectators don't wrestle. They just sit and watch.

Your position as an individual Christian is rather like being an ordinary person in your day job or within your family or church but having in addition to that a seat in the House of Commons which entitles you, as of right, to enter the Chamber and to speak in debates and to fight for your constituents. Of course, most of the time, an MP is not speaking in the House of Commons, or even sitting in the Chamber at all. But the point is he has *the right to be there when he chooses to be*.

I believe the same applies to us because I take the Bible literally on this and I believe you should too. If you do, it will transform the way you see yourself, and how you speak in prayer and, above all, in proclamation. You will not view yourself just as little you, a lowly bank clerk or greengrocer, but as having the mighty and exalted position of being a member of the Church, part of the body of Christ, and of the bride of Christ.

That means you individually are *authorised to participate in the battles waged in that forum* – the heavenly places. You have a right of access or a right of audience, as lawyers say, entitling you to speak there. I find it helpful to picture it being a little bit like the House of Commons with rows of green benches facing each other and with King Jesus sitting on the front bench alongside the archangels Michael and Gabriel and other senior figures.

Behind them are multitudes of angels and some individual Christians sitting on the "back benches" listening, and also speaking on issues raised there. I say "some" because it only involves those

Christians who know they have a right to speak there and who exercise that right. Most of us don't. Then, on the opposing benches, are Satan, his senior lieutenants and all the host of demons he rules over sitting behind him and jeering, accusing and insulting those of us who are on the other side.

It helps to use your imagination in this way to try to picture what the Bible speaks of. The Bible is so brief and gives so little description and explanation of certain things, in particular the heavenly places, it is easy for the reality of it to pass you by when you read it. Many think it just sounds like flowery poetic language which doesn't really mean anything tangible. But it really does. It is literal.

The heavenly places are real and we really are seated there, *or at least entitled to be*, albeit that most of us don't know that and never take up our 'seats' or speak in any of the debates. We are like people getting on with our daily lives without even knowing we have the letters "MP" after our name and are lawfully entitled to speak in the House of Commons *if we choose to*.

There is a difference therefore between resisting demons at a personal 'one to one' level, which we can do in all sorts of ways, and resisting them at a higher level within the heavenly places. Most of this book is focused on the battles we face at a one to one 'micro' level against the individual demons sent to oppose us personally at "ground level" and to harass our family, our church, our business or our workplace.

However, when we engage in proclamation, some of it is done at a higher "macro" level and affects issues and situations far beyond ourselves. Nevertheless, it is also true that much of it is done at a personal 'micro' level. Therefore, proclamation is a weapon we can use at both an individual level to contend for ourselves and our families and churches, but also at a much higher level to affect what is going on in our corrupt governments and institutions and to resist what the senior demons are doing there.

The point is that some of our proclamation is targeted at the higher level of spiritual warfare within the heavenly places where both the angelic realm and the demonic realm contend with each other. But some of our proclamation, albeit that it is addressed to the heavenly places, is used to give us the victory over the demons at ground level.

In both cases we are operating within the heavenly places in our proclamation but sometimes the issues are personal and at other times national and international. So, the demons are contending with us in our own lives and in our homes and churches, and we can resist them there, at that ground level, and in all sorts of ways.

But the point is we can and should *also* resist them by what we proclaim into the heavenly places. So, proclamation and warlike prayer in the heavenly places is a valid part of how we are meant to resist demons but it is not the only way. We must resist them in many other ways too, as the following chapters will address. I hope the balance of that has been made clear. We need to do all these things.

Demons can only be in one place at any given time. However, they can move around freely and, in my opinion, they can do that very rapidly, such that an angel or a demon can travel around the world in seconds if they want to. That would explain how they can be with us at one moment and up in the heavenly places shortly afterwards.

The Bible doesn't say they can move rapidly like that and so I have no authority to cite for that assertion. It is just my personal opinion but I think it makes sense and fits the facts of our experiences and is consistent with the whole rationale of them operating in the air rather than on the ground. How else could they travel back and forth from the heavenly places to your home or church if they could not move rapidly?

Note also in the birth narrative of Jesus in Luke we see an angel of the Lord accompanied by a multitude of the heavenly host, i.e. angels praising God. It does not say they are in the air rather than on the ground but that seems implied, especially as we are told these angels then went away "into Heaven" which means they flew up to the third heaven which is a long journey. Yet it seems it is done very quickly. Moreover, even in conventional warfare, aeroplanes and missiles get around faster than tanks or marching soldiers.

*<sup>8</sup> And in that region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup> And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. <sup>10</sup> And the angel said to them, "Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people; <sup>11</sup> for to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. <sup>12</sup> And this will be a sign for you: you will find a babe wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." <sup>13</sup> And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,*

*<sup>14</sup> "Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace among men with whom he is pleased!"*

*<sup>15</sup> When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us."*

*Luke 2:8-15 (RSV)*

### **There is a hierarchy among the demons. They have different levels of power and influence**

We shall look at a number of passages which confirm the existence of a variety of different ranks of demons, with different levels of power and authority. As we saw in chapter seven, we know that there are three main orders of created beings, i.e. the angels (and archangels) and above them the seraphs and above them the cherubs, and that Lucifer was the most senior of all the cherubs.

However, what I am less clear on is the precise rank structure or hierarchy amongst the demons. My belief is Lucifer gained all or almost all his followers from among the angels, rather than from the seraphs or cherubs. But what I don't know for sure is how those demons are now ranked in order of authority. We know they do have a rank structure as can be seen from these verses which speak of levels of both angels and demons within the heavenly places.

The point is that the various words used in the Bible to refer to the ranks or levels of power and authority within the heavenly places apply equally to both angels and demons. That makes sense actually, because the fallen angels who are now demons used to be angels and were ranked and classified in the same way then as they are now.



In short, both sides appear to have the same rank structure, just as the British and German armies in World War 2 both had colonels, brigadiers, major generals, lieutenant generals and so on. It seems clear that when the demons were cast out of heaven they kept the same rank structure and titles.

***<sup>10</sup> so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places.***

***Ephesians 3:10 (NASB)***

I have quoted Ephesians 3:10 in the NASB as it is a new translation and it chooses to use the words “*rulers and authorities*”. However, older translations like the KJV and RSV translate the same Greek words differently as “*principalities and powers*”. I mention that just to avoid confusion because each of us may be familiar with one or the other version. Here it is in the RSV:

***<sup>10</sup> that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places.***

***Ephesians 3:10 (RSV)***

But there are other verses too which refer to the rank structure in the heavenly places. I won’t quote them all, but here are a few:

***<sup>12</sup> For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.***

***Ephesians 6:12 (NASB)***

***<sup>16</sup>For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him.***

***Colossians 1:16 (NASB)***

In case anyone is wondering why I maintain that these rank structures also refer to demons and not just to angels, as some suppose, consider how in Ephesians 6:12 above they are referred to as “*spiritual forces of wickedness*”. That can only mean demons, not angels. Note also that in Colossians 2:15 below we are told concerning the rulers and authorities that Jesus “*made a public display*” of them and also “*triumphed over them*”. Likewise, this cannot possibly refer to angels and must therefore refer to demons, even though the same ranks and titles are used:

***<sup>15</sup>When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him.***

***Colossians 2:15 (NASB)***

So, even in those few verses, we see references to four different levels or ranks of demon and others are spoken of elsewhere. The ones we see here are:

- a) *rulers* (also referred to as principalities)
- b) *authorities* (also referred to as powers)
- c) *thrones*
- d) *dominions*

The Bible doesn't define each of these persons, titles or ranks as far as I know, or tell us exactly how they differ from each other in power or role or in their areas of responsibility. But, if we focus for a moment just on the evil side of the heavenly places, i.e. how the demons operate there, it might be helpful to picture it in terms of how Nazi Germany was organised.

Therefore, we might think of the leading figures who served Hitler and helped him to rule Germany. Some of these were the *Gestapo*, the *SS*, the *OKW* (which was the High Command of the armed forces), or even a unique rank Hitler created for Hermann Goering, the head of the *Luftwaffe*, called the "*Reich Marshal*".

There were also many other bodies and organisations which were responsible for ordinary policing, spying, organising the Holocaust, administration, government ministries and so on. Any large, complex group has to be organised into ranks and levels and also has to create sub groups with specific authority for particular tasks or projects.

I believe Satan does the same with his most senior "officers" and those who serve under them. Indeed, so does Jesus in the way He organises His senior angels on the 'good side' of the heavenly places. And, as we have seen, the same titles are still used on both sides for the various ranks.

As we must keep reminding ourselves, it is the place where both Jesus and Satan, angels and demons, and also we in the Church, operate and contend in the spiritual war that is raging. It is a huge arena and therefore those operating within it, on both sides, need to be divided up into ranks and levels. There is no alternative but to do so.

The metaphors the Bible uses for the demonic (and angelic) hierarchy within the heavenly places where both sides operate is therefore very reminiscent of how armies and governments are organised. That isn't a coincidence. The angels and demons arrange themselves in that way because it is the obvious system to adopt.

We do the same in our own armed forces with a strict rank structure and in governments too with descending stratas of National Governments, Devolved Assemblies, County Councils, District Councils, Parish Councils and so on. It is the obvious way to do things and it is how things are done in Heaven so it's hardly surprising that the demons would be arranged on similar hierarchical lines.

Accordingly, the demons allocated to oppose you and me at a personal level will probably be the equivalent of a lowly 'private' or 'lance corporal' in the Army. But some important person with a major ministry, or some church doing a lot of good work, might be assigned a 'sergeant', a 'lieutenant' or even a 'captain', metaphorically speaking. But whatever rank of demon deals with you, he will be required to report back to his supervisor just as any human employee has to.

### **What happens in the "*heavenly places*"?**

The Bible never tells us exactly what happens in the heavenly places, or precisely how they operate. But I believe the analogy of them being a bit like the House of Commons is a reasonable one and people have found it helpful in being able to grasp how to deal with the heavenly places.

However, another way I picture them is to think in terms of a large company that you might work for, such as Rolls Royce or Ford. Imagine you work on the shop floor as a fitter or mechanic or as a cleaner.

Some of the decisions affecting your work and what you are meant to do will be made at ground level by your immediate supervisor who is himself a “blue collar” worker just one or two ranks higher than you.

However, then picture in your mind the senior management of that company such as the directors, heads of departments, senior managers and so on. Imagine them all working in a different part of the factory, perhaps on the top floor of a posh office block, with deep carpets, and expensive wallpaper.

I see that office building occupied by senior managers of many different ranks, as being a bit like the “heavenly places”. I think of the heavenly places as being where strategy is formulated, where the major decisions are made, where instructions are issued and the organisation is managed. If we think of the heavenly places in these terms it may be helpful in making sense of it all.

I believe it is where both the senior angels and demons make important decisions, formulate policy and issue instructions to those below them in the chain of command. Therefore, for you to operate in the heavenly places is a little bit like a blue collar worker walking into the senior managers’ block and speaking up about issues which are causing difficulty on the shopfloor, knocking on managers’ doors, reminding them of the company’s rules and procedures, and making requests or even insisting on action being taken.

Alternatively, you could view it as being rather like a divisional or brigade headquarters in wartime. That is yet another helpful metaphor to enable us to picture how the heavenly places operate. A military HQ is behind the lines but those within it are directing what goes on at the front, and it is there that the biggest decisions are made.

Of course, the angels are also in the heavenly places and they too are active alongside the demons but I am focusing for the moment on the heavenly places from the demons’ perspective since it is only they whom we are resisting. That said, I believe proclamation can also be used to support the angelic realm in what they are doing and in inviting God to use them and strengthen them in the battles they are involved in.

Therefore, in our prayers of supplication but also in our proclamations, we are affecting not only what happens at ground level within ourselves and our families but also what happens in the “House of Commons” or in the ‘management office block’ or at the demons’ (or the angels’) brigade HQ where the senior “officers” are located. You choose whichever of those metaphors most resonates with you.

I believe our prayers and our proclamations are of effect and have significance at both ground level and in the ‘House of Commons’, ‘management block’ or ‘headquarters’. They have effect all the way up the chain of command in both the demonic realm and the angelic realm.

Sadly, we can’t cast those demons out of the heavenly places. They are fully entitled to be there and to be active in pursuit of their goals (until, as we saw, they are cast down to the earth at the mid point of the Tribulation). But I believe we can hinder them and resist them in what they seek to do in the heavenly places, just as we can resist them at ground level when we contend with the individual demons who are personally assigned to us.

**In what sense are Jesus and even we, “seated in the heavenly places”? What does it all mean?**

Ephesians not only refers to the existence of the ‘heavenly places’ but also says that both we, and Jesus, are “seated” there. That is a curious phrase, and the Bible doesn’t fully explain or define it. So what does it mean? Let’s look at two passages:

*<sup>20</sup>that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, <sup>21</sup>far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. <sup>22</sup>And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, <sup>23</sup>which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.*

*Ephesians 1:20-23 (ESV)*

*<sup>4</sup>But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, <sup>5</sup>even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ--by grace you have been saved-- <sup>6</sup>and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,*

*Ephesians 2:4-6 (ESV)*

Whatever the heavenly places are exactly, the inescapable fact is that it is a place where authority is wielded and that both Jesus and we Christians are entitled to be “seated” there. The Holy Spirit who inspired the Bible wants us to know that. Being ‘seated’ is an expression which signifies having a position of authority and influence and the right to speak and be heard. The heavenly places aren’t defined in Scripture so far as I can see. Therefore, we have to do our best to interpret it using general biblical principles, common sense and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

If we extend the analogies I offered above about the heavenly places being like a House of Commons or a management block at a factory or brigade HQ behind the lines, where senior management make important strategic decisions, then the image of being “seated” there clearly implies we are given *the right to speak into and influence what happens there*.

“Seated” can’t mean just being a mute spectator who isn’t allowed to speak there as the same word is used of Jesus and He would hardly be forbidden to speak. Besides, as we saw earlier in Ephesians 6:12, mere spectators don’t “wrestle”. So, however that wrestling operates in practice, it clearly involves conflict.

The strangest fact of all is that the heavenly places are not occupied solely by Satan and the demons, but also *by Jesus, the angels, and we who are in the Church*. Both sides are present, as in the House of Commons on opposing rows of benches. Therefore, don’t make the mistake of seeing the heavenly places as somewhere where only the demons are present or where they get all their own way and call all the shots. It isn’t just you alone versus the entire demonic realm.

The Bible presents it as a place where high level spiritual battles are conducted. That means it is a “two way street” and a place of conflict, like any debating chamber, battlefield or conflict zone. My own favourite image is to view it as a huge House of Commons or House of Representatives where the demons and Jesus, and the angels, and the Church, have a right to speak.

It is a strange image, admittedly, but it fits in with what the Bible teaches. It illustrates how we are contending not only at a one to one personal level in our home with the demon(s) assigned to us, but

also at a far higher level in the place where major decisions are made affecting vastly more people than just yourself. In that sense, therefore, we are far more significant than most of us realise and we have powers, rights of audience and levels of authority that most of us are not using because we don't even know they exist.

That battle or 'debate' is conducted using the 'weapons' of prayer, thanksgiving, praise and worship but also, more to the point, in our proclamations. That is to say in the way we proclaim God's Word, declare His promises, and speak out His principles in faith with the whole spiritual realm on both sides listening to what we are announcing, and claiming, in faith.

The point we have to grasp and which needs to become real to us is that proclamation in particular is a weapon just as if we were firing a missile or throwing a grenade. God's Word has power and has great effect when *wielded by a person who believes it*.

When we engage in proclamation, the audience includes Jesus Himself, the Church, all the angels and archangels plus the whole demonic realm at all levels, and they all know the difference between people who truly believe God's Word and confidently rely on His promises and those who don't. Listen to my four audio talks on proclamation for more detail. However, I will address it further in this book and explain a little more about how we are meant to use proclamation and how to go about it.

### **What does it mean that Jesus is "*the High Priest of our confession*" and how does that affect the way we use proclamation?**

This is a big subject, requiring a book of its own, but I shall try to deal with it briefly. We need to begin by realising that at different stages in His career, Jesus operates primarily in three different roles or ministries. He actually has far more roles than these, but I shall discuss only three of them and then focus on the second. So, we might put it like this:

- a) When he came in His incarnation as Jesus of Nazareth, and had His earthly ministry in Israel, Jesus operated as a *prophet* for about three and a half years.
- b) After His resurrection and ascension Jesus has operated, for the last 2000 years, as a *priest* and He does so within the heavenly places as well as in Heaven.
- c) After His return to the Earth, Jesus will operate as a *king* reigning over the whole Earth from Jerusalem during the 1000 year Millennium.

We shall focus on this second ministry, the one He has now, whereby Jesus is operating as a priest, in fact as our High Priest. As I discuss in much greater detail in my article on the Law of Moses, this priesthood that Jesus now has is not the same as the Aaronic priesthood that operated until the Law of Moses ended.

To be that kind of priest a man had to be both of the tribe of Levi and a descendant of Aaron. But Jesus is neither, as He is from the tribe of Judah. So, His priesthood is of a very different kind and we are told it is "*after the order of Melchizedek*":

<sup>5</sup> *So also Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by him who said to him,*

*“Thou art my Son,  
today I have begotten thee”;  
<sup>6</sup> as he says also in another place,  
“Thou art a priest for ever,  
after the order of Melchiz'edek.”  
Hebrews 5:5-6 (RSV)*

The purpose of a priest, and especially a High Priest, is to operate as an intermediary, representative or intercessor between men and God. That is what Jesus is doing now for every saved person, interceding for them, being their advocate and **taking each person's proclamation, if it is spoken in faith, and bringing it to God the Father on our behalf.**

The High Priest in Jerusalem used to enter into the Holy Place and even the Holy of Holies in the Temple, to represent the people and to seek the covering of their sins and even to offer animal sacrifices on their behalf. Likewise, Jesus now offers God our proclamation, also referred to as our “*confession*”.

Remember, the word ‘confession’ when used in this context, doesn’t mean only the confession of our sins. It means “*to say the same as*”. So, when we confess God’s Word we are saying the same as God says on that topic or issue, which could be about anything, not just our sin. In this verse from Hebrews Jesus is referred to as the “*High Priest of our confession*”:

*<sup>1</sup> Therefore, holy brethren, who share in a heavenly call, consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession.*

*Hebrews 3:1 (RSV)*

What this means is that we are to present our confession or our proclamation to Jesus in the heavenly places. To do this we take a part of God’s Word, whether it is a promise or a statement, upon which we seek to rely in faith, and apply it to our circumstances, and we proclaim it boldly into the heavenly places. But we have to believe it and rely upon it. We can’t just say Bible verses like a parrot as mere words which we don’t truly believe.

Jesus is seated there, just as we are, and He will hear what we proclaim. But He will also take our confession or proclamation and present it to God the Father on our behalf. We need Him to do that, but of course He requires us to make that proclamation first, and to speak it out in faith, before He can present it to God the Father. He cannot present a confession which we haven’t made.

Therefore, make your confession/proclamation in faith and also “*hold it fast*” which means to persevere with it and not to doubt it or give up on it. Remember, it is a “wrestling match” and those can go on for quite a while so don’t expect all your battles in the heavenly places to last just a couple of minutes. You may have to persist in your proclamation.

*<sup>14</sup> Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. <sup>15</sup> For we have not a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. <sup>16</sup> Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

*Hebrews 4:14-16 (RSV)*

Jesus has been operating in this ministry of our High Priest since He ascended and He is still doing so. The only question is whether you are benefitting from it, i.e. whether you are confessing/proclaiming anything for Him to present to God the Father. Most of us aren't.

*<sup>23</sup> The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office; <sup>24</sup> but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues for ever. <sup>25</sup> Consequently he is able for all time to save those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.*

*<sup>26</sup> For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, blameless, unstained, separated from sinners, exalted above the heavens.*

*Hebrews 7:23-26 (RSV)*

Therefore, when you face difficulties or you need help, healing, provision or any of the other things God has promised to give to us or to help us with, then take a verse or passage which is relevant to your circumstances or your need and proclaim it. Say the same about your situation, or your need, or your crisis as God says about it in any of the hundreds of promises, statements and assurances which He has given to us in the Bible.

Speak it out loud into the heavenly places with faith and confidence and both ask *and expect* Jesus to take it to His Father on your behalf. There are multitudes of such verses in the Bible but I have arranged a lot of them in a convenient format in the appendix to my Book 3. They are in business card sized format so you can print them off, cut them out, and use them when they are needed.

### **What would your objectives and methods be if you were a demon?**

Imagine for a moment you had the great misfortune to be a demon. What would your aims and objectives be and how would you seek to achieve them? Let's look at that now, starting with high level, strategic aims, then mid level tactical objectives and finally, ground level objectives in the lives of individual Christians and unbelievers.

If we look at the whole picture in that descending order, we will get an overall view of what they are trying to achieve at all the different levels and be better able to distinguish one method or approach from another. We will then see how demons of all their various ranks seek to cause chaos internationally, nationally, regionally, amongst groups and organisations, in churches, and finally at a personal, individual level.

### **The high-level strategic objectives of demons**

Here we are talking about the Devil's highest level objectives. With these he himself will sometimes get personally involved to plan, oversee and supervise what his most senior demons, i.e. the 'principalities and powers' or what we might view as his "cabinet ministers" or his "generals", "brigadiers" and "colonels" are doing on his behalf. These strategic aims will include things such as the following:

- a) Satan's opposition to Israel and his wish to stoke up hatred of Jews and prevent Israel from becoming a nation state again (he has already failed in this) and to prevent or delay its turning

belatedly, as a whole nation, to accept its Messiah. That day is coming and Satan dreads it because, at that point, Jesus will return and Satan's career will be almost over

- b) attacking and minimising the effectiveness of the Church as a whole, i.e. the overall body of Christ, causing division and false teaching wherever possible and perverting the structure, approach, policies and doctrines of the Church so as to delay and minimise its progress in evangelising the world
- c) promoting false religions worldwide, in particular Islam, but also Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism, atheism, Catholicism, evolution etc and increasing their scale, power and effectiveness as much as possible
- d) creating and prolonging wars, famines, and other disasters on a global scale
- e) promoting sin and rebellion on a global level, in particular through enlarging the scale of abortion, pornography, promiscuity, gender confusion and family breakdown
- f) promoting and spreading sickness and disease worldwide
- g) influencing and perverting the thinking and decisions of national governments and international organisations such as the EU, NATO, UN, World Bank, IMF, WEF, WHO etc.
- h) delaying the return of Jesus Christ to the Earth

### **The mid-level tactical objectives of demons**

These are Satan's mid level aims and objectives. Here he wants to influence:

- a) institutions
- b) church denominations
- c) large companies
- d) corporations
- e) councils
- f) hospitals
- g) schools and universities
- h) police forces
- i) government departments and
- j) media organisations
- k) pop stars and celebrities
- l) Hollywood and the film industry

Here Satan's junior ministers and what we might call his 'majors', 'captains' and 'lieutenants' will be given responsibility for each of these objectives, i.e. mid ranking 'officers'. Their orders are to get each



of these organisations to do Satan's bidding in a coordinated manner and promote his overall agenda, whether these organisations realise it or not.

If we consider both the high strategic and mid level tactical objectives combined for a moment, we might ask how these senior demons go about it. How do they plan, organise and coordinate things, including trends and patterns that occur simultaneously all over the world.

Your common sense tells you it can't all be happening by coincidence, not when hundreds, or even thousands, of institutions and organisations develop the same perverted, evil, corrupt policies all at the same time, often using the exact same words on the same day.

It is plain that there is a 'choreographer', or rather a team of them, making it all happen, just as a large team of officers planned the Normandy invasion with very intricate timings and dovetailed tasks, functions and objectives all fitting seamlessly together, including coordinating the logistics of over 5,000 ships, 11,500 aircraft, and over 150,000 soldiers and paratroopers on day 1 alone. You know perfectly well they didn't all turn up in Normandy on the same day by accident.

That is exactly how it is with worldwide trends, policies and lies pushed by groups like the World Economic Forum (the "WEF"), a very evil group of satanists and globalists, including psychopathic criminals like Bill Gates, Dr Anthony Fauci, George Soros, Barak Obama, Klaus Schwab, etc. They meet annually at places like Davos to plan and scheme at a human level but it is plain that they themselves are being guided by very senior demons.

Then they bring in worldwide policies such as the Covid hoax, the global warming hoax, the obsession with race, gender confusion, homosexuality, the restriction of free speech, and so on. All those things, and many more, are even harder to plan and coordinate than D Day was. Yet, they are achieving every part of it with astonishing efficiency.

### **Ground-level objectives of demons in the lives of individuals, families and local churches**

This is the main area we will focus upon, both in this chapter and those that follow, because it is the most relevant battle from most people's perspective. It is also the one we can do most about, at least if we are ordinary people. Here we are looking at what Satan does to deploy ordinary individual demons whom we might view as privates, corporals and sergeants to deal personally with ordinary people like you, me and everybody else we know.

It is rather like 'man marking' in football, i.e. where the opposing manager tells one of his players to 'mark' you and to obstruct you constantly to prevent you playing well in that game. Likewise, the demon assigned to you, or perhaps demons plural, are told to obstruct you and prevent you achieving anything for God. They will also seek to bring about various problems for you and to carry out attacks upon you of the kind listed below and discussed in more detail in the chapters which follow.

You may find the list is much longer than you expected and contains many issues, problems and obstacles you never imagined had anything to do with demons. Even those people who do believe in demons are probably only aware that they tempt us to sin. It never occurs to them that demons are involved in a host of other things as well and undermine us in so many miscellaneous ways.

**A brief summary of the different types of personal attacks demons will make on you, so you can see the overall picture**

In the chapters that follow we will look at several different types of personal attacks that will be made against you and how we can best approach each of these attacks. We could summarise them briefly as follows, in no particular order:

- a) to deceive you
- b) to influence and misdirect your thinking
- c) to discourage you
- d) to frighten you
- e) to oppress you
- f) to demoralise you
- g) to create division, misunderstanding and conflict between you and others
- h) to get you not to trust honest people whom you should trust
- i) to get you to trust dishonest people whom you should not trust
- j) to distract you from doing what you are meant to do and urge you to spend time on what God does not want you to do
- k) to waste your time and slow you down
- l) to tempt you to sin
- m) to make you ill and even kill you
- n) to get you to be inactive and not to obey God's commands
- o) to stop you sharing the Gospel
- p) to stop you bearing fruit in your life
- q) to accuse you and make you feel guilty and unforgiven
- r) alternatively, to get you to excuse your sin and to feel complacent or self-righteous
- s) to create needless tasks and distractions to waste your time and exhaust you
- t) to rob you of sleep
- u) to undermine your hope
- v) to get other human beings to oppose you (by getting their demons to cooperate)
- w) to prevent you using the gifts of the Holy Spirit
- x) or to get you to use counterfeit gifts which are actually demonic
- y) to prevent you studying the Bible
- z) to prevent you maturing as a disciple

That's a long list, but it isn't anywhere near complete. The range of attacks is endless and their flexibility and inventiveness mean they will look for any openings or weak points they can find in your

“armour”. Or they will seek to catch you at times when you aren’t “wearing” it in the sense that some aspect of your character is not as it should be in that you are not being truthful, righteous, hopeful and so on.

If so, they will take any opportunity they can to trip you up and will do whatever they can get away with, without any mercy or restraint, other than the boundaries which God imposes upon them. However, we must realise that each part of our ‘armour’ only works in the particular way intended for it and does not protect us from all the other dangers.

For example, if you were to use what the Bible calls the ‘*helmet of salvation*’, which is hope, imagining that it will protect you from being *tempted to sin* it wouldn’t work. Hope is the defensive armour which protects our minds from *discouragement and despair*. It’s not designed to protect you from all the other attacks, such as temptation to sin.

Therefore, for each potential attack we must defend ourselves in the right way, keeping all the armour in place at all times, i.e. all the character traits, so we always have the correct armour for any attack we might face. That is to say each specific character trait protects you from particular things but not from all things. That is why you need all the armour, or rather all the required character traits, at all times. See chapter 11 below for a fuller discussion of the Ephesians 6 “armour”.

The long list of things above is what Satan wants to be done in the lives of individual Christians but also individual unbelievers, to prevent them from becoming believers. The same applies to small scale organisations, such as a local church, a local school, doctors surgery, police station or workplace etc.

Such things or places which are at ground level, i.e. on a small scale, are what Satan entrusts to individual demons at a junior level, i.e. “privates, corporals or sergeants” not middle or high ranking officers. The point is that none of these people or churches have any strategic or even tactical level significance. Their influence is only local and small scale. Therefore, a lesser demon is allocated to deal with such people or groups.

For most genuine, saved Christians the usual issue is not *casting out* demons, but *resisting* them. However, even to resist them we need to know what demons do in our lives and how they go about it. If we don’t know these things then it’s very difficult to resist them. Too many of us have a wrong understanding, which has often come from misguided things we have heard people say or from watching horror films like ‘*The Exorcist*.’

Demons are then seen as only being relevant in the lives of deranged people who do bizarre things. The reality is much more ordinary, so much so, that many people assume their low level, ordinary problems have nothing to do with demons. In fact, the main activities of demons in our lives are quite mundane and unspectacular, i.e. to discourage, frighten, deceive, demoralise, distract, and accuse us etc.

They rarely do anything openly supernatural, at least in the West. They focus instead on the routine day to day ways of obstructing and harassing us, as set out above. We shall now start to consider what demons are seeking to do to us and why. Then, we shall turn our attention to what we can do about it.

### **The main activities and tactics of demons in our lives:**

The demon or demons that have been allocated to you have got a job to do and higher ranking supervisors to report back to. Likewise, their supervisors are accountable to yet higher ones, all the way up to the top, as in any organization. Their aim is to destroy you, but if that can't be achieved, then at least to render you useless in God's service.

They want to stop you being effective or achieving anything for God and they will do whatever works best, given your character and personality, to undermine and obstruct you. We are all different and so they will use slightly different methods with each of us, or at least emphasise different things.

Nevertheless, there is a large amount of pattern and duplication. They use very similar methods most of the time with each of us. They also use the same tricks over and over again because they know it works, and also because they know most of us never learn from past experience. That's because most of us aren't even attempting to learn, as we see no need to learn, and also because most of us refuse to take advice and even recoil from it.

Indeed, most of us don't take demons seriously at all, even if we notionally believe in them in theory. Thus, even when their techniques are plain, we still don't see them and we don't learn anything from our defeats and errors. Let's change that from now on. Let's wake up and take a radical new approach.

### **Demons want to influence our minds and to plant ideas in our heads as if they were our own**

Demons are interested in every part of us, i.e. our body, mind, emotions, will and spirit, i.e. our new man. They want to influence all of the above. They also want to make use of our old man, i.e. our flesh nature and get him revved up and working for them, as a traitor within our camp to trip us up and lead us astray.

However, if I had to single out one key part of us which the demons particularly want to target, it would be our minds. That is where the main battle is fought between the demon and us. It is a mental battle over who is going to have the greater influence over your thinking, you or the demon.

Demons therefore operate by preventing good, wholesome, biblical thoughts from forming in our minds, or by not letting them remain for long. But they also plant false, sinful, selfish, heretical ideas and thoughts into our minds as if they were our own thoughts:

*<sup>2</sup>During supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him,*

*John 13:2 (ESV)*

Here we see that the idea of betraying Jesus did not actually come from Judas at all. It was Satan's idea. He planted the thought into Judas' heart and mind and Judas adopted it as if it was his own. Indeed, I expect Judas never realised the idea had not been his own. When we die we will probably be shocked and appalled to find out how many of the thoughts which we assumed to be our own, were actually planted there by a demon.

**When a demon speaks to you, it will sound like your own thought, in your own accent and tone of voice, not a voice from outside of you**

We find it hard to believe that the things we assume to be our own thoughts actually come from a demon. One reason is they seem so internal. They sound like our own thoughts because what we “hear” mentally in our head will be *in our own tone of voice and accent*. Also, the thoughts will always be *in the first person*, speaking as “I”, not the second person “you”. So, if a demon wants to suggest a sin to you, he won't say "*Why don't you.....?*"

If he did you'd immediately know the thought came from *someone else* and was not your own, even if you were an unbeliever. You may not necessarily assume it to be a demon. You'd probably just think you were going mad but you would know it was not your own thought and would therefore reject it.

Therefore, the demon is astute enough to adopt the simple policy of always speaking into your mind *as if it was you thinking*. So, if a demon wanted to tempt you to overeat, it would say something like “*Mmmm – those biscuits look nice*”, as if it was something *you would think yourself*. And if it wanted you to steal from your workplace it might whisper into your mind “*They won't notice if I take that*”. The demon would never say “*.... if you take that*.”

Of course, the demon will hardly ever speak in an audible voice that you perceive via your ears. It doesn't speak in that sense. It just plants thoughts and it puts them into your mind, as a thought, from the inside, *not through your ears* which would indicate that it came from outside of you. Otherwise, you would recognise immediately that whoever said that, it wasn't you.

So, if a demon wanted to tempt you to steal a £20 note left on someone's desk it might say “*Nobody saw me come in. I'll take that*”. The thought is then in your mind and you will think it was your own idea. Given that our bodies are accustomed to doing what our minds tell them to do, you could be half way to stealing that £20 note before your conscience catches up and says “*No, I must leave it. That's stealing*”.

Your conscience might be strong enough to withstand that suggestion and win the battle. However, if it was, the demon would already know that and would have suggested something else, about which it knows your conscience is weaker or less well informed. Thus, it might tempt you to gossip instead by saying into your mind “*Who was that woman that X was with yesterday?*”

X might be a colleague, or perhaps someone at church. As that thought is whispered into your mind, you are likely to find yourself shortly afterwards voicing it out loud with your own mouth. You may then say it to someone else before you have the time to stop yourself or to realise it is slanderous gossip, which could do harm to X, especially if there's an innocent explanation.

Have you ever found yourself blurting out some comment which, immediately after you have said it, sounds cruel, harsh, dishonest, exaggerated, sarcastic or suggestive and you aren't even sure why you said it? You may well have voiced a planted demonic thought. The examples I have given above may not resonate with you, but just substitute some other thought instead that is more relevant to your personality.

The demons are inventive, creative and flexible. They know your nature and your ways and will plant whatever thoughts or feelings are best calculated to trip you up, harm you or entice you or to get you

intimidated, angry, resentful or whatever else *you* may have a weakness in. It is not “one size fits all” but will be tailored to fit your individual weaknesses and maximise the chances of tripping you up.

**The demon will also speak into your feelings via your emotions, not only into your mind with planted thoughts**

I mention feelings separately from thoughts because the demon will also seek to influence you via your emotions, not only your mind. That is especially true in the case of women and, in some ways, it is harder to counteract because thoughts can more easily be defined, examined and checked (though they rarely are). But feelings are more vaporous and intangible and are harder to define, examine or disprove.

So, whenever I refer to demons planting ideas in your head, remember that there can also be feelings planted via your emotions, not only thoughts planted via your mind. The demons know all about my “committee analogy” and will attack and undermine you via every part of yourself, not only your mind. So, they will whisper feelings into your emotions as well, if they think that will work better, not only thoughts into your mind. They are flexible and will come at you from every possible angle.

Whispering thoughts into our minds or planting feelings into our emotions are very similar techniques and they each need to be guarded against and dealt with in largely the same ways. So, whenever I speak of a demon planting a thought in your mind, be aware that the point being made is probably equally applicable to them planting a feeling of fear, resentment, suspicion etc into your emotions.

People who struggle with anxiety or dark thoughts, hypochondria, insecurity etc are prime candidates to have their strings pulled in this way by a demon. It might say into your mind (or your emotions) as you’re listening to a news item about some health scare “*I’ll probably get that*” (as we saw, the demon won’t say “you”).

Then you might have a sleepless night fretting about cancer or heart disease etc. while the demon keeps repeating the unsettling thought in your mind (or emotions), just as you were beginning to forget it and drift off to sleep. The same applies with unforgiveness and bitterness.

Have you ever had the experience of having eventually managed to forget some emotional wound that was inflicted on you but then the memory of it comes flooding back and you are reliving it again, and beginning to turn it over and over in your mind in an unhealthy, destructive way? Guess where the thought came from that sparked you off again and got you nursing the grudge that you had managed, with great effort, to stop dwelling on.

**You can’t properly understand the problems you face if you don’t believe demons are involved in your life.**

Strangely, some Christians will accept that *Satan* himself opposes them, even though he personally has never even heard of 99.9% of us, and will never come into contact with us. But they won’t believe that ordinary *demons* affect them, or affect anybody else either. Possibly they see demons as evoking a greater sense of shame or stigma.

Yet, for the vast majority of us, unless we are Presidents or Prime Ministers, it is actually demons, not Satan personally, we have to contend with, just as British and American troops never came into direct

personal contact with Adolf Hitler in World War Two. Yet they did get to meet and fight against his *armies*, or at least some of the more junior individual soldiers within it.

Likewise, Satan rules over billions of demons, of varying levels and ranks. Most of the time he operates through them, and it is they who do the day to day work of opposing us, because Satan himself is not all-powerful, or all-knowing. Above all, he cannot be in more than one place at once.

Therefore, at a moment when Satan was in the White House, pulling the strings of his loyal servants, the corrupt homosexual Muslim, President Obama, or the paedophile fraudster, Joe Biden, he couldn't also be in your house, bothering you. That is impossible, even for Satan.

However, one or more of his demons certainly can be in your home on Satan's behalf, and they regularly are, though not necessarily 24 hours a day, because they do also come and go on other errands and are not necessarily continuously with you. Don't forget, demons also visit the heavenly places, though we have no information as to how often, or for how long, they go there. So, they may not always be with you, just as the demon which affected King Saul would come and go intermittently and was not always with him.

Nevertheless, your denominational traditions, the opinions of your pastor, your own unbelief and your cowardly wish to fit in with the sceptical views of others may cause you to accept the idea that demons cannot affect you. If you make that grave error, the demons will then run rings around you because you will not be taking any steps to watch out for them or to resist them, let alone cast them out. Why would you be if you are convinced they cannot do anything to you, or don't even exist?

How vigilantly would you look out for incoming Luftwaffe aircraft if you didn't believe they had any, or that the Luftwaffe itself even existed? Having said that, many Christians will accept, *theoretically*, that demons exist, and were active at some time in the *past*, and even that they may now affect *other people* who live *elsewhere*. But they won't accept that demons are operating:

- a) now, in this day and age
- b) in their own lives
- c) in the lives of the people they know
- d) in their own town, home, church, workplace, family or marriage

A sceptic may accept that Jesus and the apostles encountered demons and cast them out of people. But they think those demons have all moved away somewhere, or gone into early retirement, or are chained up in a prison, or that God no longer allows them to do anything. Therefore, they assume demons no longer bother anybody, or at least have nothing to do with them personally.

But if that was so, why did the disciples and apostle Paul continue to cast them out, even after Jesus had ascended? More to the point, why would Mark's gospel say in the very last chapter, when Jesus is looking ahead to the future, that *those who believe* will also cast out demons in His name?

Furthermore, if, as some people argue, all demons automatically leave a person at the moment of his conversion, what would be the point in Jesus mentioning casting them out? It would surely be unnecessary even to speak of it as the problem would already have been solved by the person getting saved. And yet He did say we would cast out demons:

***And these signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons;  
Mark 16:17(a) (ESV)***

Moreover, that statement clearly related to Jesus' *future* followers, not to the 12 apostles, nor even to the 70 disciples, because they had already been casting out demons, even while Jesus was still on the Earth. Therefore, it cannot be right to say that casting out demons is something only the 12 apostles or the 70 disciples were meant to do, and not something we should do today. That interpretation would make Jesus' words into nonsense.

He was referring to the future, not the (then) present and was saying the casting out of demons would be done by "*those who believe*". That group is obviously far bigger and wider than just His existing followers in AD 30. And there is absolutely nothing in the statement to suggest it is time limited in any way, such that it would only apply until the apostles died, or the end of the first century or any other arbitrary cut off date.

Remember, the people of the "first century" didn't think of themselves as being in the first century. They simply thought of themselves as being in the present day, just as we do. The dating system we use now didn't even start until after the fourth century when the false Catholic church began. So, the obsession people have with things ending at the end of the "first century" is totally misconceived.

**You must get your beliefs about demons from the Bible, not from the world, or public opinion, or even from what your church teaches.**

If demons have all ceased to exist, or gone away, or are no longer active, why would Jesus say His future followers will cast them out? What need would there be to do so at all in the future if the demons aren't there, or don't do anything? If Jesus knew demons were all going to cease their activities as soon as the first century ended, He would surely have said so and He would have told us to do something else instead of casting them out.

Thus, He obviously did not share the view held by most Christians, and most leaders, in today's churches. Therefore, I challenge people to face this issue head on and be honest with themselves as to *why* they are complacent about, or even oblivious to, the activities of demons. In particular they need to be challenged to prove, *from the Bible*, why they think resisting demonic activity and also the need for deliverance have ended as an issue for us.

They then need to cross-examine themselves rigorously as to *where* they are getting their beliefs from because it certainly isn't the Bible. Their sceptical approach mainly comes from absorbing the opinions and the unbelief of the people around them in churches, in particular from leaders whose theology has no place for demons. It certainly doesn't come from believing God's Word, taking it seriously, and at face value, and acting on it.

Part of the reason for the unbelief is that most of the activities of demons are not spectacular and do not involve dramatic or remarkable things, at least in the West. If they did come out into the open and show themselves or if they were to do obviously supernatural things which make their presence unmistakable then far more of us would believe in them. But it does not suit their purposes, at least in the western world, for us to believe in them.



They want us to dismiss them as fairy tales and take no steps to resist them. They choose to hide themselves, to operate covertly, and to focus on quietly whispering thoughts into our minds and feelings into our emotions as if those were our own thoughts and feelings. Therefore, where I live, in the UK, the demons' policy is to promote scepticism and complacency and to undermine any church leader who takes them seriously and teaches the truth about them.

By contrast, in Africa and Asia, where people have been openly worshiping idols for thousands of years, the population have no doubt at all that demons exist, and are active in their lives. They have seen and heard them and have even been physically knocked about by them.

So, in Africa and Asia, the demons' preference is to be open and even visible. It suits them better in that context to make their presence felt, to create fear, and also to promote the occult, voodoo and witchcraft rather than encouraging complacency or unbelief.

### **Some of the main activities of demons in all of our lives, including your life**

On the assumption that most readers live in the West, as I do, let us look briefly in the following chapters at some of the things demons do here. Most of it is so mundane and unremarkable as to be invisible because the demons' aim is *not* to be noticed or believed in.

The demons' main tactics are actually just to whisper into our minds and emotions almost continually to deceive, distract, discourage and demoralise us and also to create conflict and suspicion between us and other people. In addition, they want us to feel insecure, afraid, anxious, inadequate and bogged down. In each of these ways, they are able to keep multitudes of people from ever hearing, believing or responding to the Gospel.

However, with that minority who manage to withstand their influence and who are born again their policy changes. From then on it is to seek, by the same methods, to prevent them growing into mature disciples or being effective in sharing the Gospel with others. This whispering process does not only affect you individually. It also has a knock-on effect on the people you live and work with and it can harm, or even destroy, all kinds of relationships.

However, I would say the demons' main goal in the West is to undermine marriage and the family unit, because those two institutions are the foundation upon which God has chosen to build the whole of society. They do this by promoting ungodly perverted ideas about homosexuality, gender confusion and paedophilia plus radical feminism and hatred of men. These are pushed nationally and internationally to pervert people's minds, corrupt children and destroy the innocence that God wants parents to preserve.

However, they also operate at ground level within individual marriages. I have seen how effective the demons are in wrecking individual relationships, not only within families, but also in churches and workplaces. I have also seen demonic interference in my own marriage as well as with couples I have counselled. I look at that more closely in the chapter on marriage in my Book 5.

Indeed, I often say to couples that every conversation they have is four-way. One demon is whispering into the husband's mind and another demon is whispering into the wife's mind and especially into her emotions. Their aims are to ensure there is no effective communication and to cause the greatest

possible misunderstanding, tension, conflict, unforgiveness, resentment and bitterness. They want your marriage to fail and your whole family to become dysfunctional or, if possible, to be destroyed.

### **How demons interfere with our thoughts and feelings so as to derail conversations and create and multiply conflict and misunderstanding**

Even without the involvement of demons, conversation between spouses is already inefficient to begin with. The things we mean to say are not accurately heard, or properly understood, even at the best of times. For that reason it is necessary to work hard at communicating, not only in marriage, but everywhere else too. Things we say get mixed up and a lot of the message is altered or lost in transmission and either not heard at all, or not understood, or remembered wrongly.

So, the circumstances already favour the demons to begin with as they seek to intervene in your conversations. Even when you are alone, after a conversation is over, they continue to interfere with your own thoughts and feelings to create even more confusion as to what people said and meant and cause more offence to be taken. They do it to increase even further the difficulties of communicating. This problem of demonic interference in our conversations isn't easy to overcome. We have a real battle on our hands and we cannot afford to be complacent.

It is harder still to avoid these conflicts and misunderstandings if you don't know, or are not willing to believe, that many of your conversations, are *four-way*, *not two-way*, and that they involve demons seeking to sabotage your relationship with that person. But if you can see that demons are continually influencing your thoughts and feelings, and distorting what you say, feel and hear, and what your spouse says, feels and hears, then both of you will be better placed to resist their tactics and overcome them.

### **The demons' main weapon is their voice. They need to use you as their 'arms and legs' to do most of their dirty work for them.**

The vast majority of us under-state the power demons have and therefore become complacent. A small minority go the other way and over-state it and therefore end up fearing them. In fact, we don't need to be afraid of demons at all, especially once we have woken up and begun to take them seriously and to resist them. Their main weapon is their voice so their aim is to get you to *damage yourself* and to damage others by believing what the demons say and then *acting upon their lies*.

So, this battle is mainly fought within our minds and emotions as the demon seeks to gain control over our thoughts and feelings. We then act upon their 'advice' and carry out their instructions which we wrongly imagine to be our own thoughts. Realising this is going on helps to make clear why apostle Paul tells us to "*take every thought captive*", and to be "*transformed by the renewing of your minds*".

Though our emotions are also a key target for the demons, our minds are the principal 'battlefield' where the warfare takes place. Therefore, it is over our thoughts that most of the battles are fought. That is such an obvious thing to say, but the vast majority of Christians still don't know it or act upon it. We must therefore learn to examine our thoughts to see where they really come from and whether they are even our own thoughts at all.

Treat it as if you were a quality control inspector in a factory, examining every thought (and feeling), one by one, to consider whether it is true, where it came from and whether it can be relied upon. I expect you will need to attach a “Reject” sticker to at least 50% of them.

Then we must *impose* right thoughts on ourselves instead of accepting the demons’ whispers as if they were our own thoughts. If we do this, our lives will be transformed and we will start to win rather than lose. So, it is largely a mental battle and it must be seen as such, and fought as such, until your mind has been transformed to such an extent that the following things have become true of you:

- a) You have absorbed a large amount of the Bible and made God’s thoughts into your thoughts – but please note this is going to take a lot of work and discipline and it won’t happen overnight.
- b) You can therefore tell whether the thoughts in your head are in line with the Bible.
- c) If they aren’t, you can tell they must have come either from worldly people or your sinful flesh nature or, more likely, from a demon.
- d) You reject the ungodly thought and replace it with a biblical, wholesome thought instead. That is how thoughts are ‘taken captive’.

As you become more effective at examining your thoughts, recognising where they come from, and replacing lies with truth, you will seriously frustrate the demons’ purposes. If you don’t fall for their tricks and if you refuse to do as they suggest they are powerless because they have no physical bodies of their own. That is why they need to use your body and your voice to do their dirty work for them. If you refuse to be used in this way they become largely powerless.

**The demons also seek to influence your emotions, not only your mind, especially if you are a woman.**

I have focused primarily on our mind as the key battlefield where our war with the demons is fought. I believe that is a fair and accurate assessment, which is why it is so important to define, examine and check all our thoughts to see whether they really are ours, or are from a demon.

But the same is almost as important in relation to your emotions and feelings, especially for women. Therefore, those too need to be defined, examined and checked to see whether they are reasonable and justified or whether a demon has planted a false feeling into our emotions, in the same way as they plant false thoughts into our minds.

Sometimes it is hard to distinguish between thoughts and feelings. Nevertheless, it can be done, though you may have to work a little to figure out whether something you believe is a thought or a feeling. Do your best and, if in doubt, treat it as a thought. Then act in the same manner by defining it in clear words rather than allowing it to remain vague and nebulous.

Ideally, write it down on paper and then examine it carefully to see whether, under logical scrutiny in the cold light of day, that feeling (or thought) is true or false, warranted or unwarranted, fair or unfair, proportionate or disproportionate, biblical or unbiblical.

As I say, men will mainly be targeted in their minds because God has designed men to live primarily, but not exclusively, in and through their minds, not their emotions. With women it is the reverse so they operate more, but not exclusively, via their emotions. That is why a woman's emotions are so much closer to the surface and they cry easily or get visibly upset in situations where most men will remain silent, thoughtful and stoical.

The 'software' that God has installed into each of the genders is valid and both types of software are needed. (There are only two genders, by the way, not 57.) God made no mistakes at His factory when He was making women, or men, and He wants them to be exactly as He designed them.

I actually feel that a married couple, if they are godly, mature and biblical, have the best of all worlds because they have access to both of these very different modes of thinking and feeling. They are far better equipped, if they work together, fully using each of their respective strengths, rather than fighting each other. Then they are in a much better position to weigh up and assess any person, proposition or situation and decide whether it/they are valid, genuine and trustworthy.

I speak of such mature married couples who value the differences between them, pool their different aptitudes, and willingly cooperate, as being "*a full deck of cards*". They are much less likely to be deceived, exploited or abused by other people than they would be if they used only the man's mind or only the woman's feelings.

Each spouse, operating alone, is vulnerable to being deceived. But working together, in close cooperation, with each spouse respecting and highly valuing the other's input, they are far less likely to be deceived and more likely to make good decisions.

One standard problem which arises in marriage is that women will often speak of a problem or situation with the sole objective of "venting" or expressing *how they feel about it*. They are not seeking for a solution, or at least not yet, but just want to be heard, understood, sympathised with and comforted, without any mention of finding a "solution".

But most men don't know this and will jump straight in, seeking to find a solution, and not addressing the woman's need to be heard, sympathised with and comforted. Ironically, in doing that, the man is acting precisely in accordance with the way God designed him by using his mind constructively to find a practical, workable solution.

Moreover, he will actually do this as an expression of love, and care, seeking to help, because he has no idea that women are made so differently and that they don't want a solution, or at least not yet, not until they are satisfied that their feelings have been given the attention they need. So, he is doing the right thing, but at the wrong time, i.e. prematurely, before he has given his wife what she is looking for.

Many a woman has concluded therefore that her husband "*doesn't care about me*" or is "*so insensitive*". Some have been known to say "*All he cares about is fixing the problem, he doesn't care about me*". The husband will respond to this with bewilderment and incomprehension, having no idea what he did wrong or why trying to find a solution is such an "*unloving*" thing to do.

At the same time the wife will be angry, considering it obvious that what she needed was sympathy and comfort and she will blame the husband for not knowing that, even though she has never told him. In short, she misjudges the situation because she doesn't know that God designed men so very differently.

Yet, at the same time, she is angry because her husband doesn't understand women, which of course he probably doesn't. She is then likely to conclude (with the help of a whispering demon) *"If he loved me he would know what I need, without needing to be told, so he obviously doesn't love me."*

That very foolish and untrue conclusion is arrived at partly because of the way women think, or rather feel, and partly due to the demon whispering into her emotions and her mind to whip up more anger, resentment and bitterness – all over a problem which doesn't even exist.

At the same time, the husband's demon will whisper into his mind, and perhaps sometimes his emotions too, to say his wife is being *"ridiculous, unfair and hysterical"*. Of course, he wouldn't think that if he properly understood how God designed women. He would then realise that all she actually needs is for him to go to her, hold her in his arms, comfort her and show empathy and concern – with no mention of solutions or what action to take.

My wife and I figured all this out many years ago but, until then, when our IQs were much lower, we had some quite unnecessary fireworks and all because:

- a) neither of us realised that men and women think and feel very differently
- b) neither of us realised that demons were also getting involved whispering into both our minds and emotions to stir things up and get both of us more exasperated and revved up than we already were.

Nowadays, since my IQ has substantially increased, and is well into double figures, I try to take care to hold back on offering any solution or suggested action until I have given my wife a full opportunity to vent and give her the emotional support she needs. That has to come first and every husband needs to learn that.

I even make a joke of it sometimes and say *"I'm not going to be so unloving as to try to find a solution to help fix your problem – only a very unloving person would do that"* And my wife now smiles because her IQ has also risen, not just mine.

**Demons are flexible and will therefore do whatever is most likely to deceive, undermine or tempt you, or those around you.**

You might assume the main work of demons is done at a high level, seeking dramatic results by causing people to become murderers and terrorists. There are of course demons who will seek to do things like that, if the person they are working on is a likely candidate. But demons are realistic and are well aware most of us aren't going to be receptive to such things.

Therefore, they will seek to damage, deceive, discourage and distract each of us in whatever is the most opportune way of exploiting our own personal areas of weakness. We are all different and the demons know exactly how far to push each of us and what tricks we are most likely to fall for. Thus no demon has ever tried to tempt me into taking drugs or robbing banks.

Yet they have tried to undermine and discourage me in all sorts of other ways, especially in my marriage, family, work and ministry. Even at a very basic level, they want to hinder me by creating obstructions, delays, and other problems, often in the pettiest of ways. There is nothing too small or too trivial for them to get involved in, if it will slow you down, or tire you, or waste some of your time.

However, of all those things, their attack on marriage is probably the most strategic. That is why they focus on it so much. They have been immensely successful in attacking marriage, as is evidenced by the explosion of divorce since the 1960s. The collapse of marriage in the West has done incalculable harm to families and also to the nation but, above all, to the work of spreading the Gospel.

**The apostles, and even the angel Gabriel, were demonically resisted. Therefore, why should you imagine you won't be?**

Have you noticed how often the disciples were unable to understand what Jesus was saying, or how they were plagued by unbelief or fear? This was not entirely due to their own flesh, or the influence of the world, and it was certainly not due to them being stupid. They were all very capable men, even though they were working class.

At least in part, I believe their problems were due to demonic interference as demons will particularly target anyone who is effective in God's service or who wants to be effective. So, it was entirely to be expected that they would focus on undermining the apostles. They will focus on you too if your intention is to become a committed disciple and to do God's will.

But demons don't only operate by speaking to us. They can also take physical action when they want to, and if God allows it. For example, when the apostles were on Lake Galilee and a sudden storm blew up and seemed to be about to sink their boat it seems most likely that it was supernatural and was caused either by Satan himself or his demons.

In the same way, we know that the storm which destroyed Job's home, killing all who were inside, was directly caused by Satan. That incident alone shows what great power he has, when he is allowed to use it, and not only him personally. The demons who serve Satan also have great power, as we see with the actions of the '*prince of the Kingdom of Persia*'. He was not a human being but a powerful and senior demon, who was able to withstand the mighty angel Gabriel for 21 days:

*<sup>12</sup> Then he said to me, "Fear not, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand and humbled yourself before your God, your words have been heard, and I have come because of your words. <sup>13</sup> The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days, but Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I was left there with the kings of Persia, <sup>14</sup> and came to make you understand what is to happen to your people in the latter days. For the vision is for days yet to come."*

*Daniel 10:12-14 (ESV)*

Not only with the apostles, but also with other great men, and even the angel Gabriel, God has plainly allowed Satan and also his demons to resist, delay, distract and discourage His servants. There is no getting away from the fact. Therefore, what conceivable basis could any of us have for assuming we would be immune to all of this and demons would not be allowed to affect us? You won't find any support for that notion in the Bible. The idea is widely believed but it is purely man-made and false.

**How to tell whether it is your flesh or a demon which is tempting you to sin.**

When a person is being tempted to sin the flesh and a demon operate in different ways, albeit that both are drawing you towards sin. The way the flesh operates is not in terms of a voice or a thought in your

mind suggesting that you sin or persuading you to do so. That is what a demon does, though of course, the “voice” you hear in your head will sound like your own voice, so you think it is you.

However, the way the flesh draws you towards sin is very different. It is not usually through any voice or words but rather through *cravings, urges, impulses and longings*. The flesh is what predisposes you towards sin in the first place, giving you the desire to sin, for example the desire to look lustfully at a woman or to gamble or smoke or become aggressive or engage in ‘road rage’ and so on.

All of those urges can be felt and can influence you *without any words ever being spoken*. They operate at an animal level and aren’t usually articulated in words. Therefore, if thoughts are arising in your mind that take the form of words, and if those verbally expressed thoughts are urging you to sin then what you are hearing is a demon speaking to you.

It won’t be your flesh because your flesh doesn’t generally “speak”. It feels and wants and desires and lusts and craves but it doesn’t often use words. Therefore, thoughts which take the form of words and are set out in sentences are probably coming either from your own mind or from a demon.

But if those thoughts are along the lines of seeking to induce you to sin then it probably isn’t your own mind doing it. It is far more likely to be the demon. Of course, that would be made obvious if the demon spoke in another voice, which sounds different from yours or if it spoke audibly so you heard it via your ears, not in your mind. But it won’t do that because its goal is to deceive you and that is best achieved by making you think these are your own thoughts.

**Become aware of what the demons want you to think, feel, say and do. Then do the direct opposite.**

It is essential to set about learning about demons’ aims, methods and tricks, so as to recognise how they are influencing you. You will get better at this as your knowledge increases and as you anticipate more accurately what they want in any given situation. Then you can try to make sure they don’t get it. For example, you may find in a crisis that your confidence and hope are reducing. Even as this is happening, it is possible for you to “*take every thought captive*” and say to yourself:

*“In this situation, the demons’ aim is to get me to lose hope, become discouraged and give up. That being so, I will instead force myself to do the opposite. I will encourage myself and fill my own mind with hope. Then I will press ahead, absolutely determined to deny them what they seek, and not to let them influence my thoughts.”*

The same applies where the demons want you to be afraid, to sin, to fall out with someone, or to have a row with your wife. In any such situation, a wise person will stop and remind himself of what the demons want and of how he is being led along by them. He will then resolve, even in the middle of a heated argument, *not to take the bait* and to do the opposite of whatever the demons want.

Even the wisest of people won’t always achieve this but they still try or at least they know they ought to be trying. Moreover, they do have their victories at least from time to time and, in the end, they begin to win regularly. So, reflect on what specific things the demons might be trying to do in your life and be vigilant to avoid letting them achieve any of their goals.

**Everything the demons try to get you to think or believe can be resisted and overcome by ‘proclaiming’ ‘confessing’, or ‘declaring’ relevant parts of God’s Word.**

As we have seen, proclamation means we declare, announce or ‘confess’ parts of God’s Word out loud with boldness, defiance and even aggression. To ‘confess’ means to “*say the same as*” what God says on any given topic. One reason why we need to do that is in order to cause our own speech, thoughts and beliefs to come into line with what God’s Word says. So, in part this is a defensive procedure to prevent ourselves being deceived and also to ‘undeceive’ ourselves where we have already believed and absorbed lies.

Much of the time, especially when we listen to demonic whispering, we end up thinking, believing and saying the *very opposite* of what God’s Word says. That is no coincidence. It is because the demons and the worldly people around us have influenced our thinking and trained us not to believe what God says and to accept instead whatever the unsaved world says.

In this way fear and unbelief can eventually become our settled habits or ‘default-settings’. That is why we need to make it our regular practice to counteract the demons’ influence and to re-programme our minds. The best way to do that is by proclaiming relevant portions of God’s Word whenever we face situations which undermine our faith or tempt us to unbelief or to doubt God’s promises or His character.

You could face an illness, even a serious one, and you might begin to doubt whether God will heal you or even whether you will survive. Your own flesh, plus the influence of the unbelieving world, will already draw you towards feeling fear, doubt and unbelief and to express those negative ideas out loud. Therefore, if you don’t actively seek to do the opposite, you are already likely to dwell on those gloomy, morbid thoughts.

That natural tendency will then be further compounded by the demons, who will seek to drag down the level of your hope and your faith even further, preferably to zero. In fact, what they ideally want is to get you to go “below zero”, such that you actually have a *confident expectation of getting ill*, or dying, or of your business collapsing and so on. From their perspective it would be great if they could get you to “*have faith for failure*”.

At such times, regardless of what you might actually think or feel, you could force yourself to proclaim out loud a verse such as this one below *and to keep on proclaiming it*. And when you do so, picture yourself as announcing these things into the heavenly places where the whole angelic and demonic realms are located, together with the Church, and with Jesus presiding. And as we saw above, make your confession/proclamation in the full expectation that Jesus “the High Priest of our confession”, will take it and present it to God the Father.

Say it to them as if you were making an impassioned speech in the House of Commons. What you are proclaiming will have influence there. And even if you don’t at present truly believe what you are proclaiming, as it hasn’t yet become real to you, continued practice and repetition will mean that it will eventually become what you really do believe, not merely what you are trying to believe:

***<sup>17</sup>I shall not die, but I shall live,  
and recount the deeds of the Lord.  
Psalm 118:17 (ESV)***



And you could proclaim this:

<sup>8</sup>*The Lord will fulfill his purpose for me;.....*  
*Psalm 138:8(a) (ESV)*

You might also proclaim this:

<sup>7</sup>*The angel of the Lord encamps*  
*around those who fear him, and delivers them.*  
*Psalm 34:7 (ESV)*

Or it could be that you are being attacked by the wicked. If so, proclaim this verse:

<sup>3</sup>*But you, O Lord, are a shield about me,*  
*my glory, and the lifter of my head.*  
*Psalm 3:3 (ESV)*

And also this:

<sup>2</sup>*The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer,*  
*my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge,*  
*my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.*  
*Psalm 18:2 (ESV)*

Whether you are facing illness, danger, fear, financial insufficiency or whatever else, your initial aim is always the same. It is to train yourself to *make a right confession* instead of the wrong one you have probably been making up to that point. That means to *say the same as* whatever God says on that particular issue rather than your own opinion which you have previously espoused.

Therefore, when we confess our sins, we are just saying the same about our sins as God says about our sins and seeing them as He sees them. But confession covers far more subjects than just sin. We can equally ‘confess’ any part of God’s Word, and *say the same as He says on any issue*, not just our sin.

If we keep doing this then we are influencing our circumstances by what we are proclaiming into the heavenly places, which Jesus will then present to God the Father on our behalf. However, we are also gradually retraining our minds to come into line with what God’s Word says on all sorts of topics, such as God’s faithfulness, or His provision for us, or whether He can be trusted. Or it could be about assurance of salvation or whether He loves us, or has a plan for our lives.

The list is endless and on all these issues we need to believe and *say the same as God says about it*, not the lies the demons have told us or the junk we have picked up from other people. If we persist we will reach a stage where we not only say it but genuinely believe it and act upon it. It will eventually also become a habit.

We must therefore persist until we have reprogrammed ourselves with God’s Word in place of the negative, anxious, sceptical thoughts we previously had. That reprogramming process is a vital part of “*renewing our minds*”, “*taking every thought captive*” and also of *resisting the Devil* and his demons. In modern terms we might call it installing new software and changing our default settings, as on our computers.

Therefore, for all these reasons, and with all these objectives in mind, we need to make the proclamation of God's Word into a regular part of what we do each day. By so doing we make ourselves far harder for demons (or wicked people) to deceive or influence. Begin to see the proclamation of Scripture as a vital part of your armoury. Indeed, make it central to your whole way of life because it is, essentially, what wielding *'the sword of the Spirit'* is all about.

In cooperation with Jesus, the High Priest of our confession, you are influencing what happens in the heavenly places and the decisions that are made there. But you are also influencing yourself and changing what you believe deep down until you come to truly believe all of God's Word. It also means using God's Word like a knife or a sword to cut through and cancel out the lies that the demons and this sinful world continually pour into your mind.

Their aim is to get you to disbelieve God's Word and to doubt His character. Your job is to remind yourself that this is their aim and then to use proclamation to strengthen the very faith they are trying so hard to undermine. You must also set out to reinforce your trust in His character, so that you come to know for certain that He can be relied on and will never lie to you or let you down. To assist you in learning that God is trustworthy and to convince yourself of the benefits of trusting Him, you might choose to proclaim this passage from Jeremiah:

<sup>7</sup> ***"Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord,  
whose trust is the Lord.***

<sup>8</sup> ***He is like a tree planted by water,  
that sends out its roots by the stream,  
and does not fear when heat comes,  
for its leaves remain green,  
and is not anxious in the year of drought,  
for it does not cease to bear fruit."***

***Jeremiah 17:7-8 (RSV)***

Let me add my own little character reference for God. I have known Him now for 43 years and, although He has allowed me to face some very difficult times and has let wicked people steal from me, lie about me and cause me a lot of grief, *He has always been with me* during every difficult time of my life, even when two crooks stole my business from me. (see below)

So, although my life hasn't been easy all the time and God has let me suffer many things, He Himself has *never been to blame for any of that* – not even once. I can assure you He is 100% trustworthy and has never ever mistreated me, forsaken me or let me down. All the problems I have got into in my life were either my own fault, or someone else's, but never His.

The very same is true in your life. The only question is whether you know it and are *convinced of it*. And if you aren't yet convinced of all that, such that you know it at the level of an *immovable, unshakeable fact*, then you need to take the necessary steps to ensure that you become convinced. If you are like most people then, at difficult times, you will be tempted to believe that God doesn't care about you, or has forgotten you, or is treating you unfairly.

I promise you He has never done any of those things and He never will. But don't take my word for that. Take His word for it by selecting several of the numerous promises, statements and assurances He makes and reciting them out loud until you know them and believe them.

All God's promises are true, but they need to become *true to you*, such that they *feel true*, and proclamation is one of the best ways to make that happen, so they cease to be just words on a page and become embedded in your mind, as if carved on stone.

In that way the *strongholds* or fortresses of lies, doubt, fear, distrust, unbelief and error the demons are seeking to build in your mind can be gradually torn down. In their place you can then build the right kind of strongholds of truth, faith, trust, hope and confidence.

Those are what God intends all of us to have, all the time, whatever may be happening. Apostle Paul refers to this process of destroying demonic strongholds and we need to take it seriously and put it into practice until the ungodly strongholds in our hearts and minds have been torn down:

*<sup>3</sup> For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. <sup>4</sup> For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. <sup>5</sup> We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ,*

*2 Corinthians 10:3-5 (ESV)*

**Proclamation can also be used offensively in attack, to announce your faith and intentions to the heavenly places, as if making a bold, aggressive speech in the House of Commons**

As we have seen, proclamation can be used to retrain your own mind and to 'undeceive' yourself by removing the entrenched lies which are so deeply embedded in your mind. It can also be used defensively to protect yourself from such lies and from various other demonic attacks upon you, including sickness and death. All of that is valid and vital. However, there are other ways in which we can use proclamation, in a bold, warlike aggressive manner to take the fight to the enemy and to defeat them.

This kind of proclamation will become very relevant when we get to my Book 9 concerning the ministry of deliverance. We will then start to look at how we can forgive others, renounce the occult and false religion, break curses over our lives and revoke the "tenancy agreements", as I put it, which we have granted to demons. We grant these "tenancy agreements" through our sins or our unforgiveness towards others or by our involvement in the occult, thereby entitling them to live and operate inside us.

There are numerous ways in which we can speak, whether it be to ourselves or to God, or to others or to enemies, or to a large audience and so on. In each of those situations you will agree we speak differently and adopt a different tone and mode of speech. So, the way we speak to our Dad over a cup of tea obviously differs from the way we might address a business committee or a public meeting.

Likewise, the way we speak to God the Father to tell Him we are sorry for a particular sin and that we repent of it is different from how we would speak to the heavenly places to announce that we are renouncing our past involvement in the occult and are cancelling every curse which that involvement brought upon us.

Therefore, in my Book 9, I will refer to different types, modes and tones of speech we need to engage in at different times and for different purposes. It could be supplicatory prayer where we ask God for things, or it could be praise or worship, or thanksgiving. Or it could be confession of our sins whereby

we bare our souls to God, tell Him what we have done, express our sorrow for it, promise to turn away from it, and seek His forgiveness.

Then there is proclamation where we get ourselves into the mindset to address the heavenly places, as if speaking to a packed House of Commons, and announce something for which we have faith or to refer to a stronghold which we seek to tear down. Or it could be to announce to all those who are listening that we hereby revoke, renounce, break or cancel whatever oath, idolatry, occult practice or false religion we have participated in.

As we go along, and especially in Book 9, I shall try to keep reminding us at each point what ‘mode of speech’ we need to be in, depending on whether we are asking for God’s help, or announcing our forgiveness of person A or revoking a wicked oath we made when we joined the Freemasons or renouncing our baptism into the Mormon ‘church’ or breaking a curse spoken over us by a parent, teacher or pastor or even a self imposed curse we spoke over ourselves.

But just be aware, and seek continually to remind yourself, that each of these scenarios require you to speak in a different way, with a different purpose and in a different tone. I have seen many times that people get confused and bewildered as they switch from one mode of speech to another.

They can get so muddled up they start giving commands to God or alternatively asking Him to do things which it is their own duty to do, such as renouncing their membership of a cult or their involvement in a séance, and so forth. *Those are not things for God to do but for us to do ourselves* though we can, of course, pray to Him beforehand (in supplication mode) to ask *for His help when we do it*.

Nevertheless, even though God is willing to help you to proclaim, He still wants the proclamation to *be made by you* and to come from you, *accompanied by your faith, not His*. It is perhaps a little like a job interview or asking your boss for a pay rise. Your Dad would be very willing to *advise you on how to do that*, what to say, and how to say it.

However, your Dad will not be willing to do the job interview *for you* or to ask for the pay rise on your behalf. Indeed, the people you are meant to be speaking to would not be impressed if you were to ask your Dad to speak for you. Therefore, my advice before you do any of these things is to pause for a moment and ask (or remind) yourself:

- a) what am I seeking to do here?
- b) to whom am I speaking?

So, you might be speaking to God, but you still need to ask yourself *why* you are speaking to Him and *what* you are seeking to do because, even in addressing Him, there are many different *ways* in which we can speak and tones which we might adopt. For example, we could be engaging in praise, worship, confession of sin, asking for help, reminding Him of His promises, or being a “watchman on the walls of Jerusalem” as we pray for His people the Jews and ally ourselves to them in prayer.

And there are many other ways too. So, to speak appropriately and not become hopelessly confused, we need to keep in mind at all times *to whom are we speaking, what are we doing and why*. Perhaps the things that confuse people the most are the various situations in which we are *not praying to God*, or indeed are *not praying at all*, because we are instead speaking to, or making announcements to, or even giving commands to, *the heavenly places*.

When we speak in those more combative ways and *are addressing the heavenly places, not God*, we adopt a very different tone of voice and become bold, assertive and even warlike. Of course, all of those things are utterly inappropriate when we are addressing God, to whom we would never give commands and who must always be addressed with reverence. But those things, and those tones of voice are absolutely right and proper when we are making a proclamation to the heavenly places.

It may take some time and practice for you to come to terms with those alternative modes of speech and tones of voice which are appropriate and even essential in one context but unthinkable in another. I have noticed that most people only know how to pray in ‘supplication mode’, i.e. where we ask God for things, which is perfectly valid in its right setting. However, many of them don’t know how to speak in any other mode.

So, as I discuss in my Book 9, when I ask people to start to go through their list of individuals to forgive, then instead of saying “*I hereby forgive person A for XYZ*”, they often start saying “*Lord, please help me to forgive person A for XYZ*”. Or they might get even more confused and ask God *to do it all for them* instead of doing it themselves, by praying “*Lord, please forgive person A for XYZ*”.

Of course, there is nothing wrong with starting by asking God for *help* in forgiving person A. It is just that that isn’t what is meant by you actually forgiving person A. It is something for *you to do*, not for God to do. He has either already done it if A is saved, or He never will do it if A never becomes a Christian. So, the declaration of forgiving someone is for *you to do* and for *you to say*, not something for God to say or do. And in saying it, you are making an *announcement, not a request*.

Do you see that? Grasping this point about what mode of speech you are in at any given moment changes everything. It enables you to really start to engage in all of this, rather than to flounder about in a bewildered state, not even knowing to whom you are talking, or why, or who is meant to be doing what’s needed, i.e. is it God, or yourself, or someone else?

### **An example of how I used proclamation in a warlike manner in a crisis situation**

Please refer to my earlier books for various examples of proclamation when used in a particularly assertive, warlike mode. Such examples help to illustrate the point better than any amount of definitions and explanations. Let me give just two brief examples here, although I explain this more fully elsewhere.

The first example is when a close relative’s husband was at death’s door after an operation had gone badly wrong. It was about 3:00 am in the morning and the whole extended family was gathered around in a hospital waiting room while an emergency operation was being done to put right the previous unsuccessful operation which had gone horribly wrong.

At about 3:00 am, the surgeon came in to say the second operation was over and that X was “very poorly”, that everything was very precarious, that the next few hours were critical, and that we needed to prepare ourselves for bad news. I was not the only believer present, but none of the other believers, who were more distant relatives of X, had the faith or knowledge to handle this crisis. In addition, there were his whole immediate family all of whom were unsaved, as indeed was he.

I therefore felt very alarmed as I knew he could die in the next few hours, as an unsaved man, and go into a lost eternity as an unbeliever to face Hell and then the Lake of Fire. That thought filled me with

dread but also a holy anger because I felt sure the demons were involved in this and were seeking to take his life and indeed that they probably sabotaged the first operation which went so badly wrong.

His whole immediate family was despondent, shell shocked and clueless. None of them had any idea what to say or do and they had no hope in them whatsoever as they were utterly blind to all spiritual reality. And the three other believers who were present simply didn't have the maturity to know what to do. So, I was effectively alone, to all intents and purposes. But I felt a boldness rise up in me and a refusal to accept what the demons plainly had in store for X.

Therefore, I stood up, in a room full of people all but three of whom were unsaved and completely "unchurched" as well, knowing nothing at all about the Bible. I knew they all needed someone to take the lead and that it had to be me as nobody else could do it. I also knew that none of the unsaved family members would understand any of what I was doing and might well be offended. But I went ahead anyway, as I knew it was both vital and urgent and that there was no alternative as X's life was at stake.

I then got out my Bible and proclaimed out loud a number of passages about healing, about God's help in times of crisis, about His faithfulness and so forth. As I did this, I spoke it out *aggressively*, not plaintively or in an attitude of supplication. *I was not speaking to God*, or at least not after my initial supplicatory prayers. I was primarily speaking *to the heavenly places* and **announcing what I had faith for**.

I very assertively spoke life, health and blessing over X and commanded the demons to leave him alone and proclaimed that I had faith for X to survive and to be restored to us. It was a good impression of an impassioned speech to the House of Commons from a fiery back bencher. Anyway, it worked. An hour or so afterwards, the doctor returned and we were told that X was showing positive signs. He later recovered consciousness and was eventually able to leave hospital albeit that was not for some months.

My firm belief is I fought and won a battle for X's life that night and I fought it using the power of proclamation so as to achieve a change of policy in the heavenly places where matters such as this, including questions of whether a person lives or dies, are decided. I believe it was the demons' intention to end his life that night but I stood in their way and foiled their plans by the power of my proclamation which I believe Jesus heard and took to God the Father on my behalf as He could see that I had faith.

I believe I was also helped by being given the "gift of faith" which is one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit apostle Paul speaks of in 1 Corinthians. So, my proclamation that night was "turbo charged" in that sense and given added power. But the basic fact remains that the battle was fought and won *in the heavenly places*. And, on this occasion, it was done by one person acting alone. That illustrates the power we each have when we see ourselves in our full authority, which I will expand upon in Book 9.

### **An example of proclamation taking the form of my issuing a command to the heavenly places**

The second example of how I have used proclamation is at a more mundane level. It involved a large amount of overpaid tax money which the Inland Revenue were supposed to return to me and which I needed urgently. I had recently set up my new law firm in 1999 and my tax position had changed drastically as I was no longer part of the previous large law firm. Therefore, I was owed a big tax refund and I needed it urgently or my new law firm could have been destroyed by lack of cash.

I rang the Inland Revenue (Internal Revenue) and asked for the refund to be expedited but I was told my file was in a long queue and it would take several weeks before it would even be looked at, let alone actioned. This telephone call took place during the working day and left me feeling very concerned as I simply could not afford to wait weeks for the refund. I needed it desperately.

So, of course, we prayed about it in the sense of supplication and asked God to intervene. But I believe the thing that really unlocked the situation on this occasion was not prayer but proclamation. That very evening, after it had closed, my wife and I went to the office of the Inland Revenue that was handling my case. We then stood on the pavement outside and proclaimed God's Word out loud.

Thankfully it was late, and dark, and nobody was around. I proclaimed Bible verses about God's provision and I did so in faith, believing God would provide for me. But what I also did was to go beyond that and to move into yet another alternative mode of speech whereby I *commanded* the Inland Revenue, in the name of Jesus, to release my money to me. I need to explain this because it is a separate sub category within the wider definition of proclamation.

Ordinarily, when one proclaims God's Word in faith, believing for a particular outcome or development to occur, one is operating at the level of asserting God's Word and speaking it out, aggressively and boldly, to the heavenly places. And I hasten to add that I had already done that, in addition to having already engaged in supplicatory prayer whereby I asked God for His help.

But now, at this point, as I stood on the pavement outside the front door of the Inland Revenue, I moved beyond that into yet another mode of speech. Or you could say I 'changed gear'; and began to issue *my own command* to the Inland Revenue. I spoke it out loud into the heavenly places, and of course I issued the command in Jesus' name. But it was, nevertheless, *my command*, using *my own authority that was vested in me*, arising out of *my status* as:

- a) a disciple of Jesus Christ and thus a member of the body of Christ and part of the Bride of Christ
- b) one who is entitled to wear Jesus' robe of righteousness
- c) an heir of God who has been adopted as a son
- d) one who is seated in the heavenly places alongside Jesus Christ, which means I have the right and authority to speak into that forum
- e) an ambassador of Jesus Christ – but you have to remember what an ambassador is. It means someone who is authorised to speak on behalf of a King and to represent that King when abroad in dealings with another country. Indeed, if that ambassador is accorded 'plenipotentiary' status then he is also authorised to negotiate treaties with the King of another country without needing to report back to obtain instructions or approval first. Therefore, when Paul says we are 'ambassadors' it is not a small or trivial statement. Neither is it poetry or flowery language. It means what it says.

Accordingly, I was operating in the status that the Bible says I have and wielding the powers implied by that status – indeed by all of those different aspects of our status, because our status and the authority that goes with it is multi-faceted and far ranging. Therefore, I stood by that doorway to the Inland Revenue's office and said words to this effect:

*“By the power and authority vested in me as a servant and disciple of Jesus Christ, the King of Kings and LORD of Lords and Name above all names, and in my capacity as an adopted son and heir and as*

*an ambassador of Christ, **I command you**, in Jesus' name to release the money you are holding and return it to me."*

The amazing thing is that the very next day, in the late morning, only 3-4 working hours after the Inland Revenue had re-opened, and only 24 hours after the totally negative phone conversation the previous day, I received a call from the Inland revenue. *They rang me!* They launched straight in and said:

*"We have reviewed your file and approved a full tax refund and the sum of £XYZ has just been sent to you."*

Now, you might say that was just a pure coincidence. But I don't think so. Only 24 hours earlier they had told me without any shadow of a doubt that they wouldn't even look at my file for "several weeks", let alone action it. But now, only 24 hours later, and only 3-4 hours after their office re-opened, following my proclamations and command, they had not only looked at it but actioned it and paid it! And I had not been back in touch with them at all. Neither had I rung or written to anyone else.

The only things I did were to pray, proclaim and command. And I believe that released the blockage, and all obstructions in the heavenly places were bulldozed out of the way. The Inland Revenue staff must have come into work that morning feeling an inexplicable sense of urgency to deal with my file. I doubt if they had any idea why they felt that or why they were departing from their normal protocols and timetables. But I knew why.

Of course, I am not saying we should always be issuing commands in the heavenly places. This was a very special situation and was both urgent and crucial. I also believe God gave me a specific "gift of faith" to do this, which is one of the spiritual gifts Paul lists in 1 Corinthians. But what I am saying is that we should *sometimes* do this – when it is appropriate. Admittedly, that is not always, but neither is it never.

At any rate, what I have sought to do here is to explain and illustrate some of the different ways in which we can pray and proclaim – and even sometimes issue commands, and the different modes of speech we need to adopt and the different ways in which we need to think, while doing so.

So, please familiarise yourself with the theology of all this and seek to develop the mental agility and flexibility needed if you are to swap from one mode of speech to another when necessary. And please keep all of this in mind when we get to Book 9 and start to look at casting out demons.

**Where we don't completely succeed against the demons' schemes, it is still worthwhile to continue to resist them, even if we can only reduce their influence.**

No matter how hard you try, or how long you spend on it, I doubt if you will ever completely defeat the demons in your life or entirely withstand their influence. At any rate I have never managed it and I don't know anybody who has. Even the great apostle Paul himself never fully overcame the '*messenger of Satan*' that was sent to buffet him. That powerful demon pursued Paul relentlessly throughout his entire ministry causing problems everywhere he went. So, we need to be pragmatic as well as ambitious in our battles against them.

We must, of course, resist them at every point and seek never to give them any opening. At the same time we must also be realistic about how much, or how often, we can succeed against them because



they are experienced and determined opponents. If you expect complete and permanent victories all the time you are going to be disappointed. You might even become so disillusioned as to give up the fight altogether which is exactly what they want you to do.

Even if you did manage to grow so much in maturity that you were able to consistently defeat the demons currently assigned to you that still wouldn't bring the battle to an end. They would simply respond to your string of victories by sending more senior demons to replace the junior ones. As the saying goes, "*New levels – new devils*". In other words, if a disciple begins as a 'private' but, through diligence, is promoted to corporal, sergeant, lieutenant, captain and so on, then new demonic opponents, of corresponding 'rank', will be reassigned to take over from the ones they have outgrown.

Therefore, even if, like Paul, you keep on maturing and reach a very high level, some demon of 'general' rank will be allocated to you. Therefore, however far or high you go, the Devil will never run out of more senior, more powerful demons to oppose you. Satan had a servant, the prince of Persia, who could even withstand the angel Gabriel for 21 days. Therefore, he will have no difficulty in finding plenty of demons who are a match for you, no matter how much you grow.

However, the answer to that is not to stop maturing. Keep growing as much, and as fast, as you can. Just be aware that the resistance to you will also keep on intensifying in response to whatever growth you achieve. But don't view that continual ramping up of the opposition as failure or as a reason to give up. It is actually a sign of your success and should be taken as a compliment. It means the demons see you as someone who is maturing and therefore a threat.

**Wise people decide what their thoughts will be, and what they will *allow themselves to think*, rather than letting their thoughts form randomly**

Radically changing your beliefs, attitudes, priorities and values will not be achieved overnight. It is a long-term project. Sadly, very few Christians pay any attention to this and many are not even aware they are supposed to. We all need to get rid of many of our thoughts, beliefs and speech patterns. The only question is which of these do we need to change because the particular lies we believe will be different for each of us.

Apostle Paul wants us to get a grip on our own thoughts and *decide* what we will, and will not, let ourselves think as opposed to just letting our thoughts form randomly of their own accord. Unless you monitor and regulate your own thoughts in this way you will end up adopting whatever ideas are suggested to you by the unbelieving world or whatever junk is whispered into your mind by demons.

If so, you will find you are consistently plagued with dark, negative thoughts plus lies, unbelief, fear and various unbiblical ideas. That is a certainty, because the world and all its warped values are pumped at you every day from the people you know and via the media.

As stated earlier, remember that although this applies primarily to our thoughts, which take place in our minds, we also need to have regard to our feelings which take place within our emotions. The demons are just as capable of whispering into your emotions as into your mind.

Therefore, you are under an equal duty to examine all your feelings and decide whether they are valid, where they came from, and whether you can allow yourself to continue to feel that way. So, if you feel anger towards person A, that doesn't automatically mean you are right to do so.

Indeed, you probably aren't. But the point is you need to check and examine and decide whether you can allow yourself to continue to feel that emotion just as much as you need to check and decide whether a particular thought can be allowed to be in your mind.

The demons who accompany all of us from the outside, even if we are extremely mature Christians, are continually seeking to control both our thinking and our feelings. They want to fill us with fear, doubt, unbelief, negativity, inferiority, pessimism, bitterness, unforgiveness, anger, guilt, shame, insecurity and much else besides. Each of these wrong beliefs or unhealthy attitudes can then turn into the *strongholds* referred to in 2 Corinthians 10:4 above.

### **What are 'strongholds', how are they formed in our minds, and how do demons make use of them?**

Perhaps the best way to explain a '*stronghold*' is to think in terms of the demons building *fortresses* inside your mind. They can then defend and maintain those fortresses so as to undermine you and render you ineffective as a disciple. Imagine Warwick Castle which is a typical example of a medieval fortress or stronghold. Even a small group of men defending that would be hard to shift. They could use that castle to maintain control over the surrounding countryside, coming out in raiding parties at unexpected times.

Yet, if they are attacked they can quickly retreat back into it. They can then defend themselves within it for a very long time, even withstanding a sustained siege, by using food stores and water sources from within the castle. That is how a stronghold works and that is the metaphor Paul chose to use. It describes the way in which we ourselves, the world around us, and the demons who harass us, have caused a series of barricades, roadblocks or fortresses to be built up in our minds which keep us bogged down in false, unhealthy beliefs and wrong ways of thinking and feeling.

Yet most of us don't realise any of this is going on and won't accept it even if we are told of it. Let me give one example of a stronghold, although most of us have many of these. An elderly person I once knew had a profound commitment to the negative and was constantly saturated in pessimism, gloom and defeatism. It had become a deeply entrenched habit for her to think in those ways.

Everything that ever happened to her was put through a negative filter taking the basic facts and distorting them. This created in her mind a clear expectation of the road ahead being difficult and of the likelihood of defeat. She was also a convinced hypochondriac usually seeing herself as likely to get ill, and speaking gloomily of anybody else's medical situation. For that reason, if we ever had any sicknesses we learned not to tell her anything about it.

We knew she would only contaminate us with her own pessimism and undermine any faith for healing we might have had. Our wariness towards her might sound odd but it is really important, when you face a health issue, or any other hazard, that you should approach it with faith, hope and confidence and maintain a bold, even a defiant, confession. You certainly must not allow yourself to absorb the gloomy, defeatist, morbid thoughts of those around you.

If you hear other people's negative words or if the demons whisper them to you or if they arise out of your own mind due to your own habit of pessimism you must immediately reject it. Then replace that thought with a bold, confident, hopeful thought. You must then speak that positive thought out loud, *even if you don't truly feel it*. Make a proclamation and speak it boldly into the heavenly places so the whole spiritual realm can hear you.

Eventually, if you keep on speaking out loud in this way, even if you are saying things you don't actually yet believe, *but which you want to believe*, those will eventually become your actual thoughts and beliefs. In the meantime, if the negative thought keeps coming back, then keep on rejecting it, again and again, with persistence for as long as it takes.

Also, deliberately make it your practice to *rejoice* regularly, to *give thanks*, and to *expect good things* from God, even when the circumstances seem bleak, indeed even where they *are* bleak. Consider this passage from Habakkuk about how we should rejoice even in the midst of bad situations and circumstances:

<sup>17</sup> *Though the fig tree should not blossom,  
nor fruit be on the vines,  
the produce of the olive fail  
and the fields yield no food,  
the flock be cut off from the fold  
and there be no herd in the stalls,  
<sup>18</sup> yet I will rejoice in the LORD;  
I will take joy in the God of my salvation.  
<sup>19</sup> God, the Lord, is my strength;  
he makes my feet like the deer's;  
he makes me tread on my high places.*  
*Habakkuk 3:17-19 (ESV)*

When things seem to go wrong and even when they do actually go wrong you need to get a grip of your mind and launch into giving thanks, praising God and rejoicing in your future as a believer. If this does not come naturally or if you don't *feel* like doing it, then just do it anyway. This approach to life involves *choosing* to maintain a positive, hopeful, confident manner rather than just doing whatever you are used to or are in the mood for.

This strong, self-controlled mentality was typified by King Jehoshaphat of Judah. Note the admirable way in which he reacted and especially the calm way in which he chose to think and speak, when the southern Kingdom was under attack by the armies of Ammon, Moab and Mount Seir. The attackers were all Arabs and came from what we now call Jordan. The account begins with an attack being planned by these three armies and with Jehoshaphat hearing of it. He saw their military build-up and he obviously felt afraid, as anybody would be:

<sup>1</sup> *After this the Moabites and Ammonites, and with them some of the Meunites, came against Jehoshaphat for battle.* <sup>2</sup> *Some men came and told Jehoshaphat, "A great multitude is coming against you from Edom, from beyond the sea; and, behold, they are in Hazazon-tamar" (that is, Engedi).* <sup>3</sup> *Then Jehoshaphat was afraid and set his face to seek the Lord, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah.*

*2 Chronicles 20:1-3 (ESV)*

Although his fear was real, and was based on true facts, Jehoshaphat's response to this crisis was not to panic. He did not *allow* his mind to run away with itself or to indulge in negative, fearful thoughts. Instead, he listened attentively to the prophet Jahaziel who gave a confident, positive prophetic message about how God would help them. He then *chose* to believe Jahaziel's words and to trust in God's character. Jehoshaphat himself then gave a bold message to the people, telling them not to fear. He also led the people in praising and worshipping God and in speaking boldly and confidently:

***<sup>18</sup> Then Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell down before the LORD, worshiping the LORD. <sup>19</sup> And the Levites, of the Kohathites and the Korahites, stood up to praise the LORD, the God of Israel, with a very loud voice. <sup>20</sup> And they rose early in the morning and went out into the wilderness of Tekoa. And when they went out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, "Hear me, Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem! Believe in the LORD your God, and you will be established; believe his prophets, and you will succeed." <sup>21</sup> And when he had taken counsel with the people, he appointed those who were to sing to the LORD and praise him in holy attire, as they went before the army, and say, "Give thanks to the LORD, for his steadfast love endures forever."***

***2 Chronicles 20:18-21 (ESV)***

Look at what then happened as a result of the decision to sing and praise, rather than wallowing in fear, gloom or despair. It changed everything. God then moved in power to cause the Arab soldiers from Ammon, Moab and Mount Seir to become so confused they began to fight against each other and destroy themselves:

***<sup>22</sup> And when they began to sing and praise, the LORD set an ambush against the men of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah, so that they were routed. <sup>23</sup> For the men of Ammon and Moab rose against the inhabitants of Mount Seir, devoting them to destruction, and when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, they all helped to destroy one another.***

***2 Chronicles 20:22-23 (ESV)***

The result of the decision by Jehoshaphat, and also of the people of Judah, to sing and praise, and to think and speak with faith, was that they then received God's help. That is the natural consequence of maintaining a bold, faith-filled confession. However, there is more to it as well, even in every day life, in the natural, not just spiritually.

If your mind is operating on the basis of hope, confidence, trust and optimism rather than gloom, negativity and fear then you will inevitably think more clearly and make better decisions. That is because stress and panic cause a person's mind to seize up and to become unable to function. You will also be far more creative, imaginative and mentally resilient.

Thus, even at a natural level, not only in the spiritual realm or 'heavenly places', it makes sense to *decide* to think along those lines. Therefore, train yourself to do it that way rather than in the negative, fearful ways you may have grown used to. Unfortunately, those negative ways come naturally to us like well worn paths, and therefore that is how we will react automatically unless we force ourselves to think differently.

An analogy I sometimes use when explaining how we can stop thinking negatively or in unbelief and start to think confidently, positively and with faith and hope, is to picture a grass meadow across which

there is an existing well worn path. That footpath represents a long established mental habit which has become entrenched in your mind. So how do you get rid of the existing well worn and familiar footpath and replace it with a brand new one?

Picture the meadow in your mind and, instead of walking along the existing path, as you have always done, imagine walking through the long meadow grass, *where there is no path*, and gradually starting to create a new path by regularly walking back and forth across the meadow, always using the new path, despite it being hard to walk on because the grass is still long.

Gradually, over several weeks, your feet will begin to flatten and then to kill off the grass on the new path so that it becomes a recognisable footpath. But the grass on the old footpath will begin to grow back again until, eventually, you won't be able to tell that a path was ever there. That is how it must be done in our minds. We stop using the old negative "footpath" until it ceases to be a path at all.

And we carry on engaging in proclamation of God's Word plus praise and thanksgiving, until we wear out the "grass" so that a new healthy, wholesome attitude or set of beliefs and expectations is formed. Then you keep on using that "new path" which will be much easier to do after a while because it will eventually become just as visible and firmly entrenched as your previous negative way of thinking was.

### **How I once dealt with a devastating piece of news by reacting defiantly and giving thanks for our future success instead of despairing about the current crisis**

In chapter 5 I tell the story of how, when I was 37, I was a one third equity partner in a law firm and caught the conveyancing partner forging an invoice in order to steal money from the firm. I challenged him about it and also went to the Senior Partner and he promised to support me in tackling the wrongdoer. So I called a meeting to raise the issue formally and that happened a couple of days later.

Sadly, by then, the conveyancing partner had somehow managed to blackmail the Senior Partner and he therefore changed sides. They both then brazenly denied the theft and refused to address it, even though the proof was undeniable. In the end, instead of the corrupt conveyancing partner being expelled from the firm, the two of them voted to expel me! Yet all I had done was to expose and report a fraud.

But there seemed at least to be a silver lining because my expulsion meant they were legally obliged to pay me £250,000 cash "forthwith". But they refused to pay anything at all and told a pack of lies to justify withholding my money. I then instructed a solicitor to act for me to force them to pay but my former partners kept on lying and used every procedural trick in the book to slow the case down.

This went on for about three months, during which I had set up a brand new law firm of my own from scratch. But I had also spent £20,000 already on legal fees, paying my specialist commercial lawyers to represent me. There then came a day when I had to face the fact that this case could run for two years or more and would devour all my cash.

That would then make it impossible for me to succeed in my new law firm, which also needed a lot of capital. I could have sued them OR I could establish my new law firm. But I hadn't got enough money to do both. So I made the agonising decision to abandon my case and use the little money I had left to pay for the needs of my new law firm, not for litigation costs.

My wife and I made that painful decision one evening at home and we both felt violated and traumatised by the whole experience. We could so easily have despaired, given up and lost all our confidence for the future of the new firm. However, from somewhere deep inside myself I felt a defiance rising up and a holy boldness. I believe God yet again gave me the gift of faith which is one of the spiritual gifts listed by Paul.

So, instead of weeping and wailing, I went to the fridge, got out a bottle of Champagne and said “*We are going to have a toast to our new business and to thank God for all the success it is going to have.*” We then proclaimed that the firm would be a great success and rejoiced over that, even though there was no sign of any success at that point. The boldness and faith which I now felt quickly spread to her.

Therefore, we celebrated the future success of the new firm, and gave thanks for it, even though it was still tiny at that stage and was operating on a shoestring budget. However, as we did this, reacting in exactly the opposite way to what the demons expected of us, something broke in the spiritual atmosphere and a radical shift took place in what Paul calls “*the heavenly places*”.

We stopped seeing ourselves as victims or defeated and saw ourselves as victors who were going to triumph in the future. And that is exactly what happened. A long series of miracles took place and God gave me many ideas for how to advertise in a completely new way and how to build the new firm.

Over the next 13 years my law firm grew exponentially and became many times bigger than the firm I had lost and vastly more profitable. Then, when I was 50 years old, I sold the business and retired to devote myself to teaching the Bible and writing books. Moreover, a very short time after I retired my two former partners who had stolen my capital both went into bankruptcy and their law firm collapsed! So God not only granted astonishing success to me but also poured out His judgment on them.

But I believe the whole of those 13 years of success flowed directly from my reaction that night when I got out the Champagne, proclaimed God’s Word and gave thanks for all the success we were going to have even though, at that point, there had only been a series of disasters. To any observer my wife and I would have sounded ridiculous, celebrating our future success in the midst of a devastating defeat and injustice.

But God didn’t see it that way. I believe His heart was touched by our faith and He responded to it miraculously. The demons also must have seen it as a dramatic turning point in the battle being fought over us in the heavenly places. Therefore, I believe they were very unhappy about the way we reacted. They had hoped we would just curl up and die rather than fight back in faith and defiance.