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‘Thy Kingdom Come.’

A Theological Analysis of the Methodology of Exorcisms in the  
Gospel According to Luke.

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## Chapter 1. Introduction

Analysing exorcisms and ancient understanding of the demonic and the exorcism phenomena the methods used by Jesus and his apostles to cast out (ἐκβάλλω) evil spirits inevitably raise questions. Specifically, when looking at various examples of exorcisms performed by Jesus and his disciples, how were the exorcisms connected to the spread of the kingdom of God (Lk. 11:20)? And why was Jesus' methodology of exorcisms different from other Jewish exorcists and even His own apostles?

Different methodologies of casting evil spirits out have been used for centuries, but the purpose of this study is to concentrate on Jesus' and his followers' methodology of exorcism. This project will attempt to answer the question of the significance and purpose of Jesus' exorcisms in God's plan to re-establish His reign and kingdom, and what, if any, techniques of casting out demons were used to fulfil the above mission. In addition to the study of Jesus' techniques, this research will also focus on the techniques of his disciples, who were using the name of Jesus as their main aid in casting out demons. The key objective, however, is to analyse how the issue of *how* Jesus and his disciples performed exorcisms will lead the study to a more important question – *why*.

Taking into account the fact that the study of the demonic, the casting out, and the paranormal phenomena in general is an extremely broad and deep subject to deal with, it is necessary at this point to narrow it down and provide the exact direction this research will take in the field of exorcisms.

While attempting to explain and analyse different methodologies of exorcism used in the New Testament and the theology behind invoking the name of Jesus in a performance of an exorcism, this research will not deal with the theories of origins or functions of demons, and will not attempt to analyse what those spirits are. This research will not include psychiatric, historic, or ethnic views on the reasons and symptoms behind demon possession.

This study will not battle psychiatric opposition to the spiritual phenomena, and will not involve any scientific explanations behind either the possession or the exorcism. In addition, this research project will not examine the first Christians' understanding of demon possession, nor will it analyse Paul's view regarding the subject. Whereas a connection to Acts 2 (the Pentecost) is very probable, the role of the Holy Spirit and the debate about whether casting out demons is a gift of the Spirit or not will also be excluded from this project.<sup>1</sup>

In short, this research project will deal mainly with the methodology of casting out of demons found in the Gospel of Luke and some portions of Acts, and what those texts say about the technique and methodology of performing an exorcism in Jesus' Name. Since both the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts are believed to have been written by the same author, we will analyse these writings due to their great contribution to the understanding of exorcisms, the role of the Holy Spirit, and the great emphasis on the coming of the kingdom of God being fulfilled in this practice. This study will examine the theological meaning and significance behind it, which will attempt to result in clear, biblical explanation and definition of an exorcistic technique (or techniques) used by Jesus in the Gospel of Luke, and how it was applicable in the Book of Acts.

Although the topic of exorcism and demonic possession has been surrounded by uncertainty and vagueness in terms of how and when can possession occur, and what are the means to 'cure' this condition, careful biblical and theological analysis of the issue is nevertheless able to provide clarity and answers regarding the phenomena. Some of the

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<sup>1</sup> For more on these topics see: Dunn, James D. G. *Jesus and the Spirit: a Study of the Religious and Charismatic Experience of Jesus and the First Christians as Reflected in the New Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1997; Twelftree, Graham H. *Paul and the Miraculous a Historical Reconstruction*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2013; Bhayro, Siam, and Catherine Rider, eds. 'Demons and Illness from Antiquity to the Early-Modern Period,' Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2017; and Koch, Kurt E. *Demonology Past and Present: Identifying and Overcoming Demonic Strongholds*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2000.

notable scholars and demonologists, whose works will assist the study of this research, include Graham Twelftree, Michael Heiser, Merrill Unger, and Frederick Conybeare<sup>2</sup> among many others. Their (and many other) works will be carefully analysed to see how they address the phenomena of Jesus' techniques of exorcism, and what conclusions they reach in regard to the differences of exorcistic techniques between Jesus (in the Gospel of Luke) and His disciples (in both Luke and Acts).

This project will begin with establishing a background picture of different exorcist practices found in non-Biblical sources (such as the pseudepigrapha, the *Magical Papyri*, etc.), and that will involve the study of relevant sections of those materials. The above study will assist in the analysis of the Names of Yahweh and Jesus, which will be one of the key elements in understanding the techniques of exorcism performed by Jesus and his apostles. The research will also analyse key Greek concepts (e.g. ἐκβάλλω, and δύναμις) which will help research the cases of exorcism in the Gospels and what techniques (if any) were used.

The scenes of exorcism found in the Gospel according to Luke will be compared to other Gospels, while the emphasis will still remain on Luke's perspective on the phenomena. The analysis will include the study of all major exorcism stories (4:33-37; 8:26-39; 9:37-43; 11:14-23) and their parallels in other Gospels. Minor exorcism scenes may also be addressed as part of theological and exegetical analysis.

Thus, in light of both the study of how an ancient Israelite would have perceived the practice of casting out of demons, and the analysis of the theology of the Name (Yahweh and Jesus), we will begin unwrapping the scenes of exorcisms found in the Gospel of Luke. The exorcism scenes, analysed from theological, textual, and exegetical viewpoints, will

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<sup>2</sup> For example, Twelftree, Graham H., *Christ Triumphant, Exorcism Then and Now*. London: Hodder and Stroughton, 1985; Conybeare, F. C., *Christian Demonology*. Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2007; Heiser, Michael, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible*. Bellingham: Lexham Press, 2015.

eventually turn the question of *how* Jesus and his apostles performed exorcisms into *why*. The key point in this analysis will take place in Luke 11:20 where we will see the clearest connection between exorcism practices and the coming of the kingdom of God. This project will not be examining the theology of the kingdom of God (e.g. its definition or eschatological aspects). Rather, the entire study of exorcism methodology in the writings of Luke will lead us to understand the inevitable and inseparable connection between the kingdom of Yahweh and the performance of an exorcism.

In addition, as mentioned above, this study will analyse the works of some notable scholars. However, whereas Twelftree, Conybeare and Klutz, among many others, have attempted to analyse the exorcisms of Jesus and his apostles before, this study will provide an in-depth look into how an exorcism was both understood and put into action both by Jesus and his followers. Contribution to the analysis of Jesus' techniques specifically will be made through examination of *how* and *why* exorcisms were performed in Luke's writing, and how they constituted the presence of God's kingdom. Concentrating on the methodology of exorcisms in particular, we will be led to the question of how the kingdom of Yahweh was spread during the casting out of the demonic, and how the presence of Yahweh and His kingdom formed the essence of exorcistic practices.

## Chapter 2

Although this project is mainly concerned with the techniques and methods of casting out demons found in the Gospel of Luke, it is nevertheless crucial for the purpose of this study to look at the ancient literature outside the Bible and see what techniques of exorcism were common and in use before and at the time of Jesus. The aim of this chapter is to look at selections from ancient literature such as *Magical Papyri*, *Testament of Solomon*, and *The Book of Tobit*, in order to re-create the lens through which the apostles and followers of Jesus would have perceived the phenomena of exorcism.

Establishing this ancient perspective towards exorcisms and different methods of carrying them out will let us understand how Jesus' unique techniques were perceived, and help us see the connection to how Jesus dealt with and expelled demonic forces.

### 2.1 Methodology found in the *Magical Papyri*

Even though the Old Testament is relatively silent about exorcisms and demon possession,<sup>3</sup> these concepts were far from new during the time of Jesus. Ramsay MacMullen has stated that 'in Christianity it [exorcism] found an extraordinary flowering.'<sup>4</sup> However, upon careful examination of ancient exorcists who preceded Jesus and the apostles, and methodologies used to cast out evil spirits, we will see that Jesus' audience was already familiar with this commonly practiced phenomenon.

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<sup>3</sup> The most evident example comes from 1 Samuel 16:14.

<sup>4</sup> MacMullen, Ramsey, *Christianizing the Roman Empire (A.D. 100-400)* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1984), 28.



We first turn to the *Magical Papyri*.<sup>5</sup> In the papyri we see a blend of different religious traditions, including Jewish, Egyptian and Christian, and their contents speak of various subjects such as economics (P. Oxy. 1439), politics (P. Oxy. 38, 3208), and social relationships (P. Oxy. 37).<sup>6</sup> Most importantly, however, they shed a great deal of light upon the use and practices of magic, and the phenomena of exorcism and its methodologies.

### 2.1.1 Invoking a god as power authority

*Magical Papyri* offers a variety of ways how to perform an exorcism. The reason for the inclusion of different techniques is not entirely clear. This project, however, is focused only on the techniques and methodologies which were claimed to be in use. Therefore, we are not concerned about the origins of the material or why there are different methods of exorcisms included. Rather, the goal is to analyse the techniques themselves and later see how they connect with Jesus' methodology in the Gospel of Luke.

One of the methods of casting out demons found in the papyri is when a god is invoked as a power authority to exorcise the demonic entity. The exorcist was to carefully follow certain incantations while invoking a god as a power-authority.<sup>7</sup> The formula of the incantation in PGM V<sup>8</sup> begins in the following way: 'I summon you, Headless One, who created earth and heaven,...deliver him...from the daimon which restrains him,...deliver

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<sup>5</sup> *The Greek Magical Papyri* is a body of papyri from Greco-Roman Egypt, which contains a variety of magical spells, hymns and rituals. The texts are mainly from the second century BC to the fifth century AD. More on this see: Betz, Hans Dieter, *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation: Including the Demotic Spells* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

<sup>6</sup> Twelftree, *Triumphant*, p.39.

<sup>7</sup> Twelftree, *Triumphant*, p. 40-41.

<sup>8</sup> *PGM* is Latin for Papyri Graecae Magicae, and this abbreviation will be used in this project when referring to Magical Papyri documents.

him' (V:99-133).<sup>9</sup> The names of various gods called upon include Zeus, Helios, Mithra, and many others, but the main concern at this point is the methodology of invocation itself.

Sometimes the invocation had to be followed by a particular description and set of devices, which apparently were supposed to increase the chances of success in performing the rite of exorcism. As Graham Twelftree notes, 'One of the devices was the use of a descriptive history of the activities and accomplishments of the god who was being invoked.'<sup>10</sup> Twelftree was right in his observation, because in PGM V we read:

...you are Osoronnohris whom none has ever seen; you are Iabas; you are Iapos; you have distinguished the just and the unjust; you have made female and male; you have revealed seed and fruits; you have made men love each other and hate each other.  
(PGM V:100-108).

Although the analysis of the theology of the Name will appear later in this project, it is nevertheless important to note at this point the reason for invoking a god by its name and reciting its history as part of the exorcism. According to Fredrick Conybeare, the name was the personality of the deity itself, and 'when the gods lost their names they lost their individual personality as well.'<sup>11</sup> This notion is confirmed by assyriologist, Rev. Archibald Sayce, who said: 'Injury could be done to a person by using his name in a spell; and, similarly, to pronounce the name of a deity compelled him to attend to the wishes of the priest or exorcist.'<sup>12</sup> The latter observations talk about a method of controlling and flattering the god that was being invoked, rather than giving him due respect and honour. Patrick

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<sup>9</sup> All quotes from the *Magical Papyri* texts come from: Betz, *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation*, 1992.

<sup>10</sup> Twelftree, *Triumphant*, p.41.

<sup>11</sup> Conybeare, F. C., *Christian Demonology* (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2007), p. 118.

<sup>12</sup> Sayce, A. H., *Lectures on the Origin and Growth of Religion as Illustrated by the Religion of the Ancient Babylonians* (Whitefish, MT: Kessinger, 1898), p. 302.

Miller, in his study of the theology of biblical prayers, notes that this was exactly the difference between the prayers of Mesopotamia and ancient Israel – Mesopotamia’s magical arts were performed to control a deity, whereas Israel’s prayers were to be founded upon a genuine relationship with God.<sup>13</sup> This pattern of the intention with which prayers were used and names invoked is what we observe in the texts of *Magical Papyri* as well. Both the knowing and the usage of the name and the recitation of the god’s history and accomplishments were evidently done in order to control the power-authority being invoked. This, as it was believed, was to guarantee the success of casting out demonic spirits. Moreover, in the papyri texts we read:

Hail, God of Abraham; hail, God of Isaac; hail, God of Jacob; Jesus Chrestos, the Holy Spirit, the Son of the Father, who is above the Seven, / who is within the Seven. Bring Iao Sabaoth; may your power issue forth from him,... until you drive away this unclean daimon Satan, who is in him (PGM IV: 1230-1240).

From this passage it is evident that the exorcist did not rely upon himself; the exorcism was believed to be performed by the god who was being invoked. Commenting on this passage, Twelftree says: ‘The rationale behind this amalgamated spell of Jewish, Christian, and pagan ideas is that a demon is expected to come out of a person because the power of a god comes to drive it away.’<sup>14</sup> In addition, the name and the description are also present in these examples from the papyri, as means to control and force a god into performing an exorcism.

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<sup>13</sup> Miller, Patrick D., *They Cried to the Lord: the Form and Theology of Biblical Prayer* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1994), p. 30-31.

<sup>14</sup> Twelftree, Graham H., *In the Name of Jesus: Exorcism among Early Christians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), p. 39.

What can be noted in conclusion of this section of invoking a god as a power-authority in *Magical Papyri* texts is that exorcists clearly did not rely on their own charismatic force and skills, but rather, on the power of the god being invoked. Whereas the incantations were to be said by an experienced exorcist or leader of the cult, it was not the exorcist in particular who was performing the exorcism. A god, invoked as a power-authority and being controlled by the exorcist with what could be identified as flatteries or force, and with the knowledge of its name was the one expelling the demon.

### **2.1.2 Invoking a famous and powerful exorcist**

Another method of casting out demonic spirits found in the ancient papyri texts contains the invocation of a famous and powerful exorcist instead of a god. In PGM V we read the following incantation:

I am Moses your prophet to whom you have transmitted your mysteries/ celebrated by Israel; you have revealed the moist and the dry and all nourishment; hear me. I am the messenger of Pharaoh Osoronnohris; / this is your true name which has been transmitted to the prophets of Israel. (PGM V: 106-117).

The peculiarity of this invocation lies in the fact that the exorcist was assuming the figure of a famous exorcist, a holy man, or an angel. The use of historical names in ancient literature was not unusual. Names like Noah (in the book of Jubilees, *Jubilees* 10), Abraham (in Genesis Apocryphon, 1QapGen 20:28-29), David (in Josephus' writings – e.g. *Ant.* 6:168), and Solomon (in *Magical Papyri* XCII: 1-10) were all legendary figures, whose high

esteem and skills in defeating demons were ‘assumed to be able to fight and subdue’<sup>15</sup> the demonic entities and their powers. Therefore, as noted above and as we shall observe later, it was believed that the knowledge of the name gave power to the exorcist over the spiritual entity (or in this case, historical figure, or a god). It meant the presence and power of the historical figure itself, which gave more power and chances of success to the exorcist.

The connection between the invocation of a god as a power-authority and a historical figure like Solomon lies in the procedure and methodology, which included specific incantations, and no significance of the exorcist himself. In both of these cases the exorcist was responsible only for the procedure of prayers and invocation of either a god or a legendary figure, which was known for dealing with the demonic. Thus, the methodology was nearly identical. The latter, however, cannot be said about other techniques of exorcism found in ancient materials which will be examined next.

## **2.2 *The Book of Tobit***

Written around the second century BC,<sup>16</sup> *The Book of Tobit* presents a different technique of casting out demonic spirits. For the sake of this project we will not analyse the origins or the debate of authorship of this material, but will rather concentrate on the activity of a demon Asmodeus (*Tobit* 3:8,17) and the means used to cast him out.

The book tells a story of Sarah and how a demon Asmodeus, being in love with Sarah, killed her seven husbands during their wedding nights (*Tobit* 3:8; 6:13). Finally, Tobias, her new husband, is instructed by the angel Raphael how to cast out the demon. Due to the fact that the instructions provided by the angel were efficient, the exorcism was successful (8:3),

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<sup>15</sup> Twelftree, *Triumphant*, p. 52.

<sup>16</sup> Pfeiffer, R. H., *History of New Testament Times, with an Introduction to the Apocrypha* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1963), p. 247.

and the demon fled. Whereas the text may not necessarily talk about possession per se (or at least it is not entirely clear), it does describe the attacks of Asmodeus, and Tobias' attempt to ward him off.

The demon Asmodeus functions differently in various ancient texts. According to Hutter, Aggadic texts connect Asmodeus with 'drunkenness, mischief, and licentiousness'; and it also has connections to an 'Iranian concept of Aeshma as a demon of wrath.'<sup>17</sup> In this story, however, Asmodeus functions as a jealous demon, able to kill Sarah's seven husbands.

About the instructions of the angel and the technique of the exorcism we read in *Tobit* 6:17-18:

take some of the fish's liver and heart, and put them on the embers of the incense. An odor will be given off; the demon will smell it and flee, and will never be seen near her any more.

Later, in *Tobit* 8:3, we encounter the conclusion of the ritual: 'Then the angel Raphael took the devil, and bound him in the desert of upper Egypt.' By this conclusion we understand that the demon was successfully cast out.

Although the methodology of fumigation may seem unusual and somewhat magical, it was certainly not an uncommon notion among the early Christians<sup>18</sup> during and after the time of Jesus.<sup>19</sup> According to the analysis done by Twelftree, from this text it becomes evident that 'some of the Jews of the New Testament era believed incense could remove a demon.'<sup>20</sup>

Furthermore, William Alexander identifies several ancient techniques for casting out demons,

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<sup>17</sup> M. Hutter, 'Asmodeus,' in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible*, 106–108.

<sup>18</sup> Josephus, *Ant.* 8. 46-49.

<sup>19</sup> Twelftree, *In the Name of Jesus*, p. 38.

<sup>20</sup> Twelftree, *Triumphant*, p. 29.

among which was the method of ‘disgusting demons’ by laying the heart and liver of a fish upon the embers of ashes.<sup>21</sup> Similar to the *Magical Papyri* texts, the methodology found in *The Book of Tobit* involves a rite which could be successful only if done properly and according to instructions. Regarding this method, Loren Stuckenbruck comments: ‘...the burning of these organs ‘before a man or a woman’ being attacked by ‘a demon or an evil spirit’ will guarantee protection against the danger posed by the demon.’<sup>22</sup> In addition, Stuckenbruck also analyses two versions of *The Book of Tobit*, which are *Vaticanus* and *Sinaiticus*. The *Sinaiticus* text ‘is not only reflected in the Old Latin version,’<sup>23</sup> but also has the closest resemblance to the Aramaic and Hebrew manuscripts from Qumran Cave 4. The reason for this analysis lies in a clearer understanding of angel Raphael’s assurance of the success of the technique. Below is the comparison between the texts of *Vaticanus* and *Sinaiticus*.

<i>Vaticanus, Alexandrinus</i>	<i>Sinaiticus</i>
8:11 ‘And he took hold of his father and rubbed the gall upon the eyes of his father saying, “Take courage, father!”’	8:11 ‘And Tobiah <u>went up to him, with the gall of the fish in his hand</u> and he blew into his eyes and he took hold of him and said, “Take courage, father!” <u>And he put medicine on him, and it took effect.</u> ’

<sup>21</sup> Alexander, William Menzies., *Demonic Possession In The New Testament: Its Relations, Historical, Medical, and Theological ... (Classic Reprint)* (Place of publication not identified: Forgotten Books, 2015), p. 126-128.

<sup>22</sup> Stuckenbruck, Loren T., *The Myth of Rebellious Angels: Studies in Second Temple Judaism and New Testament Texts* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2017), p. 128.

<sup>23</sup> Stuckenbruck, *The Myth of Rebellious Angels*, p. 126.

Based on this chart we can see that *Sinaiticus* text adds more details, which are essential in understanding that the methodology offered in *The Book of Tobit* was meant to be successful. Moreover, Stuckenbruck further analyses the two texts and concludes that the guarantee of success found in the longer version of *The Book of Tobit* implied that the methodology was not only meant to work in the case of Asmodeus, but could also be applied and ‘expected to be potent in any situation of demonic attack, whether the victim be a man or a woman.’<sup>24</sup>

Thus it is evident that to rid oneself of unwanted demons, the technique of fumigation was not only in use, but it was also apparently effective. The recipe to burn a fish’s heart and liver to ward the demon off was not entirely different from the incantations and rites found in other ancient texts. As in the *Magical Papyri*, *The Book of Tobit* provides clear evidence that the identity of the exorcist was not as important as what was said and done during the exorcism. The success of the rite, therefore, entirely depended on the performance of the instructions given by angel Raphael.

Both in the *Magical Papyri* texts and in *The Book of Tobit* the core of the successful exorcism lay in the *performance* of the rite, which involved careful observance of invocations, prayers, and, as was the case in *The Book of Tobit*, the instructions of burning heart and liver of a fish. Unlike other ancient texts which will be analysed later, the identity of the exorcist mattered little, if at all, and the success depended entirely on the rituals themselves.

### **2.3 The Testament of Solomon**

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<sup>24</sup> Stuckenbruck, *The Myth of Rebellious Angels*, p. 128-129.



Whereas there are varied opinions regarding the date and authorship of this pseudepigraphical work,<sup>25</sup> *The Testament of Solomon* is undoubtedly a valuable source for the study of the history of exorcisms. Ascribed to King Solomon, the text talks a lot about demonic forces<sup>26</sup> and Solomon's ability not only to cast them out but also to control them. This section will therefore briefly analyse the main methodologies of exorcism found in this text and how they contribute to the perspective on demonology in the first-century Palestine.

In the Greek title of *The Testament of Solomon* we read the following lines:

'Testament of Solomon, Son of David, who reigned in Jerusalem, and subdued all the spirits of the air, of the earth, and under the earth.'<sup>27</sup> Although the material speaks a lot about demonology, magic, astrology, and angelology, its presentation of techniques of exorcism is unique and enriches the perspective of this study in various ways.

One of the most important passages regarding the power through which Solomon was able to control and cast out demons is presented in the beginning of the text, and it reads:

When I, Solomon, heard these things, I went into the Temple of God and, praising him day and night, begged with all my soul that the demon might be delivered into my hands and that I might have authority over him. Then it happened that while I was praying to the God of heaven and earth, there was granted me from the Lord Sabaoth through the archangel Michael a ring which had a seal engraved on precious stone. He said to me, "Solomon, Son of David, take the gift which the Lord God, the highest Sabaoth, has sent to you; (with it) you shall imprison all the demons, both female and

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<sup>25</sup> We accept that it was written around First to Third century AD, according to Charlesworth, James H., *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (NY: Doubleday and Company, Inc.1983), p. 935.

<sup>26</sup> Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, p. 935-957.

<sup>27</sup> Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, p. 960.

male, and with their help you shall build Jerusalem when you bear this seal of God”  
(*TSol* 1:5-7).<sup>28</sup>

The emphasis of this lengthy but significant piece of text is the ring, which Solomon received ‘from the Lord Sabaoth’, as its use by many magicians and exorcists can be found in various ancient texts like Josephus’ *Antiquities of the Jews*, in which he describes Solomon as a great and skilful exorcist. In chapter 8 of the *Antiquities* Josephus talks about a Jewish exorcist named Eleazar, who was able to cast out demons by using a ring with a certain root placed inside of it. The demon was expelled through the man’s nostrils after the man had smelled it. In addition, Solomon’s name and his prayers were also recited as a part of the exorcism (*Ant.* 8:46-49).

According to Twelftree, the passage in *Antiquities* 8:46-49 reveals several important aspects regarding exorcism. First, both in the story of Eleazar, the Jewish exorcist, and in other materials like *Magical Papyri* and *Testament of Solomon*, it is evident that ‘Jews were renowned for their skill in exorcism,’ and that the ‘practice of exorcism was not confined to Greeks or pagans.’<sup>29</sup> Secondly, the text reveals that ‘mechanical or physical aids were used by Jews in exorcism.’<sup>30</sup> What the latter observation implies is the usage of the ring with the root under its seal to cast the demon out through a person’s nostrils. Alexander, when commenting on this particular methodology of casting out demonic spirits, identified it to be a ‘terrorizing’ technique, which meant that demons were startled or even frightened by a certain smell or sight (e.g. fire).<sup>31</sup> In fact, the author provides a detailed analysis of the root itself, of which he says: ‘The root referred to is, no doubt, that which our author elsewhere

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<sup>28</sup> Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, p. 962.

<sup>29</sup> Twelftree, *Triumphant*, p. 34-35.

<sup>30</sup> Twelftree, *Triumphant*, p. 35.

<sup>31</sup> Alexander, William Menzies., *Demonic Possession In The New Testament: Its Relations, Historical, Medical, and Theological ... (Classic Reprint)* (Place of publication not identified: Forgotten Books, 2015), p. 126-128.

calls “baaras,” whose colour was like that of a flame. [...] The sole value of the plant depended on its anti-demonic properties.’<sup>32</sup>

However, even though it is tempting to see this method of exorcism to be similar to those found in *Magical Papyri* and *The Book of Tobit*, meaning that what was said or performed was of greater importance than the identity of the exorcist, it is quite incorrect to see these methods as having the same core. The latter will also be evident in the following examples. In Josephus’ *Antiquities* we read: ‘And God granted him knowledge of the art used against demons’ (8:45). From this passage it becomes clear that God was the one who granted Solomon the wisdom to control demons, and it was God’s favour that guaranteed the success of an exorcism, rather than what was performed or said.

The methodology described above can be analysed in two parts. Firstly, it was God’s act that granted the knowledge to perform an exorcism. And secondly, it was the identity of the exorcist that mattered in the performance and the success of the exorcism, as he was the one favoured and instructed by God Almighty himself. Regarding the latter observation, Twelftree adds: ‘Josephus believed it was Solomon’s charismatic force, based on his standing with God that enabled him to control demons (*Ant.* 8:182, 190).’<sup>33</sup> In other words, it was God’s power that cast out a demon through a personal relationship He had with the exorcist. It therefore explains why Eleazar used the name of Solomon for the success of the exorcism, of which we read in *Antiquities*:

He put a ring that had a Foot of one of those sorts mentioned by Solomon to the nostrils of the demoniac, after which he drew out the demon through his nostrils; and when the

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<sup>32</sup> Alexander, *Demonic Possession*, p. 126.

<sup>33</sup> Twelftree, Graham H., *Jesus the Exorcist: a Contribution to the Study of the Historical Jesus* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1993), p. 36.

man fell down immediately, he abjured him to return into him no more, making still mention of Solomon, and reciting the incantations which he composed (8:46-19).

It was therefore Solomon's relationship with God which was at the core of the power over the demonic forces, rather than physical aids and long incantations. Regarding the length and significance of incantations and spells used, in the *Testament of Solomon*, to King Solomon's question 'Who are you?', we read of the demon's response: 'Should I hear only "Michael, imprison Ruax," I retreat immediately' (18:5).<sup>34</sup> Unlike *Magical Papyri*, the incantation presented in the *Testament of Solomon* is brief, which is due to the importance of the identity of the exorcist and his relationship to God, and not lengthy prayer or spells.

In conclusion of this section, it is important to note that according to the *Testament of Solomon*, *Antiquities of the Jews*, and the studies done by scholars like Alexander and Twelftree, the ring with a certain root was an ancient method used to drive out a demon through a person's nostrils. It was a mechanical aid, yet the above study confirms that in itself it did not contain any power to drive the demon out. Rather, it was Solomon's relationship with God which could manifest its power through the symbolic performance of using the ring.

## 2.4 Other ancient methodologies and techniques

Besides the methodologies found in texts like *Magical Papyri*, *Testament of Solomon* and *The Book of Tobit*, there are numerous other sources from the ancient world which speak of different ways people cast out demons. This section will not analyse all of them, but it is nevertheless important to mention other techniques of exorcism found in the ancient texts to

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<sup>34</sup> Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, p. 978.

complete the picture of how casting out of demons was understood in ancient times and what effect it might have had on the people in the first century Palestine.

### 2.4.1 Genesis Apocryphon

*Genesis Apocryphon*, one of the Dead Sea Scrolls discovered in 1946 in Qumran Caves, retells the story of Abraham and how he prayed over the Pharaoh of Egypt, who had been afflicted by the Most High God.<sup>35</sup> In *Genesis Apocryphon* we read:

But now pray for me and for my household so that this evil spirit will be banished from us. I prayed for [...] and laid my hands upon his head. The plague was removed from him; [the evil spirit] was banished [from him] and he lived (1QapGen 20:28-29).<sup>36</sup>

The text tells us about Abraham's ability to remove the evil spirit from the Pharaoh. The technique described here is Abraham's simple prayer, which implies the involvement of the Most High God in the banishment of the demon. Analysing the passage, Twelftree notes: 'Here both the person as well as the enlisted outside help are important.'<sup>37</sup> To this, Loren Stuckenbruck adds:

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<sup>35</sup> Martínez Florentino García, and Wilfred G. E. Watson. *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated: the Qumran Texts in English* (Leiden: Brill, 1994), p. 230-238.

<sup>36</sup> All quotes from the Dead Sea scrolls come from *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated: the Qumran Texts in English*, translated by Wilfred Watson.

<sup>37</sup> Twelftree, *In the Name of Jesus*, p. 44.

Although these texts refer to human intermediaries and, to a certain extent, to particular actions on their part, the author of these passages leave no indication that they regarded the immediate source of healing to be anyone other than God.<sup>38</sup>

In agreement with Twelftree and Stuckenbruck, we see that what this study shows is that the technique of the exorcism found in the *Genesis Apocryphon* texts relied entirely on two factors: the power of God, and the exorcist, through whom God might drive out the demon. This can be seen in the emphasis of Abraham's prayer, which was the only action taken on the patriarch's part. Unlike long incantations, magical rites, and attempts to control God as power-authority in order to succeed in the performance of the exorcism, the methodology of exorcism found in the *Genesis Apocryphon* seems to highlight both the needlessness of any magical act, and the power of God which manifested itself through a prayer said by Abraham. As Armin Lange argues, the prayer of Abraham (like the hymnic exorcisms in *Jubilees* 10:3-6), and not any other means, resulted in Pharaoh's healing.<sup>39</sup>

Before we look at the similarities and differences between the prayers said by magicians and exorcists in the *Magical Papyri* texts, first let us look at material briefly mentioned above, the book of *Jubilees*, which speaks of the same methodology of casting out demonic spirits.

#### 2.4.2 The book of *Jubilees*

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<sup>38</sup> Stuckenbruck, *The Myth of Rebellious Angels*, p. 122.

<sup>39</sup> Lange, Armin. "1QGenAP XIX19-XX12 as Paradigm of the Wisdom Didactic Narrative". In eds. Heinz-Josef Fabry, Armin Lange, and Hermann Lichtenberger, *Qumranstudien. Vorträge und Beiträge der Teilnehmer des Qumranseminars auf dem internationalen Treffen der Society of Biblical Literature, Munster, 25.-26. Juli 1993* (Schriften des Institutum Judaicum Delitzschianum 4. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996), p. 197-198.

In the book of *Jubilees* we read about another biblical figure, Noah, whose methodology of casting out of demons enhances our perspective on the phenomena. Noah is asked by his sons to pray over his grandchildren who were being oppressed and even killed by demons. We read about Noah's prayer in *Jubilees* 10:

And the sons of Noah came to Noah, their father, and they told him about the demons who were leading astray and blinding and killing his grandchildren. And he prayed before the Lord his God and he said, 'God of the spirits which are in all flesh, who has acted mercifully with me and saved me and my sons from the water of the Flood and did not let me perish as you did the children of perdition, because Great was your grace upon me,

And great was your mercy upon my soul.

Let your grace be lifted up upon my sons,

And do not let the evil spirits rule over them,

Lest they destroy them from the earth.

But bless me and my sons. And let us grow and increase and fill the earth. And you know that which your Watchers, the fathers of these spirits, did in my days and also these spirits who are alive. Shut them up and take them to the place of judgment. And do not let them cause corruption among the sons of your servant, O my God, because they are cruel and were created to destroy. And let them not rule over the spirits of the living because you alone know their judgment, and do not let them have power over the

children of the righteous henceforth and forever' (*Jub* 10:2-6).<sup>40</sup>

The technique written in the text involves neither magical incantations, nor any physical aids. Similar to the methodology we observed in the *Genesis Apocryphon*, a holy and righteous man is able to control and cast out demonic entities simply by prayer to God.

The key element in the prayer of Noah provided above is found in verse 6, where Noah addresses Most High God as 'O my God.' According to the analysis of the theology of prayer done by Patrick Miller, addressing God as *my God* implies the identification of a personal relationship to God that is 'an implicit but significant ground for the appeal.'<sup>41</sup> Examining examples from the Old Testament (e.g. Ps 22:10; Ps 91:1-2; 2 Chr 14:11), the author also adds that 'God is not appealed to in general ways but is seen by the troubled prayer as being *pro me* and able to deliver in the situation of dire threat,' which means that the very character of God, when in a personal relationship, provides reasons for hope and security.<sup>42</sup> Miller is correct in his observations since the use of *my God* in Noah's prayer is not accidental as it evidently excludes any involvement of magical incantations or formulas. *My God* is a clear sign of a personal relationship between Noah and God, which also implies assurance in God's providence and power. Personal address also meant *knowing* God on a personal level, which is an entirely contrary technique than attempts to *control* or *use* God by carefully designed prayers and incantations.

Apart from the prayer, the methodology of exorcism described in *Jubilees* 10:2-6 also implies that the exorcism was successful not because of what was said or done, but because of who the individual performing the exorcism was. *Jubilees* 10 and *Genesis Apocryphon* are unanimous in relating the ability to control and expel demons not to the words or prayers, but

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<sup>40</sup> The text is taken from Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, Vol 1, p. 75-76.

<sup>41</sup> Miller, *They Cried to the Lord*, p. 58.

<sup>42</sup> Miller, *They Cried to the Lord*, p. 60.



to a ‘particular individual’s personal force.’<sup>43</sup>

In conclusion, both Abraham’s and Noah’s methods of exorcism were not founded upon a rite, magical ability to control the spiritual realm, or carefully designed incantations meant to please and flatter a god. Their examples present prayers which originated from a relationship with the Most High God. The *knowing* and *worship* of God was the core of the successful exorcism, which is the methodology we will also encounter in the New Testament analysis.

## 2.5 Conclusion

The analysis provided in this chapter presents some of the ancient methodologies of casting out of demons. Materials like *Magical Papyri*, *Testament of Solomon*, and books of *Jubilees* and *Tobit* speak of various techniques ranging from mere prayers to magical rites involving the burning of heart and liver of a fish. In summary, the key factors and the guarantees of success of ancient methodologies of exorcism can be placed into two different categories: 1) the performance and what was said and done; 2) the exorcist himself, and his spiritual or charismatic force.

The study done in this chapter also provides another alternative to the casting out of demons, which is an exorcism based on a genuine relationship with God rather than magical rites and carefully recited prayers. Instead of what was said and done, the key element found in texts like *Genesis Apocryphon*, and the book of *Jubilees*, was the exorcist’s stance with God.

Whereas there are numerous other techniques of exorcism found in different ancient books, what has been presented in this chapter will be sufficient to serve as the lens through which Jesus’ exorcisms in the Gospel of Luke will be analysed. Whether it was magical

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<sup>43</sup> Twelftree, *Jesus the Exorcist*, p. 51.

means or the relationship with God based on devotion and faith that could successfully cast the demons out, the sole purpose of this chapter is to create a perspective through which the techniques of exorcism found in the Gospel of Luke and Acts will be perceived and analysed.

## Chapter 3

When we read about followers and Apostles of Jesus performing an exorcism in the Gospels and Acts, a commonly used phrase during the exorcism is ‘in the name of Jesus.’<sup>44</sup> The usage of the name of Jesus by his Apostles and followers raises a rather important and obvious question – what does it mean to heal and cast out demons in the name of Jesus Christ? In other words, what role did the name of Jesus play in the performance of an exorcism?

In order to answer this question it is important to look at the theology of the names of Yahweh and Jesus in the Old and New Testaments first. The analysis of the names of Yahweh will serve as a pathway into the function and role of the name of Jesus. Specifically, what this chapter will concentrate on is how this brief study of the theology of the name will fit into the analysis of exorcism found in the Gospel of Luke and Acts.

In this chapter we will examine the theological and rhetorical functions of the names of Yahweh (Old Testament) and Jesus (New Testament), and see what foundation it lays for the further study of the techniques of exorcism performed by Jesus and his apostles.

### 3.1 Identificatory method

As already analysed in chapter 2 (2.1.1), the usage of a particular name in the performance of an exorcism was not at all uncommon. The names used included those of legendary and historical figures who were known for their strong relationship with God, Yahweh. Solomon (in Josephus’ writings and *Magical Papyri*), Abraham (in *Genesis Apocryphon*), and Noah (in the book of *Jubilees*) were some of the names whose mere mention in the performance of the exorcism was

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<sup>44</sup> E.g. Luke 9:49; 10:17; Matthew 7:22; Acts 3:6,16; 16:18; 19:13.

strong enough to cast the demon out. However, the method of the usage of names used in those ancient materials is unlike the usage of the names of Yahweh and Jesus in the biblical texts.

The first method, namely the use of a name (be that God's or a famous figure's) is called *identification*. In the performance of an exorcism a name was used to call upon a power-authority strong enough to subdue the demonic force, and whose 'aid was sought through a careful identificatory formula.'<sup>45</sup> The power-authority, whose name was in use during the exorcism, could be either a famous figure (e.g. Solomon), or God himself. Identifying an exorcist or a god as a power-authority was merely a magical method, an incantation, which implied that the usage, the pronunciation of the name, was enough to expel demonic entities.

Analysing the usage of a name as identification technique, William Alexander says:

...the Babylonians appealed to the gods of heaven, specially to Merodach, Gibil, and Ea. Of this trinity, Ea was the most powerful; being lord of the spirits. Justin Martyr says to Trypho, Though you Jews exorcise any demon in the name of those who were among you—either kings, or righteous men, or prophets, or patriarchs—it will not be subject to you. But if any of you exorcise it in the name of God of Abraham and the God of Isaac, it will perhaps be subject to you (Dialogue, c. 85).<sup>46</sup>

Interestingly, Justin Martyr's observation leaves some room for doubt regarding the usage of the phrase 'God of Abraham.' Frederick Conybeare, commenting on the study done by Justin Martyr and Origen (whose opinions about the usage of the name are in agreement), concludes that 'the unseen powers must come when they are called – whether it be God or Christ or Demon that is invoked – provided only they be properly addressed and by their true names.'<sup>47</sup> Evidently, this

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<sup>45</sup> Twelftree, *Jesus the Exorcist*, p. 34.

<sup>46</sup> Alexander, William Menzies, *Demonic Possession In The New Testament: Its Relations, Historical, Medical, and Theological ... (Classic Reprint)* (Place of publication not identified: Forgotten Books, 2015), p. 131.

<sup>47</sup> Conybeare, *Christian Demonology*, p. 64.

notion was applied both to demons and to power-authorities in order to control them. However, what is being analysed above is a mere pronunciation, the identification of the name, which did not imply the *knowing* aspect, which will be studied later. Commenting on Origen's take on the topic, Conybeare elaborates by saying the following:

Certain sounds and syllables, says Origen, and certain titles pronounced with aspiration or without, pronounced long or short, bring at once to us, by some incomprehensible nature inherent in them, the persons summoned. For names are not conventionally given to the things they denote, but belong to them by a natural and highly mysterious affinity.<sup>48</sup>

The above analysis of the usage of a name in the performance of the exorcism is a pattern found both in pagan or magical formulas (e.g. 2.1 section), and in the New Testament material. However, whereas Conybeare and Origen were right in their observations, the *identification* of a name and its place in a prayer or incantation did not necessarily mean that an exorcist or a magician was well aware of the personality, character, or power it actually represented. Thus, *identification* method does not involve the notion of *knowing* of what the name designates. Misused and misunderstood, the names of either historical figures or God were used as mere sounds or collections of letters thought to contain magical powers. The best example of the latter observation is found in the book of Acts, the analysis of which lays the foundation for the understanding of the theology of the names of Yahweh and Jesus.

### 3.1.1 Acts 19

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<sup>48</sup> Conybeare, *Christian Demonology*, p. 65.

Chapter 19 in the book of Acts presents one of the most compelling and peculiar cases of the usage of the name of Jesus in the performance of an exorcism. It talks about Jewish exorcists who attempted to use the name of Jesus as means to heal a demonized person. In chapter 19 we read:

Then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists undertook to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, ‘I adjure you by the Jesus whom Paul proclaims.’ Seven sons of a Jewish high priest named Sceva were doing this. But the evil spirit answered them, ‘Jesus I know, and Paul I recognize, but who are you?’ And the man in whom was the evil spirit leaped on them, mastered all of them and overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. (19:13-16)<sup>49</sup>

Whereas this passage will be analysed from different angles throughout this study, the aspect which now concerns us the most is the *identificatory* usage of the name of the Lord Jesus, which not only was unable to cast the demon out, but angered the evil spirit instead, and caused it to do even more harm. The passage tells us that the name was added to the exorcists’ incantations, which implies mere pronunciation of the sounds and syllables as magical means to perform the ritual. The exorcists did not have either respect for Christ or trust in his name, but rather, used ‘the name of the Lord Jesus merely as a magical device.’<sup>50</sup> In other words, they used the name as one of the methods to carry on their practices.

The exorcists’ intention was to use the name as a power-authority over the demonic. It is evident that Paul’s exorcisms in the name of Jesus proved to be so powerful and efficient that sons of Sceva decided to use it as well. Frederick Bruce elaborates on the notion by observing that this episode in the Book Acts reminds of the ‘curse formulas found in the magical papyri, in which

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<sup>49</sup> All quotations from the Bible are from English Standard Version (ESV).

<sup>50</sup> Newman, B. M., and Nida, E. A., *A handbook on the Acts of the Apostles*. (New York: United Bible Societies, 1972), p. 367.

various gods, Jewish, pagan, and even Christian would be invoked,<sup>51</sup> hoping that at least one of the names pronounced would be able to cast the demon out.

Popular among ancient exorcists (e.g. 2.1 section), this method did not involve *knowing* or *glorifying* Jesus and his name. Rather, without faith<sup>52</sup> and relationship with Yahweh and his son Jesus, the name was but a collection of letters included in the magical spells, thought to produce the desired effect. On the importance of faith in this particular episode, a commentary by Alexander Maclaren notes:

All that they knew of Jesus was that He was the one ‘whom Paul preached.’ Even the name of Jesus is spoiled and is powerless on the lips of one who repeats it, parrot-like, because he has seen its power when it came flame-like from the fiery lips of some man of earnest convictions.<sup>53</sup>

The *identification* method of the usage of the name implied, therefore, no faith or personal relationship with God. It was simply another magical technique of casting out demons which was common among Jewish exorcists. Graham Twelftree, commenting on Acts 19:13-19, notes: ‘Their [sons of Sceva’s] source of power-authority was the name of a renowned exorcist whose aid was sought through a careful identificatory formula.’<sup>54</sup> Thus, identical to the techniques found in the *Magical Papyri* texts (2.1.1), the name was merely a spell and an incantation used to invoke and control a power-authority in order to cast a demon out. Using the name, therefore, the exorcists’ technique was concerned mainly with the *identificatory* usage of it, hoping it would produce the desired results.

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<sup>51</sup> Bruce, Frederick F. *The Book of the Acts*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008), p. 580.

<sup>52</sup> Maclaren, Alexander, *Expositions of Holy Scripture: the Acts of the Apostles, Chapters XIII to End*. (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1907), p. 178.

<sup>53</sup> Maclaren, *Expositions of Holy Scripture*, p. 178.

<sup>54</sup> Twelftree, *Jesus the Exorcist*, p. 34.

### 3.1.2 Matthew 7:21-23

Another important example which sheds light upon the understanding of how the name of Jesus was misunderstood and used merely as an *identificatory* technique comes from Matthew 7:21-23.<sup>55</sup> The passage reads:

Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’

Although many observations in this passage can be made regarding the final judgment, what relates to this research the most is the connection between the use of the name of Jesus to cast out demonic spirits and the failure to be acknowledged and accepted by the Lord.

The passage clearly indicates that the former ‘exorcists’ in this passage were aware of the name of Jesus and were using it to expel demons. However, Jesus’ response to their appeals is shocking, as he declares he never knew them. According to David Turner, the problem was not that there was no fruit of their labor, but the fact that the fruit was not ‘genuine.’<sup>56</sup> In other words, only those who are submitting to the will of God can enter the kingdom of heaven, and doing the Father’s will ‘cannot be identified with lawless behavior.’<sup>57</sup>

Whereas this project is not attempting to address the questions of charismatic gifts and their authenticity, it is nevertheless important to point out that even though those people might have possessed some charismatic force, the key element that so far seems to be missing is the act of

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<sup>55</sup> The parallel passage can also be found in Luke 6:46 and 13:25-27, but since those passages do not explicitly mention the use of exorcism in Jesus’ name, we choose to look at and analyse the passage in the Gospel of Matthew instead.

<sup>56</sup> Turner, David L. *Baker Exegetical Commentary On The New Testament. Matthew* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 2008), p. 219.

<sup>57</sup> Turner, *Baker Exegetical Commentary On The New Testament. Matthew*, p. 219.



surrender and submission to Yahweh in the name of Jesus. In other words, when we read Jesus saying ‘In my name’, that may simply mean that ‘the false prophets *claim* to be Christians.’<sup>58</sup> In addition, William Davies observes the following: ‘Perhaps the false prophets use Jesus’ name as a charm or magical formula, as in Acts 19:13-17.’<sup>59</sup> Thus, it becomes clear that the method of the usage of the name was not based on the relationship with the Lord or following and seeking his will. Rather, it was a mere *saying* and *pronunciation* of the name which excluded knowing the Lord as their Savior or giving him the due glory. According to John Nolland, calling Jesus ‘Lord’ clearly ‘involves some sort of recognition of his significance,’ and it ‘implies a serious level of engagement with him.’<sup>60</sup> If the ‘level of engagement’ is absent, however, the name of the Lord is merely *identified*, and the results of it are clearly seen both in Acts 19 (when demons overpower the exorcists), and Matthew 7 (when Jesus says he never knew them).

The true nature and authenticity of those exorcisms in Jesus’ name is in doubt, but the analysis of the passage from Matthew 7:21-23 (in relation to Acts 19:13-16) above evidently points to the dangers and reality of the misuse of the name of the Lord as an *identificatory* method in first century Palestine. It did not involve either a personal relationship with God or giving glory to his name. On the contrary it was a plain *pronunciation* of the name, which likely had magical implications as well, since it was viewed as an incantation or a powerful word, able to produce the desired results.

### 3.2 *Knowing* method

Besides the *identificatory* technique of casting out demons by using the name of Jesus, what provides clarity to the theology of the name in relation to exorcisms is the element of *knowing*. The

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<sup>58</sup> Davies, W D, and Dale C Allison. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on The Gospel According to Saint Matthew*. Vol. 1. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988), p. 715.

<sup>59</sup> Davies, Allison. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on The Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, p. 715.

<sup>60</sup> Nolland, John, *The Gospel of Matthew: a Commentary on the Greek Text* (Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2005), p. 339.

previous section showed us how *identificatory* method of using the name of Jesus was not only insufficient but also dangerous. However, the issue was not the usage of the name itself, but *how* the name was perceived and carried out in the performance of casting out demonic entities. This section will therefore analyse what it means to *know* the name (either of Yahweh or Jesus) before it can be efficiently applied to the practice of exorcisms.

The following analysis will focus on examples from both Old and New Testaments to provide a clear study of the theology of the name and what it meant to use and know it.

### 3.2.1 The book of Exodus

The book of Exodus (3:14; 6:3) is where we find the God of Israel introducing his name as YHWH (יהוה). The passage in Exodus 6:2-3 reads:

God spoke to Moses and said to him, ‘I am the LORD. I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as God Almighty, but by my name the LORD I did not make myself known to them.’

The textual notion that is created by God’s proclamation ‘but by my name the Lord [יהוה] I did not make myself known’ (Exod 6:3) implies that God is presenting a new name which was not known before. However, assuming that none of the patriarchs knew God by his name ‘Lord’ is false.<sup>61</sup> Alec Motyer comments on the passage by saying: ‘The patriarchs called God Yahweh, but knew him as El Shaddai; their descendants will both call Him and know Him by His name Yahweh.’<sup>62</sup> In other words, it is a mistake to think that it was a new God who was going to save Israel. Rather, it

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<sup>61</sup> In Genesis 15:2, 8; 16:2, 5 we find both Abraham and Sarah addressing God by the same name, the Lord (gk κύριος, Hebrew: יהוה).

<sup>62</sup> Motyer, J. A. *The Revelation of the Divine Name*, (Leicester, England: Theological Students Fellowship, 1959), p. 16.

was the God whom the patriarchs knew to be Yahweh. Duane Garrett elaborates more on the passage, and says the following:

If he [God] had come in a different name, he would have been a different god, or he would have been the kind of pagan god that the Egyptians knew so well, one that could easily merge identities and traits with another god. But such a god would not have been 'I AM' of Exodus.<sup>63</sup>

What the above authors and commentators propose is the idea that the name *Yahweh* was well known to the patriarchs, although it is not explicitly mentioned in the text until Exodus 6:3. According to Michael Heiser, 'that Abraham knew the divine name in the biblical text as we have it (cf. Exod 6:3) is no requirement that he use it in every exchange.'<sup>64</sup> Therefore, if the name is simply associated only with letters and particular sounds, it is evident that it was not the name per se that Yahweh was revealing to Moses. The message of Exodus 6, according to Motyer, opens and closes with the statement of divine authority: 'I am Yahweh.'<sup>65</sup> In addition, the author comments the following: 'On the basis of this authority, it declares the saving acts which, it is specifically stated, will be a revelation of Yahweh's nature, for, as a results of what he will do, Israel will know that "I am YHWH your God."'<sup>66</sup> The latter study, therefore, provides evidence for the theory that it was not the *name itself* that Yahweh revealed to Moses or told him to declare, but rather his *character*, his *nature* that is associated with the name.

The name 'YHWH', according to the above analysis, was already known by the patriarchs before it was introduced in Exodus 6:3. What God unfolds in these passages is rather his saving and merciful character. To the Israelites, it is the character and nature of mercy and saving grace,

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<sup>63</sup> Garrett, Duane A. *A Commentary on Exodus*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Academic, 2014), p. 252.

<sup>64</sup> Heiser, *The Unseen Realm*, p. 132.

<sup>65</sup> Motyer, *The Revelation of the Divine Name*, p. 16.

<sup>66</sup> Motyer, *The Revelation of the Divine Name*, p. 16.

whereas for the Egyptians it is the character of judgment and punishment.<sup>67</sup> The *knowing* element, therefore, lies not in knowing or recognizing the syllables and certain sounds of the name, but rather in knowing the nature of God and *who He is*. According to the *Oxford Bible Commentary*, it is even more than the proclamation of authority, as it is the ‘self-giving of a person whose personality and character are summed up in his name, but who can be fully known for who he is only in his gracious act of salvation.’<sup>68</sup> Or, to add to the latter comment, in his punishment of the Egyptians.

In addition, another passage from the book of Exodus offers a more detailed look at the theology of the name. In Exodus 33:12 we read: ‘Yet you have said, “I know you by name, and you have also found favour in my sight.”’ And in verse 17 Yahweh says to Moses: ‘This very thing that you have spoken I will do, for you have found favour in my sight, and I know you by name.’ Taking into account the study above, it is highly unlikely that what is meant by the phrase ‘know by name’ is a mere connection between the sounds and a particular person. Motyer, commenting on the passages in Exodus 33, says:

It is possible that this should be so attenuated in meaning as to signify merely that Yahweh is acquainted with the sound ‘Moses’ and has learned to make that sound in connection with a certain man. Such externality is unthinkable.<sup>69</sup>

According to Michael Heiser, who agrees with the above analysis, in Exodus 33:12-14 it was the very presence of Yahweh that went with Moses when the people were led out of Canaan.<sup>70</sup>

In the above examples from the book of Exodus we see that to know the name of Yahweh meant to know his saving grace, his personality, and his mercy. However, it was not mere *identification* of God’s personality, which occurred through the recitation or hearing of the name.

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<sup>67</sup> This notion is also evident in other places like Ezekiel 6:7 and Jeremiah 16:21.

<sup>68</sup> Barton, John, and John Muddiman. *The Oxford Bible Commentary*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 72.

<sup>69</sup> Motyer, *The Revelation of the Divine Name*, p. 15-16.

<sup>70</sup> Heiser, *The Unseen Realm*, p. 143 (n.2).

Motyer put it this way: ‘To know by name means to have come into intimate relationship and personal acquaintance with a person.’<sup>71</sup> The knowing of the name of Yahweh, therefore, was not about identifying or recognizing God in relation to certain sounds and syllables. On the contrary, to *know* Yahweh was to be in a personal relationship with him.

### 3.2.2 Psalm 20

Although there are numerous occasions in the Old Testament where we encounter the name of Yahweh being used (e.g. Ps 80:18; 2 Chron 6:24-25, Isa 50:10), several significant examples will suffice to establish the key aspects of the theology of the name and what it meant to *know* the name of God.

Another example, which will serve that purpose, is found in Psalm 20. In verse 1 we read: ‘May the Lord answer you in the day of trouble! May the name of the God of Jacob protect you.’ And later in verse 7: ‘Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the Lord our God.’

In the above passages we read about the name of God protecting those who are in trouble, and that people of God should trust in his name. Considering the analysis done in this chapter, it would be unwise to assume that the author of Psalm 20 implied the trust in the letters and syllables that formed the name YHWH. Moreover, it is highly unlikely that the name by itself, identified as a combination of sounds, can protect God’s people from physical or spiritual dangers. Anderson claims:

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<sup>71</sup> Motyer, *The Revelation of the Divine Name*, p. 16.

The name is not to be associated with some magical incantation of the divine name (cf. Ac. 19:13), but in this context ‘the name of God’ may mean ‘God in action’. Where the name of God is, there one also finds his presence.<sup>72</sup>

Anderson is completely right in his analysis since, as we already saw in the example from Exodus 6:2-3 and Psalm 20, the  $\text{YHWH}$  of God meant the revelation of his character and presence itself. Thus, in light of the analysis of *identification* and the *knowing* of the name, it becomes clear that the usage of the name of YHWH meant the calling upon his very presence.

The  $\text{YHWH}$  of YHWH in verse 1, therefore, is used as a personification of God who will protect the psalmist, which is why the trust has to be put only into the living God in action, as we read in verse 7. The latter verse, having a clear military context,<sup>73</sup> implies the power of Yahweh himself that will go before his people and his chosen king to overcome their enemies. A situation that is similar to that found in 1 Samuel 4:3, when the presence of ‘Yahweh himself went into battle with the sacred arc.’<sup>74</sup> As analysed in previous section (3.2.1), the trust in the name of YHWH and its ability to protect the people of Israel lay not in the pronunciation of the syllables but in the saving, protecting, and gracious character of the person of the Almighty God. James Mays, commenting on Psalm 20 and its usage of the name of God in verses 1 and 7, said that the name not only identifies but becomes the identity of God; the name bears the presence, power, and person of God.<sup>75</sup> In relation to the passage found in Exodus 23:21,<sup>76</sup> Mitchell Dahood concludes: ‘The Name of Yahweh is a personification.’<sup>77</sup>

Psalm 20 offers us a clear perspective on how the psalmist viewed the usage of the name of God. It was not merely an *identificatory* element, which merely used the sounds and syllables of the

<sup>72</sup> Anderson, A. A. *The Book of Psalms. New Century Bible*. Vol. 1. (London: Marshall, organ & Scott, 1972), p. 175.

<sup>73</sup> Kraus, Hans-Joachim, *Psalms 1-59: a Commentary*. (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Pub. House, 1988), p. 281.

<sup>74</sup> Kraus, *Psalms 1-59: a Commentary*, p. 280.

<sup>75</sup> Mays, James L. *Psalms. Interpretation Bible Commentarie*. (Louisville, KY: John Knox press, 1994), p. 101.

<sup>76</sup> Which reads: ‘Pay careful attention to him and obey his voice; do not rebel against him, for he will not pardon your transgression, for my name is in him.’

<sup>77</sup> Dahood, Mitchell J. *The Anchor Bible: Psalms 1-50*. (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1966), p. 127.

name of which we read in the book of Exodus. Rather, the above analysis provides enough evidence to show that the usage of the name of the Lord was based upon *knowing* God's character, his love, saving grace, and power through a personal, intimate relationship. Merrill Unger states: 'The name stands for the infinite Person behind the name, and does not contain any magical power in itself.'<sup>78</sup>

Thus, contrary to the method of *identification* of the name and its mere pronunciation, the *knowing* of the name offers a perspective which is mainly based upon a genuine relationship with God through faith and love. Unlike the belief that the  $\alpha\psi$  of YHWH is magical and powerful when used as a spell or incantation, it is rather Yahweh himself in action.

### 3.3 Glorification method

In addition to the methods of *identification* and *knowing* of the name of God, another usage of the name YHWH found in the Scriptures is known as *glorification*.<sup>79</sup> The element of *glorification* not only expands the understanding of *knowing* the name of YHWH, but also answers the question why the name of God was in use during exorcism or worship in the first place. In other words, what spiritual significance and effect did the usage of the name YHWH, based on personal relationship which involved the very presence of God, have?

In this section we will look at some examples from Old and New Testaments to help us answer the question raised above, and complete the image of how the name of God was viewed both in ancient Israel and in the times of Jesus.

#### 3.3.1 The Gospel of John

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<sup>78</sup> Unger, Merrill F. *Demons in the World Today: A Study of Occultism in the Light of Gods Word*. (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1995), p. 119.

<sup>79</sup> Whereas these terms are not widely in use, some of them were roughly taken from Twelftree, *Jesus the Exorcist*, p. 39; and Twelftree, *Triumphant*, p. 62.

In the New Testament we find numerous examples of the usage of the name of Jesus and God.<sup>80</sup>

However, before we look at what methodologies of exorcism were used by Jesus and his apostles in Luke's writings, and what role the theology of the name played in them, it is important to look at one of the most significant examples outside the Gospel of Luke or Acts which completes the picture of how the *glorification* aspect fits into the theology of the name.

For this, we turn to chapter 12 in the Gospel of John, which reads:

'Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? "Father, save me from this hour"? But for this purpose I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name.' Then a voice came from heaven: 'I have glorified it, and will glorify it again.' (Jn 12:27-28).

Although the passage presents quite a few theological observations, our main target is Jesus' words 'Father, glorify your name'. In agony and before facing death itself, Jesus' prayer presents not only the fact that he *knows* the Father and his name, but also that he wishes it to be *glorified*. The appeal to and glorification of God's name in the hour of trouble was not an unusual notion in ancient Israel.<sup>81</sup> Whether it was a cry for the forgiveness of sins (Ps 25:11), or a plea for deliverance (Ps 79:9), the psalmists often glorified the name of God. However, the scene in John 12:27-28 offers a more elaborated perspective. Andrew Lincoln, comments:

But Jesus refuses the appeal for deliverance. Instead his sole concern is with his Father's reputation, which is paradoxically to be established through both non-deliverance and what appears to be the very opposite of glory by human standards, namely Jesus' death by crucifixion.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> E.g. Jn 16:24; Acts 4:12; Col 3:17; 2 Thess 1:12.

<sup>81</sup> E.g. Ps. 25:11; 31:3; 79:9; Jer 14:7.

<sup>82</sup> Lincoln, Andrew T. *Gospel According to St John*. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2005), p. 351.



The above analysis both confirms and expands the theology of the name, which has been studied in this chapter. Lincoln agrees that the name is more than merely a word, a collection of letters, since he identifies it as ‘Father’s reputation’. In other words, when God’s name was glorified it meant that God himself – his nature, reputation, and character – was glorified and worshipped. In section 3.2.1 we analysed how the nature and character of God were present in his name, YHWH, but in terms of it being glorified, Leon Morris says:

Here ‘glorify your name’ means ‘glorify yourself’; the usage is not unlike that in the Lord’s Prayer: ‘May your name be hallowed’ (Matt. 6:9). It is a way of referring to all that the Father is and means and, in this context especially, to the Father’s saving love.<sup>83</sup>

Morris correctly observes that it was not the glorification of syllables or sounds, but of everything that Yahweh is. Although we clearly see the reference to the name being identical with the person and the character of God, William Hendriksen, commenting on the passage from John 12, adds: ‘The name of the Father is his revelation; here, his revelation is Christ.’<sup>84</sup> Though it may seem that the commentator omits the interpretation of Father and his character being present in his name, it is quite the opposite. In John 14:11 we read: ‘Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me.’ Thus both Morris and Hendriksen are correct in their observations, as the nature of God and who he is are also present in Jesus. Therefore, the name of Jesus, just as YHWH, represents the nature and character of God – his saving love, his grace, and his unending mercy. In other words, it represents the very presence of God.

In addition to the above analysis, the passage in John 12:27-28, however, provides even more detailed perspective on what it means to glorify the name of God. According to Donald Carson,

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<sup>83</sup> Morris, Leon. *Reflections on the Gospel of John: Volume 3: the True Vine John 11-16*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1988), p. 451.

<sup>84</sup> Hendriksen, William. *A Commentary on the Gospel of John*. (London: Banner of Truth Trust, 1954), p. 201.

This is not some compromise petition, since the glorification of the Father's name for which he asks turns on Jesus' willing obedience, even unto death. This request is nothing other than the articulation of the principle that has controlled his life and ministry (7:18; 8:29, 50).<sup>85</sup>

Carson identified glorification of the Father's name as utter obedience to his will. Here lies the core of the glory which is due to God and his presence in the name – submission and obedience to the will of God. When a servant of the Lord puts his will above his own, and acts in accordance to the will of the one who sent him – just as Jesus by dying on the cross – only then does he truly glorify God.<sup>86</sup> Jesus did not seek deliverance in the hour of trouble, and certainly did not follow his own will. Rather, he clearly showed us that the only way to glorify the name of God – to glorify God himself – was by being obedient to whatever his will was.

The scene in John 12:27-28, therefore, offers us a glimpse at what it meant to use, glorify and carry in ourselves the name of God. It was the active obedience which glorified God and his name, and not a mere usage of it in prayers which is – based on the analysis in section 3.1 – known as *identificatory* pronunciation without *knowing* or *glorifying* it. Just as Donald Carson pointed out, it is the principle which controls and guides our lives and ministries.<sup>87</sup> According to George Beasley-Murray, who agrees with the latter reflection, the words 'I have glorified it' meant that the name of the Father was glorified in the 'revelation that has taken place through the ministry of Jesus', and that now it was to be 'climaxed in the obedience of the Son' by his death on the cross and 'in his exaltation by the Father.'<sup>88</sup>

Thus, in the above analysis we see evidence of God's name being glorified not in a mere pronunciation of the word as a method of *identification*. On the contrary it was an act of submission

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<sup>85</sup> Carson, D. A. *The Gospel According to John*. (Grand Rapids, MN: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1991), p. 440.

<sup>86</sup> Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, p. 440.

<sup>87</sup> Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, p. 440.

<sup>88</sup> Beasley-Murray, George R. John, *World Biblical Commentary*. Vol. 36. (Grand Rapids, MN: Zondervan, 2015), p. 212.

and obedience to the will of the Father that exalted his holy name. The *glorification* method was a necessary aspect which expanded and completed the study of *knowing* of the name, which meant being in a personal and intimate relationship with God.

### 3.3.2 Other examples

Another example which best conveys what it means to glorify God and his name comes from the book of Ezekiel. In Ezekiel 36:22-23 we read:

Therefore, say to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord God: It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations to which you came.

And I will vindicate the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, and which you have profaned among them. And the nations will know that I am the Lord, declares the Lord God, when through you I vindicate my holiness before their eyes.

Here again we encounter the use of  $\text{YHWH}$  by God himself. However, this usage of the name is unlike what we have seen so far (e.g. methods of *identification* or *knowing*). In this passage we see God using his name to complete the entire picture of how the name was supposed to be understood.

In the analysis of John 12:27-28, Carson identified the similarity between the latter passage and Ezekiel 36:22. He said that

Ezekiel 36:22, 32 are in mind here [in John 12:27-28], thus subsuming all of Christ's redemptive work and the inauguration of the new covenant under God's solemn Old Testament pledge to glorify his own name.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, p. 441.

Although we agree with Carson and can see the similarities between the passages, the passage in the book of Ezekiel offers a deeper look at the issue. It is not merely a usage of the name to cast out demonic spirits (as we saw in Acts 19 and will later see in the Gospel of Luke), and it is not simply glorification of God who protects and saves his people. Rather, it implies the ‘inauguration of the new covenant’, which will give glory to God’s name alone.

The verb *וַיִּקְדָּשׁ*, which we find in verse 23, implies more than merely *vindicate* or *glorify*.<sup>90</sup> In this context, says Horace Hummel, ‘it implies not only evidence of his triumph over all other ‘gods,’ but the winning of the awe and dread of his name, manifested through his mighty acts.’<sup>91</sup> Both Carson and Hummel are correct in their observations, since the glorification of Yahweh and his name was not just about the victory over the gods of the nations, but also about the re-establishment of the relationship between Him and his people. In the glorification of the name of God, therefore, we see many aspects being implied: intimate relationship with the Lord, obedience to his holy will, awe and dread of it, and the triumph over all other ‘gods.’ ‘Gods’ of the nations, or idols of the pagans, were identified by Paul as demons. In 1 Corinthians Paul writes: ‘No, I imply that what pagans sacrifice they offer to demons and not to God. I do not want you to be participants with demons’ (1 Cor. 10:20). Whereas this project is not concerned with such topics as the origins of demons (which can be analysed in the book of *1 Enoch* and Genesis 6:1-4),<sup>92</sup> or the Deuteronomy 32 worldview (which presents the idea of nations being given to the dominion of ‘gods’<sup>93</sup>), it is nevertheless crucial to acknowledge that whenever other ‘gods’ are mentioned, what is actually being implied is demonic entities. Here, therefore, we are in a position where we see that

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<sup>90</sup> Hummel, Horace D. *Ezekiel 21-48. Concordia Commentary*. (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2007), p. 1050.

<sup>91</sup> Hummel, *Ezekiel 21-48. Concordia Commentary*, p. 1050.

<sup>92</sup> On the topic of Genesis 6:1-4 being connected to the Deuteronomy 32 worldview, and on the topic of the Nephilim and the giants see: Heiser, *Reversing Hermon: Enoch, the Watchers & the Forgotten Mission of Jesus Christ*. (Crane, MO: Defender Publishing, 2017), p. 15-17; and *The Unseen Realm*, p. 93-94, 107-108, 183-184; Stuckenbruck, Loren T. *The Myth of Rebellious Angels: Studies in Second Temple Judaism and New Testament Texts*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2017; and Harkins, Angela Kim., Kelley Coblentz. Bautch, and John C. Endress. *The Watchers in Jewish and Christian Traditions*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2014.

<sup>93</sup> This idea is best presented in Michael Heiser’s work *The Unseen Real*, p. 113-122.

the glorification of God's name was the triumph over the 'gods', the demons, which controlled and harassed the nations and people individually.

For the above conclusion to be effective, however, it is evident that the people of God had to be obedient to his will and *be* his people. In other words, the people of God had to *represent* the name of Yahweh, and by their lives and service show that they were God's sons and daughters – that they belonged to God.

The latter interpretation of the usage of God's name is more clearly observed in the book of Revelation, where we read of either the mark of the beast (Rev 13:16-17), or the name of God (Rev 22:4) being written on people's foreheads. Below we see the two passages:

Revelation 13:16-17	Revelation 22:4
Also it causes all, both small and great, both rich and poor, both free and slave, to be marked on the right hand or on the forehead, so that no one can buy or sell unless he has the mark, that is, the name of the beast or the number of its name.	They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.

Though we are not addressing any apocalyptic interpretations, which is not the purpose of this research, the passages provided above still contribute greatly to the complete understanding of what the function of the name of God was.

According to Bernard Ramm, the name of either God or the beast on the foreheads of the people represented the sign of ownership and sealing.<sup>94</sup> It means that the people are under the rule

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<sup>94</sup> Ramm, Bernard L. *Them He Glorified*. (William B. Eerdmans Pub., 1963), p. 135.

and authority of either the beast or God. However, being owned by God or the beast is not something which is based on chance, but rather – a *choice*. We see that even in Jesus' choice to either follow God's will and be obedient, or not (Jn 12:27-28); the Israelites' decision whether to serve God alone or sacrifice to other 'gods' (1 Cor 10:20); and whether the people of Israel and Moses choose to step into a personal, intimate relationship with God and *know* him, or not (Exod 33:12). Michael Heiser pointed it out best, when he said that 'it was God's original design for human children to be servant rulers over the earth under his authority as his representatives.'<sup>95</sup> Thus we see that knowing and glorifying the name of God means much more than using and pronouncing it in prayers, worship, or exorcisms. It is a sign of ownership, which must inevitably compel God's people to represent him by obedience to his will alone.

The examples presented above show that the glorification of God's name lies in people's submission to God's will and his authority only, which must be evident in their lives, missions, and choices. Moreover, it must be evident in the exorcism practices as well, when demons are cast out in the name of Jesus.

### 3.4 Conclusion

Arguments in this chapter unfolded what it meant to use the name of God, and know and glorify it. Three main usages of the name of God were identified in this chapter: *identificatory*, *knowing* and *glorification*. These methods encompass the usage of the name of God in both Old and New Testaments and show us what was the understanding of the names Yahweh and Jesus in such practices as worship, prayer, and service.

Examples from different biblical texts (e.g. Exod 6:3;33:12; Acts 19:13-16; and Jn 12:27-28) prove that the name of God was used in accordance to one of the methods analysed in this chapter. The most important argument which summarizes the study above is that the name of

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<sup>95</sup> Heiser, *The Unseen Realm*, p. 96.

Yahweh (and Jesus) was the personification of God himself; it personified his nature and character. *The name* was not an incantation, a spell, or merely a collection of letters and syllables (known as *identificatory* method), which could invoke the power of God in case of distress. Rather, it was God himself personified, and the people of God were meant to be his representatives by using and worshipping his name. This representation was solely based upon a personal relationship (known as *knowing* method), and utter submission to God's will alone (known as *glorification* method). It was not enough to simply *say* the name of God in prayers and worship; on the contrary – it was a sign of a personal, intimate relationship that the people of God had with Yahweh and were obedient to his commandments and will alone.

Whereas the will of God was mentioned a lot of times in this chapter, the analysis of it was excluded. There are a lot of observations regarding this topic, but in the further study of exorcism methodologies in Luke's writings we will see more clearly what it meant to be submissive to the will of the Lord and use his name in exorcism practices. We will also see what connection it had to Luke's emphasis on the kingdom of Yahweh (Lk. 11:20) and the casting out of demonic spirits.

The research of the theology of the name of God lays a strong foundation for understanding what exactly was its function, and what role it played in the exorcism techniques we find in the Gospels. In the next chapter we will see how it fits and explains the methodologies used both by Jesus and his apostles in the Gospel of Luke and Acts.

## Chapter 4

The analysis done in chapters 2 (about the ancient methodologies of exorcism) and 3 (the theology of name and its function) now point to the most important question of this project – what does the Gospel of Luke tell us about the methods and techniques of exorcism used by Jesus and his apostles? Luke’s writings<sup>96</sup> include a lot of exorcism and demonic encounter scenes, which will be thoroughly analysed in this chapter.

We will not debate about the authority or reliability of Luke’s authorship. Luke clearly expects his readers to believe him as he claims (Lk 1:1-4) that he ‘consulted the contemporary sources’, and therefore expects us to ‘grant his claim to reliability.’<sup>97</sup>

Therefore, this project follows the reliability of Luke’s authorship and seeks to see what his writings tell us about exorcism methodologies used by Jesus.

In this chapter we will look at Luke’s view on the spiritual warfare and his understanding of what the exorcism represented. In addition, we will analyse the methodologies and techniques used both by Jesus and his apostles in performing an exorcism, and how it all fits within the purpose of Luke’s gospel. Four main exorcism scenes will be studied in this chapter: 4:33-37 (the demoniac in the synagogue), 8:26-29 (the Gerasene demoniac), 9:37-43 (Jesus heals a boy with an unclean spirit after his apostles are unable to), and 11:14-23 (the Beelzebul controversy). Most importantly, we will seek to answer the question *how* the exorcisms were performed in the four major episodes, and how it relates to the spiritual warfare that Luke’s writings portray. In addition, the study of the scenes

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<sup>96</sup> On Luke’s authorship see: Stein, Robert H. *Luke*. Vol. 24. The New American Commentary. (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), p. 19-20.

<sup>97</sup> Gooding, David. *According to Luke: the Third Gospel’s Ordered Historical Narrative*. (Coleraine, N Ireland: Myrtlefield House, 2013), p. 1.



mentioned above will build a foundation for the analysis of the connection between the kingdom of Yahweh and the casting out of demons, which we will examine later in the project.

#### **4.1 Jesus' temptation in the desert (Luke 4:1-13)**

Since this research mainly focuses on exorcism, it is firstly important to establish a clear definition of what is meant by this term. Graham Twelftree claims:

Exorcism was a form of healing used when demons or evil spirits were thought to have entered a person and to be responsible for sickness and was the attempt to control and cast out or expel evil spiritual beings or demons from people.<sup>98</sup>

An exorcism, a spiritual cure to a spiritual problem, also had spiritual significance and purpose. As analysed in chapter 2, it was more than simply a mechanical technique which contained magical powers. Therefore, before we examine how Luke presents the scenes of exorcism and their meaning, it is important to see where the first and most explicit declaration of spiritual warfare took place. The passage from Luke 4:1-13 provides the answer to that, as it also clarifies and lays the foundations for this study. Luke 4:1-13 talks about Jesus being 'led by the Spirit' into the wilderness for forty days where he was tempted by the devil. All three temptations addressed and challenged Jesus' loyalty to God and his will alone, as well as 'God's promise about Jesus' sonship (v. 3, 9) as revealed at the baptism

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<sup>98</sup> Twelftree, *Jesus the Exorcist*, p. 13. Most commentators and scholars are in agreement with Twelftree's definition. Also see, Orr, James, John L. Nuelsen, Edgar Y. Mullins, and Morris O. Evans, eds. *The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia*. (Chicago: The Howard-Severance Company, 1915), p. 1067; and Cross, F. L., and Elizabeth A. Livingstone, eds. *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*. (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 592.

(Lk 3:22).<sup>99</sup> Jesus resisted all three temptations presented to him by the devil, proving his trust and faith in Yahweh alone, as well as his position as righteous Son of God. However, this particular episode talks about much more than temptations and Jesus' ability to withstand them.

The desert, where the temptation took place, was no accidental environment.<sup>100</sup> In Greek and Mesopotamian demonology, dangerous spirits abided in places like deserts, lonely wastes, and even places like seas and oceans.<sup>101</sup> Mann also affirms, 'The wilderness areas were commonly believed to be the habitation of demons.'<sup>102</sup> Hence the reasoning behind the scapegoat ritual that we read about in Leviticus 16:8–10. The word for *scapegoat* in Hebrew is אֲזַזִּיל (‘*aza'zel*), and according to Heiser and Tawil,<sup>103</sup> Azazel was known in the Second Temple Judaism as the name of the demon who was associated with the force of chaos and hostility to God in the desert places.<sup>104</sup> As *Janowski* confirms: “‘Azazel’ could also be understood as a personal name, behind which could be posited something such as a “supernatural being” or a “demonic personality.”<sup>105</sup> In other words, the choice to lead the scapegoat into the desert was not an accidental one, just as in the case of Luke 4:1-13. By going into the desert – into the dominion of Satan – Jesus boldly proclaimed both who he is and what he came to do, which is to bind the ‘strongman’ (Lk 11:21-22) and destroy his works.

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<sup>99</sup> Bock, Darrell L. *Luke, V.1: 1-9:50*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1994), p. 383.

<sup>100</sup> The scene can be found in all three Synoptic Gospels: Matthew 4:1-11; Mark 1:12-13; and Luke 4:1-13.

<sup>101</sup> Riley, G. J. ‘Demon,’ in *DDD* (Dictionary of Deities and Demons), p. 236.

<sup>102</sup> C. S. Mann, *Mark: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. (Anchor Bible; Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1986), p. 203.

<sup>103</sup> Tawil H., ‘Azazel, the Prince of the Steepe: A Comparative Study,’ *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 92.1 (1980): 43–59.

<sup>104</sup> Heiser, *The Unseen Realm*, p.177.

<sup>105</sup> B. Janowski, ‘Azazel,’ in *DDD* (Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible), 128.

### 4.1.1 The first temptation

Jesus' temptation in the desert was a clear declaration of a spiritual warfare which will also take place in the exorcism scenes. In addition, this scene tells us exactly *how* Jesus came to win this warfare, which sets the example for his followers as well. In the first temptation episode we read: The devil said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread.' And Jesus answered him, 'It is written, "Man shall not live by bread alone."' (Lk 4:3-4).

Addressing and acknowledging Jesus' sonship, the devil's temptation to satisfy the hunger targets clearly the distrust in the Father's ability to provide and protect his Son.<sup>106</sup> However, the quote that Jesus uses from Deut. 8:3 talks of God's provision for his nation. God's faithfulness and his promises did not fail during the forty years in the desert, when Moses kept encouraging and reminding the nation not to doubt God's goodness.<sup>107</sup> Just in the same way Jesus was holding strong to the promise we read about in Luke 3:22, which says, 'You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.' Therefore, by Jesus turning the stones into the loaves of bread would signify his distrust in the Father's promises and His word. Even in the face of self-denial, Jesus put the Father's will and word above his own. He depended entirely on 'God's word and on fellowship with him in loving obedience to that word.'<sup>108</sup>

### 4.1.2 The second temptation

The next episode of the temptation scene comes from Luke 4:5-8:

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<sup>106</sup> Bock, *Luke, V.I: 1-9:50*, p. 372.

<sup>107</sup> Bock, *Luke, V.I: 1-9:50*, p. 373.

<sup>108</sup> Gooding, *Luke*, p. 78.

And the devil took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, and said to him, ‘To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.’ And Jesus answered him, ‘It is written, “You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve.”’

Whereas we are not trying to argue to what extent the devil’s claim ‘all this authority... has been delivered to me’ is true or false, it is important to acknowledge that some of it was definitely true. In the book of Revelation 13:2, for example, we read about a dragon who ‘gave his power and his throne and great authority.’

Whether it was simply a high place or a mountain, as in the case of Matthew’s accounts (Matt 4:8), is debated, but what is clear is that Jesus had a view of the world and earthly powers. Jesus was tempted to worship (gk. προσκυνέω) before (gk. ἐνώπιον) the devil to gain the authority and power over the kingdoms of the world. As analysed in chapter 3 (section 3.3), to give glory to or worship someone meant a lot more than mere kneeling down or giving praises with songs. By worshipping the devil, as Bock points out, ‘Jesus would be accepting his authority and sovereignty.’<sup>109</sup> By doing so, Jesus would be renouncing God as one true authority who is to be glorified. As Trent Butler observes,

What is wrong with one moment of worship for full-time authority over the world?

One-time worship reveals something much deeper. It shows devotion to selfish

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<sup>109</sup> Bock, *Luke, V.1: 1-9:50*, p. 377.

interests, hunger for personal power, willingness to doubt God's way and go Satan's way.<sup>110</sup>

Therefore, in agreement with Butler, by giving glory and worship, Jesus would have accepted the authority of the devil. To this temptation, however, he quoted Deut. 6:13, which meant Jesus would not be worshipping any other gods as the Israelites did, because his choice was to remain faithful only to the Father, Yahweh, accept his will, his authority, and be obedient to his Word alone.

#### **4.1.3 The third temptation**

The third and final temptation in the desert addressed Jesus' sonship for the second time, and it was arguably the subtlest temptation Jesus had to face.<sup>111</sup> The passage reads:

And he took him to Jerusalem and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, "He will command his angels concerning you to guard you," and "On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone."' And Jesus answered him, 'It is said, "You shall not put the Lord your God to the test."' (Lk 4:9-12).

In Luke 3:23-38 the author presents to us the genealogy of Jesus which goes back to 'the son of Adam, the son of God' (v.38). The carefully inserted genealogy between the baptism of Jesus and the temptation demonstrates that Jesus was 'son of God in the sense that

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<sup>110</sup> Butler, T. C. *Holman New Testament Commentary: Luke*. Vol. 3. (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000), p. 61.

<sup>111</sup> Gooding, *Luke*, p.79.

Adam was son of God.’<sup>112</sup> By doing this, Luke was as if confirming that Jesus was not merely a man, but fully God and fully human.

The language of sonship was not a new term introduced in the baptism and the temptation scenes. Adam (Gen 1:26-27), Israel (Exod 4:22), and eventually the king of Israel (Psa 2:7) are all referred as to God’s sons.<sup>113</sup> Ultimately, just as Luke shows us, the messiah is also called the Son of God.<sup>114</sup> On the one hand, Luke’s inclination to emphasize the salvation for all (Acts 10:34-43; 17:22-31) may indicate Jesus’ ‘relationship to all humankind as their representative.’<sup>115</sup> On the other hand, however, after having introduced the genealogy in chapter 3, Luke clearly portrays the failure of Adam in the face of temptation and the success of Jesus in chapter 4.<sup>116</sup> The second Adam, confronted by the devil, does not fall into sin and refuses to disobey God and his Word.

The third temptation is particularly unusual since we see even the devil himself quoting the Scripture in trying to tempt Jesus. The second Adam, however, discerns the ‘difference between appropriate and inappropriate use of Scripture.’<sup>117</sup> As Hendriksen points out, for Jesus, the difference was in humble trust in the ‘protective care of which we read in Psalm 91.’<sup>118</sup> The devil’s proposal did not imply the latter, because had Jesus fallen into this temptation, he would have shown his distrust in God. In other words, instead of proving his sonship, he would have abused it,<sup>119</sup> and portrayed his disobedience to God and his Word.

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<sup>112</sup> Gooding, *Luke*, p.79.

<sup>113</sup> Heiser, *The Unseen Realm*, p.156.

<sup>114</sup> In this case ‘Son’ of God is capitalized due to the references to Messiah. E.g. Jn 11:27, 20:31.

<sup>115</sup> Bock, *Luke, V.1: 1-9:50*, p. 348.

<sup>116</sup> The comparison is between Genesis 3:6 and Luke 4:3-4.

<sup>117</sup> Craddock, Fred B. *Luke: Interpretation. A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching*. (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 1990), p. 56.

<sup>118</sup> Hendriksen, William. *The New Testament Commentary: The Gospel of Luke*. (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1984), p. 239.

<sup>119</sup> Gooding, *According to Luke*, p.80.

Jesus overcame the temptation by remaining faithful and submissive to God, by his ‘reflective application’ of the Scriptures,<sup>120</sup> and by putting God’s will and plan as the highest authority and priority.

The analysis of the temptation in the desert scene speaks about important factors which will also function in the exorcism practices of Jesus. The most important question left unanswered, however, is *why* this declaration of war in the demonic sphere happened in the first place. Previously in this chapter we saw that Jesus went into the ‘territory’ of Satan to boldly proclaim who he was what he came to do, which was to bind the strongman (Lk 11:21-22) and destroy his works. In addition to the question *why*, however, we also need to ask *how* was Jesus planning to do that.

Before we start looking at how these questions (namely, *why* and *how* the kingdom of Satan is being overcome and destroyed according to Luke’s writings) are answered in the exorcism scenes, it is important to note that the resistance to the devil’s temptation did not mark the defeat of the devil. It was not yet ‘*the* binding or overthrow of Satan.’<sup>121</sup> The latter would only come to pass once Jesus dies on the cross.<sup>122</sup> What we learned now in the temptation scene is *how* the Son of God defended himself against the devil’s attacks.<sup>123</sup> Along with analysing his particular exorcism methodologies (or methodology) and its links to the coming of the kingdom of God, this is also a significant question that we will try to answer in the analysis of the exorcism scenes in Luke’s writings.

The temptation of Jesus in the wilderness signified something we will later see portrayed in him casting out demonic spirits: the re-establishment of God’s kingdom being

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<sup>120</sup> Bock, *Luke, V.1: 1-9:50*, p. 363.

<sup>121</sup> Twelftree, *Jesus the Exorcist*, p. 117.

<sup>122</sup> Wilcock, Michael. *The Message of Luke*. (Illinois: Inter -Varsity Press, 1979), p. 60.

<sup>123</sup> Wilcock, *The Message of Luke*, p. 60.

declared in the devil's realm.<sup>124</sup> The revival of God's kingdom was not a new concept presented in Luke, chapter 4. In the book of Exodus we read of Israel, called God's son (Exod 4:23), going through the sea (Exod 14-15), and then, through the wilderness, into Canaan, where Yahweh's kingdom was to be re-established.<sup>125</sup> Both Adam and Israel failed, but Jesus did not.

In this brief analysis of the temptation scene we see a small picture of how Jesus saw the re-establishment of his Father's kingdom. Through his utter surrender and obedience to God's will alone, Jesus resisted the temptations and boldly proclaimed that the kingdom of God would overthrow the kingdom of Satan (Matt 12:28/Lk 11:20). It was the beginning of the destruction of the kingdom of Satan, and an active 'takeover' of what rightfully belonged to God in the first place. According to Kraft, Jesus 'aggressively challenged the kingdom of darkness, declaring war on Satan in the power of the Holy Spirit (Luke 4:14).'<sup>126</sup> This was evident in the wilderness, and we will now look at what techniques Jesus used in his exorcism practices to fulfil this purpose.

## 4.2 The terminology

Before we delve into the exorcism scenes in the Gospel of Luke, it is important at this point to analyse the basic terminology that we will encounter. Although this project does not address the nature or origin of demons, the clarification of the words δαιμονίζομαι (e.g. Mk 5:15; Lk 8:36), δαίμον (e.g. Matt 8:31), δαιμόνιον (e.g. Lk 9:42), and ἐκβάλλω (e.g. Lk 11:19) is necessary.

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<sup>124</sup> Heiser, *The Unseen Realm*, p. 277.

<sup>125</sup> Heiser, *The Unseen Realm*, p. 277.

<sup>126</sup> Charles H. Kraft, and Mark H. White. *Behind Enemy Lines: an Advanced Guide to Spiritual Warfare*. (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Servant Publications, 1994). p. 25.



The gospel authors used the term δαιμονίζομαι to describe an evil, demonic presence in a person. According to Riley, ‘it originally meant to be under the power of a *god* or *daimon* (demon). It could also be a curse, and the words could mean “to be insane.” In later authors, especially Jewish and Christian, they came to mean “to be possessed by a demon” which caused bodily infirmity or insanity.’<sup>127</sup> It was used in the New Testament 13 times, and all occurrences refer to ‘being possessed with a demon’ (e.g. Matt 4:24; 8:16; Mk 5:15) or ‘having a devil’ (John 10:21, KJV). According to Heiser, the word ‘demon’ is in fact a ‘transliteration of the Greek, not a translation.’<sup>128</sup> In Greek literature, the word *daimon* could refer to both good and evil spiritual beings, and it could also mean a ‘god or goddess, some lesser divine power, or the spirit of the departed human dead.’<sup>129</sup> Both *daimon* (occurring only once in Matthew 8:31) and *daimonion* (occurring over sixty times) are used negatively in the gospel accounts, and they always refer to evil, demonic entities. In Luke’s writings, however, we encounter various terms that describe demons. Stuckenbruck identified the following:<sup>130</sup>

‘demon’	Δαίμον or δαιμόνιον	Lk 4:33, 35, 41; 7:33; 8:2, 27, 30, 33, 35, 38; 9:1, 42, 49; 10:17; 11:14, 15, 18, 19, 20; 13:32.
‘evil spirit’	πνεῦμα πονηρῶν	Lk 7:21; 8:2; Acts 19:12, 13, 15, 16.

<sup>127</sup> Riley, G. J., ‘Demon,’ in *DDD (Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible)*, p. 236.

<sup>128</sup> Heiser, *The Unseen Realm*, p. 325.

<sup>129</sup> Rexine, J. E., ‘*Daimon* in Classical Greek Literature,’ *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 30.3 (1985), p. 335-61.

<sup>130</sup> Stuckenbruck, *The Myth of Rebellious Angels*, p. 172-173.

‘unclean spirit’	ἀκαθάρτον πνεῦμα	Lk 4:36; 6:18; 8:29; 11:24.
‘spirit of weakness’	πνεῦμα... ἀσθενείας	Lk 13:11.
‘spirit of an unclean demon’	πνεῦμα δαιμονίου ἀκαθάρτου	Lk 4:33.
‘spirit’	πνεῦμα	Lk 9:31, 38.

Klutz notes that terms ‘demon’ and ‘unclean spirit’ are used interchangeably, which meant that ‘to be impure meant to have a demon’ and vice versa.<sup>131</sup> Whereas we can continue the analysis of each of these terms, it is generally agreed that they all refer to demonic, evil entities which were possessing human bodies.

The term used in Greek to describe the casting out of demons is ἐκβάλλω. It is used 81 times in the New Testament in various forms and sometimes having a different connotation (e.g. Matt 7:4,5; 9:33). However, whereas most usages of this word refer to evil spirits being cast out, certain occasions in the Septuagint provide a broader definition. According to Twelftree, examples from Exodus 23:30 or Deuteronomy 33:27 in LXX show us that mostly *ekballo* is used ‘in the context where an enemy, frustrating or standing in the way of God’s fulfilling his purpose for his chosen people, is ‘cast out’ so that God’s purpose may be fulfilled.’<sup>132</sup>

In the analysis of exorcism scenes below we will look more closely at how these terms, along with many others, function within the exorcism narratives in Luke’s writings.

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<sup>131</sup> Klutz, Todd. ‘The Grammar of Exorcism in the Ancient Mediterranean World: Some Cosmological, Semantic and Pragmatic Reflections on How Exorcistic Prowess Contributed to the Worship of Jesus.’ In eds. Carey C. Newman, James R. Davila and Gladys S. Lewis, *The Jewish Roots of Christological Monotheism*. JSJSup 63. Leiden/Boston/Koln: Brill, 1999, p. 161.

<sup>132</sup> Twelftree, *Triumphant*, p. 105.

### 4.3 The demoniac in the synagogue

In the Gospel of Luke we see a lot of cases of demonic possessions and exorcism (e.g. 4:33-37; 8:26-39; 9:37-43; 11:14-23). While, as we shall see later, exorcisms hold an important position in Luke's gospel accounts, he does not isolate them, nor put them higher than other aspects of Jesus' ministry.<sup>133</sup> Luke does not begin writing about Jesus' ministry with an exorcism story (cf. Mark 1:21-28), but rather, with teaching in the synagogue (Luke: 4:15).<sup>134</sup> Soon after the teachings we see the first encounter with the demonic, and by doing so Luke shows that an exorcism is an important part of the ministry, and is very significant in the evangelist's perspective. Since this project is concerned mainly with Jesus' methodology in casting out evil spirits, we will concentrate on the analysis of the latter based on what Luke is telling us.

The first scene of exorcism that we encounter in the Gospel according to Luke takes place in Capernaum, soon after the temptations in the desert and the teaching in the synagogue. In Luke 4:33-36 we read:

And in the synagogue there was a man who had the spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice, 'Ha! What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God.' But Jesus rebuked him, saying, 'Be silent and come out of him!' And when demon had thrown him down in their midst, he came out of him, having done him no harm. And they were all amazed and said to one another, 'What is this word? For with authority and power he commands the unclean spirits, and they come out!'

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<sup>133</sup> Twelftree, *In the Name of Jesus*, p. 133.

<sup>134</sup> Twelftree, *In the Name of Jesus*, p. 132.

In this scene, we see first, the demon addressing and acknowledging Jesus as the ‘Holy One of God’; and second, Jesus commanding the demon to be silent and come out of him.

That the demon addresses Jesus as the ‘Holy One of God’ was not a mere recognition or a part of a ‘speech’. As analysed in section 2.1.1, knowing and pronouncing the name of a deity gave the exorcist power and control over it.<sup>135</sup> This method of exorcising demons was known both by pagan and Jewish exorcists. The most important aspect of control and power over the deity, according to Sayce, was to inflict injury upon it, and compel it to submit to the wishes of the exorcist.<sup>136</sup> However, in this case, we see the demon using this technique and addressing Jesus by name. Craddock identified the demon’s address as an attempt to ‘gain power over Jesus or at least to neutralize Jesus’ power’ by calling him by name.<sup>137</sup> In this passage from Luke, the demon does not say Jesus’ name by accident. It was an attack on the Son of God, and an aim to harm or even overpower him.<sup>138</sup> As Huffmon confirms, ‘knowledge of the name is connected with access to and influence with – even magical control of – the named.’<sup>139</sup> Therefore, in this case, an ancient method of casting out an unwanted spirit and harm it by using its name was used by the demon itself as, most likely, either a technique of defence or an attack against the ‘Holy One.’

However, what is important to point out is that it was not merely a battle of techniques, but rather, a spiritual conflict. By addressing Jesus as the ‘Holy One’, Luke

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<sup>135</sup> There is not enough evidence to conclude that a demon was using the name of Jesus in order to gain power over him. Nevertheless, it was not the same (controlling the deity by using its name) for the exorcists of the time (chapter 2) as this methodology was well known and in use, which is what this project is concentrated on.

<sup>136</sup> Sayce, *Lectures on the Origin and Growth of Religion as Illustrated by the Religion of the Ancient Babylonians*, p. 302.

<sup>137</sup> Craddock, *Luke: Interpretation: a Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching*, p. 67. Also see, Marshall, I. H. *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary On The Greek Text*. (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1978), p. 193; and Reiling, J., & Swellengrebel, J. L. *A Handbook On The Gospel of Luke*. (New York: United Bible Societies, 1993), p. 215. Although Luke does not make it explicitly clear, the historical evidence of how a deity’s name was understood and used at the time suggests that the demon’s attempt to neutralize Jesus’ power was a possibility.

<sup>138</sup> Bock, Darrell L. *Jesus According to Scripture*, p. 101.

<sup>139</sup> Huffmon, H.B., ‘Name,’ in *DDD (Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible)*, p. 610.

shows that both the unclean spirit and Jesus were engaged in a battle much more significant. The wording in the passage shows that the author makes a clear connection between the ‘Holy One and the Davidic Messiah in 1:31-35.’<sup>140</sup> In connection to the latter passage, Luke 4:34 and 4:41 express clearly a messianic conflict. The Messiah who would come from the line of David (Isa 11:1) and be called the Son of God (Ps 2:6-9), is now bearing the Spirit of God and confronting an evil spirit. Jesus being called ‘holy’ (Mk 1:24; Rev 3:7) was not merely a reference to the absence of sin. Marshall comments on this by saying that Jesus being called ‘holy’ meant that ‘its roots lie in the idea of Jesus as the Son of God (1:35), separated to his service (Jdg. 13:7; 16:17 with Nu. 6:5, 8).’<sup>141</sup> The task which Jesus is performing both in exorcisms and his entire ministry is evident in what we read in Luke 4:17-19, which says:

And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written: ‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of the sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.’

Quoting the passage from Isaiah 61, Jesus, the promised Messiah, clearly stated his mission. With the Spirit of God upon him, Jesus was exorcising demons (Lk 4:33-36), performing miracles (Lk 5:1-11), healing the sick (Lk 5:12-14), and teaching (Lk 11:1-13). However, what raises the most important questions is *how* and *why* Jesus was setting the captives free

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<sup>140</sup> Bock, *Luke, V.1: 1-9:50*, p. 433.

<sup>141</sup> Marshall, I. H. *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary On The Greek Text*. (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1978), p. 193.

and giving sight to the blind. In other words, Jesus' methodology of miracles, and specifically exorcisms, spoke of a much greater significance of his ministry than merely liberating people of unclean spirits or healing a person with leprosy. As Joel Green points out, 'Jesus is radically committed to one aim, God's eschatological agenda; the devil has an alternative aim, a competing agenda.'<sup>142</sup> Two agendas, two kingdoms were at war, and this was explicitly manifested in exorcism stories in particular.

Both in teachings and exorcism scenes the spiritual warfare carried a much greater significance, and the analysis of Jesus' techniques of casting out demonic spirits will bring clarification to the full perspective of spiritual warfare which took place in exorcisms, miracles, and death on the cross.

#### **4.3.1 Jesus' methodology of exorcism in Luke 4:33-36**

After the demon addressed Jesus by name, which we analysed in the previous section, Luke records Jesus' response in the following way: 'But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent and come out of him!"' Unlike the common exorcistic practices of the time (see chapter 2), Jesus did not use anyone's name as a source of power or authority to cast the demon out; nor did he perform a particular ritual to guarantee the success of the practice. Luke, who puts a lot of emphasis on exorcisms in his writings,<sup>143</sup> simply says that Jesus 'rebuked' and told the spirit of the unclean spirit to 'be silent and come out.' Although it may seem that Jesus did not follow any particular exorcistic technique of the time, it is incorrect to assume he did not have a technique at all.

The first word which requires special attention is *rebuke* (gk. ἐπετίμησεν) which we find in verse 35. In order to understand and interpret the term, we must begin the analysis by

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<sup>142</sup> Green, Joel B. *The Gospel of Luke*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997), p. 195.

<sup>143</sup> Twelftree, *In the Name of Jesus*, p. 132.

looking at *Genesis Apocryphon*, which is where we find the Semitic equivalent of ἐπιτιμάν – גער.<sup>144</sup> As Kee suggests, the term גער means a ‘commanding word, uttered by God or by his spokesman, by which evil powers are brought into submission, and the way is thereby prepared for the establishment of God’s righteous rule in the world.’<sup>145</sup> Fitzmyer, however, proposes the translation ‘the plague will depart from you’<sup>146</sup>(20.26). In other words, an evil spirit ‘departed’ from the demonized person, and according to Kee’s observation above, it was a sign of the enemies of God being overcome. However, regarding the analysis of the word גער and its relationship to how exorcism was perceived, Twelftree draws the following conclusion:

As this suits the element of ‘rebuke’ in the word, as well as describing the expulsion of the evil spirit, we suggest ‘rebuking in order to expel’ as the best understanding of what the Qumran people thought was happening in the exorcism.<sup>147</sup>

Other accounts of exorcisms in Luke’s writings will contribute more to the clarity of what Jesus’ methodology of casting out evil spirits was. What is clear at this point is that the term ἐπιτιμάν (Semitic equivalent – גער) referred to overcoming an evil power by rebuking and afterwards expelling it. This two-fold pattern is explicit in what Jesus does in verse 35: first we see Jesus ‘rebuking’ the demon, and then commanding it to ‘come out’ of the demonized.

More light is shed upon the scene when we also take into consideration Jesus’ words ‘be silent’ (gk. Φιμώθητι). Many interpretations exist as to why Jesus commanded the demon

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<sup>144</sup> Kee, Howard Clark. ‘The Terminology of Mark’s Exorcism Stories.’ *New Testament Studies* 14, no. 2 (1968), p. 232. Also on the meaning of the term see: Clines, David J. A., ed. *The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*. Vol II. (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press; Sheffield Phoenix Press, 1993–2011), p. 369.

<sup>145</sup> Kee, ‘The Terminology of Mark’s Exorcism Stories.’ *NTS* 14, (1968), p. 235.

<sup>146</sup> Fitzmyer, Joseph A. *The Genesis Apocryphon of Qumran Cave I.: a Commentary*. Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, (2004), p. 103.

<sup>147</sup> Twelftree, *Jesus the Exorcist*, p. 46.

to be silent. Liefeld proposes the following three: 1) Jesus would be the revolutionary against Rome; 2) he wants his works to testify about him, and not the words of a demon; and 3) Jews were well aware of the fact that only particular self-proclamations were appropriate for the Messiah.<sup>148</sup> To Liefeld's observations Bock responds by saying that it had 'nothing to do with any attempt at keeping his identity secret, but rather is part of the ritual of telling a demon to be bound and thus silent.'<sup>149</sup> Whether Jesus simply did not wish to be proclaimed by an unclean spirit, or did not want it to make any eschatological remarks is a question for debate. What is clear and relevant for the technique of the exorcism itself is that the 'ritual', as Bock named it, was new and different from any practices known in the first century Palestine. Twelftree identifies such a command by Jesus as 'incantation-restriction.'<sup>150</sup> However, we do not see any usual formulas or carefully structured prayers which could qualify as an 'incantation.' Jesus did not appeal to a power authority, and certainly recited no exorcistic prayers. As Bock argues, it was a 'simple, direct command to come out.'<sup>151</sup>

In comparison to Mark's description of the episode, we see the following:

Mark 1:27	Luke 4:36
And they were all amazed, so that they questioned among themselves, saying, 'What is this? <b>A new teaching</b> with <u>authority</u> ! He commands even unclean	And they were all amazed and said to one another, 'What is this <b>word</b> ? For with <u>authority</u> and power he commands the unclean spirits, and <b>they come out!</b> '

<sup>148</sup> Liefeld, W. L. 'Luke' Edited by F. E. Gaebelin. *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, Vol. 8, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984): 797–1059, p. 872.

<sup>149</sup> Bock, *Jesus According to Scripture*, p. 102.

<sup>150</sup> Twelftree, Graham H. 'EI DE...EGO EKBALLO TA DAIMONIA...' Edited by David Wenham and Craig Blomberg. *Gospel Perspectives: Studies of History and Tradition in the Four Gospels*, Vol. 6, (Sheffield: JSOT, 1986): 361–400., p. 378.

<sup>151</sup> Bock, *Jesus According to Scripture*, p. 101.



spirits, and <b>they obey him.</b> '	
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As we can see in the table above, Mark records people calling what they saw ‘a new teaching’ whereas Luke’s account says ‘this word.’ The result is also observed from different angles: Mark emphasizes that the unclean spirit obeyed Jesus, but Luke puts significance on the final outcome – ‘they come out.’<sup>152</sup> In both cases, considering the mention of amazement in both gospel accounts, the technique of exorcism was ‘new’ in the eyes of the spectators, and the episode in Mark and Luke clearly points to the authority that Jesus had over the demonic forces.

Jesus’ exorcism performed with authority – a term we will come back to later – was more than a miracle of saving a person from a spiritual bondage. Nor was it a show of powerful spells or ‘teachings’ or ‘words’. It was a sign of deliverance of the captives from the satanic realm which took place on a cosmic, grander scale. As N. T. Wright puts it, it was ‘the physical inauguration of the kingdom of Israel’s god.’<sup>153</sup> Thus it becomes evident that Jesus’ ability to cast out a demon in the synagogue was not due to his words containing special power. On the contrary, the episode is the perfect representation of who Jesus was and what he came to do – Yahweh incarnate overcoming the satanic kingdom by spreading and proclaiming his own. More specifically, it was not a mere miracle. As Riley notes: ‘The point of exorcism in the ministry of Jesus and the early Church was not only the relief of suffering, but the clash of the kingdom of God and the kingdom of the Devil.’<sup>154</sup> As we shall see this

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<sup>152</sup> It is generally agreed by scholars that authors of Matthew and Luke used Mark as a source, deriving from him the basic order of the story as well as much of his material. See Johnson, Luke T., *The Writings of the New Testament* (Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1986), p.144.

<sup>153</sup> Wright, N. T. *Jesus and the Victory of God*. (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1996), p. 196.

<sup>154</sup> G. J. Riley, ‘Demon,’ in *DDD (Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible)*, 239.

topic unfolding in other exorcism scenes, it was the sign of re-establishment of Yahweh's reign and rulership.

#### 4.3.2 Simon's mother-in-law in Luke 4:38-39

The scene that immediately follows Jesus casting out a demon in the synagogue comes from Luke 4:38-39, which reads:

And he arose and left the synagogue and entered Simon's house. Now Simon's mother-in-law was ill with a high fever, and they appealed to him on her behalf. And he stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her, and immediately she rose and began to serve them.

Unlike Mark who simply says that the woman had a fever (Mk 1:29-31), Luke carefully uses a particular terminology to convey a different message in the scene. According to David Gooding, if we see Luke say the same thing as Mark, it is because he wishes to do so; but whenever he wants to emphasize something, it is because he 'certainly feels free to do so.'<sup>155</sup> And although this project is not addressing the debates between exorcisms and scientific perspectives (e.g. psychiatry and different illnesses), it is nevertheless important to see the reasons behind Luke using the term 'rebuke' when speaking of bodily illness.

$\epsilon\pi\iota\tau\iota\mu\acute{\alpha}\omega$  is a common term in Luke's writings (e.g. 4:39; 8:24; 9:42).<sup>156</sup> In two consecutive scenes, which at the first glance seem to be of a different nature, what we see Luke repeating is the term 'rebuke' (gk.  $\epsilon\pi\iota\tau\iota\mu\acute{\alpha}\omega$ ). The gospel writer certainly used this word on purpose, regarding which Conybeare notes: 'There were also fever demons, and Luke

<sup>155</sup> Gooding, *According to Luke*, p. 89.

<sup>156</sup> Bock, *Luke, V.1: 1-9:50*, p. 433.

ascribes the “great fever,” from which Simon’s wife’s mother suffered, to a demon.’<sup>157</sup> This conclusion is built exclusively upon the term ἐπιτιμάω, which is characteristic of accounts which speak of the performance of casting out evil spirits. Twelftree agrees with the above observations: ‘In rebuking the fever or demon Luke’s readers would have understood that this enemy was being subdued or brought under control.’<sup>158</sup> Therefore, due to Luke’s usage of the term ἐπιτιμάω to describe a healing technique, it is very likely that the author recognized a clash of two opposing kingdoms taking place in the episode.

In connection to eschatological promises we find in Isaiah’s writing (e.g. Isa 26:19; 35:5-6; 61:1-2), Evans describes healing as a ‘part of the demonstration of the powerful presence of God and his rule’, and does not deny that some of the healings were directly connected to the demonic realm.<sup>159</sup> Regarding the fever, he later adds: ‘We see this in the healing of Simon Peter’s mother-in-law, where Jesus is said to have “rebuked the fever” (Luke 4:39), as though a sentient being was responsible for the fever.’<sup>160</sup> However, whether it was a demon or merely a fever is a debated question, as well as the distinction between mere psychiatric and medical conditions (e.g. epilepsy) and demonic possession. Unger notes that scholars generally agree that demonic possession is believed to always involve some derangement of the body or mind or both, and therefore there are always symptoms of disease, although they may vary in severity.<sup>161</sup>

Another reason why this particular case of healing is viewed as a form of spiritual deliverance is because of how Luke describes Jesus’ actions: ‘And he stood over her’ (v. 39).

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<sup>157</sup> Conybeare, *Christian Demonology*, p. 8.

<sup>158</sup> Twelftree, *Triumphant*, p. 103.

<sup>159</sup> Evans, Craig A. ‘Inaugurating the Kingdom of God and Defeating the Kingdom of Satan.’ *Bulletin for Biblical Research*, no. 15.1 (2005). p. 49-75. p. 73.

<sup>160</sup> Evans, ‘Inaugurating the Kingdom of God and Defeating the Kingdom of Satan.’ p. 73.

<sup>161</sup> Unger, *Biblical Demonology*, p.97.

Unlike Mark, who simply says that Jesus ‘came and took her by the hand and lifted her up’ (1:31), Luke’s choice of words implies a different meaning. Twelftree notes that

exorcist standing over the patient has its roots in ancient Babylonian healings and in the New Testament period it is directly paralleled in Magical Papyri (e.g. *PGM* IV: 745, 1229 and 2735) where the focus of attention in healing was often directed towards the head.<sup>162</sup>

Twelftree is correct, but there is not enough evidence to determine whether Jesus was resembling or plainly adopting the technique which was well-known at the time. Either way, however, it implies that his actions and words were not concerned with fever alone, but also possibly represented an act of spiritual deliverance as well.

The latter observation, however, does not imply that Jesus ‘copied’ the contemporary techniques of exorcism and healing. As we analysed in chapter 2, the technique, recitation of a spell, or invocation of a power-authority were merely rituals by which a demonized person was thought to be delivered. Blurring the distinction between a medical illness and spiritual bondage, Luke is not afraid to show that Jesus was ‘a man of his time in using contemporary healing techniques.’<sup>163</sup> On the contrary, Luke portrays his exorcism scenes in a way that puts the entire emphasis on Jesus’ authority and his reign. Klutz also recognizes that Jesus’ rebuke of both evil spirits and ‘fever demons’ denoted his ‘authoritative word’, which was strongly associated with the ‘cosmic rule of Israel’s God.’<sup>164</sup>

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<sup>162</sup> Twelftree, *Triumphant*, p. 103.

<sup>163</sup> Twelftree, *Triumphant*, p. 104.

<sup>164</sup> Klutz, Todd. ‘The Exorcism Stories in Luke–Acts.’ *Society For New Testament Studies Monograph Series* 129, (2004), p. 46.

Whether it was an explicit demonic possession (Lk 4:33-36) or a demon disguised as a mere fever (Lk 4:38-39) the message that Luke conveys to his readers in both cases is that Satan's reign (in possession or illness) was being overcome and his kingdom was in the process of being destroyed. Luke ends these scenes with Jesus saying: 'I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns as well; for I was sent for this purpose' (Lk 4:43). In the latter verse, the summary of Jesus' mission, which is portrayed in healings and casting out of evil spirits, is called simply the preaching of God's kingdom. Luke echoes the same idea in Acts 10:38, where he says: 'How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.' It is important for Luke to draw attention to the connection between 'being empowered by the Spirit, healing – particularly exorcism – and Christology.'<sup>165</sup> This is not surprising as, according to Maddox, Luke emphasizes and 'lets the accent fall more heavily on the presence of the kingdom' than any other evangelist.<sup>166</sup>

A passage from Acts 10:38 is obviously a part of a speech (10:34-43), and there are considerable debates regarding this particular subject.<sup>167</sup> Dibelius, for example, argues that Luke was the one who composed the speeches in the book of Acts (especially Peter's speech in 10:34-43), considering it unlikely that the early Church would have placed a rather long speech in a scene about a centurion's conversion.<sup>168</sup> However, our purpose is not to engage in the debate mentioned above. What is undeniable and contributes greatly to this study is the fact that both during and after the life of Jesus, exorcism remained an important part of what Jesus' mission was, and how it was meant to be fulfilled in the post-Easter ministries of the Church.

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<sup>165</sup> Twelftree, *Triumphant*, p. 98.

<sup>166</sup> Maddox, Robert. *The Purpose of Luke-Acts*. (Edinburgh: Clark, 1985), p. 132.

<sup>167</sup> Twelftree, *Jesus the Exorcist*, p. 129.

<sup>168</sup> Dibelius, M. 'The Speeches in Acts and Ancient Historiography.' *Studies in the Acts of the Apostles*. (London: SCM, 1956), p. 138–85. P. 110.

### 4.3.3 Jesus calms the storm

Another episode which bears strong signs of spiritual warfare and overcoming the demonic comes from Luke 8:23-25. The passage is found in all Synoptic Gospels,<sup>169</sup> but our focus is on the Gospel of Luke in particular. The passage reads:

and as they sailed he fell asleep. And a windstorm came down on the lake, and they were filling with water and were in danger. And they went and woke him, saying, ‘Master, Master, we are perishing!’ And he awoke and rebuked the wind and the raging waves, and they ceased, and there was a calm. He said to them, ‘Where is your faith?’ And they were afraid, and they marveled, saying to one another, ‘Who then is this, that he commands even winds and water, and they obey him?’ (Luke 8:23-25)

There is no mutual agreement among the scholars as to what the evangelist wanted to convey by this passage. Nonetheless, a brief look at some of the most common versions of interpretation will enhance our understanding of the spiritual warfare Jesus was engaged in.

Unlike scenes of exorcism, which have an explicit spiritual overtone, the calming of the storm is generally viewed as either a natural event or another episode of spiritual warfare. Scholars like Lenski<sup>170</sup>, Loos<sup>171</sup>, and Hendriksen<sup>172</sup> among many others are in agreement that the calming of the storm did not mean anything other than Jesus portraying his power and authority over natural forces and chaos. Hendricksen, for example, suggests that God, who

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<sup>169</sup> Matthew 8:23-27; Mark 4:35-41.

<sup>170</sup> Lenski, R. C. H., *The Interpretation of St. Luke's Gospel*. (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Pub. House, 1961), p. 463.

<sup>171</sup> Loos, Hendrik van der, *The Miracles of Jesus*. (Leiden: Brill, 1965), p. 648.

<sup>172</sup> Hendriksen, *The New Testament Commentary: The Gospel of Luke*, p. 439.

has utter control over his created nature, was the one who used those physical forces, ‘employing them for the realization of his own purpose.’<sup>173</sup> Therefore, the denial of any involvement of evil spirits in this episode is common.

However, in spite of naturalistic perspectives, the language that the evangelist is using in this passage suggests a different interpretation. In verse 24 we again encounter a word already familiar to us – ‘rebuke’ (gk. ἐπιτιμάω).<sup>174</sup> As analysed earlier, ἐπιτιμάω is most commonly used in exorcism scenes to denote Jesus’ address to evil spirits in particular. Conybeare agrees with this connection and recognizes that it was the evil spirit that Jesus was rebuking in v. 24. As all three synoptic writers use the word ‘rebuke’ in this scene, Conybeare notes: ‘There can be no question in what light Mark regarded the incident, and Matthew and Luke by using the same word “rebuked” also assent to this interpretation of it.’<sup>175</sup> Klutz also supports the view that the storm was a form of diabolic manifestation, making a connection between Luke 8:23-25 and the *Testament of Solomon*, where we read about the demon Lix Tetrax, who ‘describes himself as stirring up among other things “whirlwinds.”’<sup>176</sup>

Regarding ancient perspectives on desolate places (e.g. waters and deserts) we saw in section 1 of this chapter that usually they were associated with the habitations of the demonic spirits. In *DDD* we even read about these storm-demons being identified by names. Among the Hittites the storm-god was called Tarhunza,<sup>177</sup> and in Akkadian texts we read of a storm-god named Enlil.<sup>178</sup> These examples show that in the ancient world storm, natural forces, and

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<sup>173</sup> Hendriksen, *The New Testament Commentary: The Gospel of Luke*, p. 439.

<sup>174</sup> Arndt, William, Frederick W. Danker, Walter Bauer, and F. Wilbur Gingrich. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), p. 384.

<sup>175</sup> Conybeare, *Christian Demonology*, p. 107.

<sup>176</sup> Klutz, Todd, ‘The Exorcism Stories in Luke–Acts.’ p. 149.

<sup>177</sup> Greenfield, J. C., ‘Hadad,’ in *DDD (Dictionary of Deities and Demons)*, p. 379.

<sup>178</sup> Aune, D. E., ‘Heracles,’ in *DDD (Dictionary of Deities and Demons)*, p. 403.

desolate places were all associated with a god,<sup>179</sup> a demon, or an evil entity. To the above perspective, Van der Toorn adds that in ancient world ‘the appearance of gods was believed to be accompanied, moreover, by such phenomena as storm, thunder, and earthquake.’<sup>180</sup> Thus, the above analysis supports the supernatural perspective of the calming of the storm we find in the Synoptics. It leaves a gap for a possibility that Jesus’ ‘rebuke’ of the storm was more than the portrayal of power and authority over the natural events and forces.<sup>181</sup> Rather, it was yet another example of Jesus overcoming the demonic forces by showing his authority and power.

The analysis provided in this section unfolds a clearer understanding of the meaning of Jesus’ exorcisms. We saw how the language that Jesus uses to exorcise demonic spirits was also applied to other situations (e.g. rebuking of the fever and the storm), which did not necessarily have an explicit exorcistic overtone. Jesus’ exorcisms, although bearing small methodological resemblance to show that he was a man of his time and was also aware of the contemporary exorcistic techniques,<sup>182</sup> were nevertheless different and unique. Using no incantations or involvement of power authority, Jesus did not try to manipulate or control the demonic or divine entities. On the contrary, he *rebuked* the hostile forces that opposed the spread and reign of the kingdom of God.

By analysing different passages from Luke where he uses the term *rebuke*, we see no evidence of Jesus *performing* an exorcism, as essentially the same methodology was applied to situations where there were no possessed people (e.g. natural forces, illness). In all of those

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<sup>179</sup> As analysed previously, in 1 Cor 10:6-20 Paul makes a clear point that foreign idols and gods were not merely an inanimate, imaginary things, but demons.

<sup>180</sup> Toorn, K. van der, ‘God (I),’ in *DDD (Dictionary of Deities and Demons)*, p. 354.

<sup>181</sup> Morris, L. *Luke: An Introduction And Commentary*. Vol. 3. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), p. 174.

<sup>182</sup> More on how Jesus’ methodology resembled those of his contemporaries see: Twelftree, *In the Name of Jesus*, p. 47-48.



cases it was simply a command, a rebuke to be still or be gone, which simply meant that the technique was not of the essence in what Jesus was doing. Whereas the definition and the act itself of casting out of demons does not change, Jesus' exorcisms so far show that there was a more important and grander significance behind them than mere casting out of the demonic. This inevitably leads us to conclude that Jesus' exorcisms, as analysed in passages above, were not mere miracles to prove his status as the Son of God, the Messiah. As Wright notes:

The exorcisms, in particular, are not simply the release from strange bondage of a few poor benighted souls. For Jesus and the evangelists, they signalled something far deeper that was going on.<sup>183</sup>

Therefore, having analysed a few exorcism passages in this section, we already see that Jesus' methodology of casting out evil spirits was made explicit in *what* he was doing, and not in *how*. Namely, elaborating on Wright's observation, exorcisms were merely a part and a representation of his mission of spreading the kingdom of God and overcoming the reigning rulership of the Devil. In the passages mentioned above, the overcoming and victory over the demonic took place in a case of possession, an illness, and natural forces, in all of which demonic presence was evident. In all of these instances the evil entities were overcome not by technique, but by *who* Jesus was and *what* he came to do.

Whereas we are not addressing the nature of the kingdom of God or any theological debates that relate to this particular topic, we will rather look at how this concept unfolds and develops throughout the exorcism scenes that Luke writes about, and what role it played in their purpose.

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<sup>183</sup> Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, p. 195.

#### 4.4 The Gerasene demoniac

The next major exorcism scene comes from Luke 8:26–39 and is known as the ‘Gerasene’<sup>184</sup> demoniac’ scene.<sup>185</sup> The passage talks about a man possessed by many demons who identified themselves as ‘Legion’ (v. 30). Later in the passage we read of Jesus’ performance of the exorcism, which is again unique and new. In this section we will not only focus on Jesus’ methodology of exorcism, but will also analyse such details as the location of the scene and the meaning of demons being cast out into the herd of swine. As we shall see, these details will bear great significance in understanding of Jesus’ technique and how its meaning contributes to the Lord’s mission as an exorcist.

##### 4.4.1 The Gerasene location

In all three Synoptic Gospels we find the evangelists saying that Jesus went to either the ‘other side, the country of the Gadarenes’ (Mt. 8:28), or ‘the other side of the sea, to the country of Gerasenes’ (Mk 5:1), or ‘to the country of the Gerasenes, which is opposite Galilee’ (Lk 8:26). The location of where the scene is taking place is of great significance, because what the authors refer to as ‘the other side of the lake’ was in fact considered to be a pagan, gentile territory.<sup>186</sup> What this passages echoes is the scene of the temptation in the desert (4.1), where Jesus steps into the ungodly, pagan, and demonic territory as if proclaiming again that the spread of the kingdom of God was not meant for a comfort zone, but for an active assault on the Satanic reign.

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<sup>184</sup> Bruner, F. D., *Matthew 13–28* (2 vols.; Eerdmans Publishing Co., MI, 2004), p.97.

<sup>185</sup> The scene is found in all three Synoptic Gospels: Matthew 8:28–34, Mark 5:1–20, Luke 8:26–39.

<sup>186</sup> Bruner, Frederick, D. *Matthew 1–12* (2 vols.; The Christbook, Eerdmans Publishing Co., MI, 2004), p.402.

Before looking at how Jesus' exorcism in a pagan territory was a perfect example of an offensive strategy against the demonic kingdom, we must first look at one of the most controversial passages in the Gospels, which comes from Matthew 16:17-19. The passage reads:

Simon Peter replied, 'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.' And Jesus answered him, 'Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.' (Matt 16:17-19).

While the correct interpretation of this passage raises important questions and debates between Roman Catholics and Protestants, we will rather focus on the phrase 'the gates of hell' (Matt 16:19), which contributes to our study. John Nolland has noted that Jesus' building of the Church on a rock, and the gates of hell not prevailing against them, simply means the most explicit act of offense found in the Gospels, as gates, by definition, are defensive structures, not offensive weapons.<sup>187</sup>

The study of giants and fallen angels in the book of 1 Enoch provides a clearer perspective as to what was implied by the term 'the gates of hell'. The location where the events of Matthew 16:13-20 took place was Caesarea Philippi, 'a city located in the northern part of what had been called Bashan, at the foot of Mount Hermon.'<sup>188</sup> Heiser also notes, that

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<sup>187</sup> Nolland, John. *The Gospel of Matthew: a Commentary on the Greek Text*. (Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2005), p. 675. Also see, Weber, Stuart K. *Matthew.. Holman New Testament Commentary. Vol I*. (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000), p. 252.

<sup>188</sup> Heiser, *Reversing Hermon*, p. 95.

in the Ugaritic language<sup>189</sup> the word Bashan was spelled *Bathan*, which (both Bashan and Bathan) meant ‘serpent’.<sup>190</sup> In addition, this ‘place of the serpent’ was also called the land of the Rephaim in Deuteronomy 3:13, which is strongly connected to 1 Enoch 6:1-6, where Mount Hermon is the place where the angels met and rebelled against Yahweh, making ungodly oaths and agreements.<sup>191</sup> Moreover, according to Lete, for Canaanites the region of Bashan represented hell, or at least the pathway to it.<sup>192</sup> Thus we see that Jesus did not choose this term, ‘the gates of hell’, by accident. He was once again standing in the territory of the enemy, in the land formerly known as Bashan, the ‘land of the serpent’,<sup>193</sup> proclaiming that God’s kingdom would defeat and destroy even the very gates of hell.

Just as in the temptation in the desert scene, we see that it was the kingdom of God that was the aggressor. Unlike the belief that the Church would survive and prevail against the demonic offense, it was, rather, the ‘gates of hell’ and the kingdom of Satan under the attack. In other words, ‘the gates of hell shall not prevail against it’ simply means that the Satanic kingdom will not hold up against the Church.<sup>194</sup> According to Richard Hays, the spread of the Gospel of Jesus resembles the occupation of Canaan, and it marks the beginning of a crusade against hostile forces that are now in the possession of the land.<sup>195</sup>

Furthermore, regarding the words ‘my church’ (v. 18), John Meier claims the following: ‘In Matthew’s polemical theology [...] the kingdom of God is taken away from the people of Israel and given to another people, “my church.”’<sup>196</sup> The kingdom of God,

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<sup>189</sup> Extinct Northwest Semitic language.

<sup>190</sup> Heiser, *The Unseen Realm*, p. 200.

<sup>191</sup> Rollin, W. ‘Hermon,’ in *DDD (Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible)*, 412.

<sup>192</sup> Lete, G. del Olmo, ‘Bashan,’ in *DDD (Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible)*, 162.

<sup>193</sup> Heiser, *The Unseen Realm*, p. 200.

<sup>194</sup> Heiser, *The Unseen Realm*, p. 285.

<sup>195</sup> Hays, Richard B. *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels*. (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2016), p. 23.

<sup>196</sup> Meier, John P. *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus*. Vol II. (New Haven, NJ: Yale University Press, 2008), p. 975.

therefore, given to the Church and God's people, is what the Satanic realm will be overcome by.

Thus, the Gerasene location was more than a gentile territory. It also represented an area under the demonic rulership and grasp. Luke's portrayal of the clash of two kingdoms is a pattern found both in the temptation of Jesus in the desert, the Lord's arrival into the pagan land, and the exorcism scenes. However, calling it 'clash' or a 'battle' is not entirely precise<sup>197</sup>, as it was more of an aggressive attack on and defeat<sup>198</sup> of the Satanic realm and its agenda. Therefore, it is important to emphasize that dualism is not implied in this interpretation, as Satan is capable to act only as much as God allows him to (Job 1:12,16,19; 2:2-6), which means the two kingdoms are not equal in power.

#### 4.4.2 The demoniac

The description of the demoniac raises important questions regarding the symptoms, the reasons, and also the effect of the demonic possession. Although the study of the latter points is not the main goal of this project, a brief analysis of the Gerasene demoniac will provide a better understanding of what the purpose and technique of Jesus' exorcism were. The accounts from the Synoptic Gospels are the following:

<b>Matthew 8:28</b>	<b>Mark 5:3-5</b>	<b>Luke 8:27</b>
And when he came to the	He lived among the tombs.	When Jesus had stepped

<sup>197</sup> Riley, G. J. 'Demon,' in *DDD (Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible)*, 239; and Pfeiffer, Charles F., and Everett Falconer Harrison. *Wycliffe Bible Commentary*. (Chicago, IL: Moody P., 1962), p. 994.

<sup>198</sup> As mentioned before, exorcisms were not the representation of Satan's final destruction, which is still yet to come.

<p>other side, to the country of the Gadarenes, two demon-possessed men met him, coming out of the tombs, so fierce that no one could pass that way.</p>	<p>And no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain, for he had often been bound with shackles and chains, but he wrenched the chains apart, and he broke the shackles in pieces. No one had the strength to subdue him. Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always crying out and cutting himself with stones.</p>	<p>out on land, there met him a man from the city who had demons. For a long time he had worn no clothes, and he had not lived in a house but among the tombs.</p>
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The Synoptic Gospels differ in details regarding the demoniac's behavior. What is clear from these accounts is that the demoniac may have had some unusual strength, lived among the tombs, and been involved in some abnormal behavior such as wearing no clothes. In addition, Mark and Matthew add that he might have been involved in self-destructive behavior.

From a psychological point of view, William Alexander recognized the symptoms to be those of acute mania<sup>199</sup>, whereas Derrett suggests that the person cutting himself with

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<sup>199</sup> Alexander, William Menzies. *Demonic Possession In The New Testament: Its Relations. Historical, Medical, and Theological*. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1902), p. 93-96.

stones might implicate him being involved in a mourning ritual which was taken too far.<sup>200</sup> Whereas when reading these passages in the modern age it is easy to confuse the spiritual bondage with a mental disorder, Ellis points out that even in the ancient world mere illnesses were distinguished from mental or psychological disorders.<sup>201</sup> However, scholars like Merrill Unger disagree, claiming that it was the demonic that had ‘power over the human body to cause dumbness (Matt 9:32–33), blindness (Matt 12:22), insanity (Lk 8:26–36), suicidal mania (Mk 9:22), personal injuries (Mk 9:18), and various physical defects and deformities (Lk 13:11–17).’<sup>202</sup> Passages like Matthew 4:24, 8:16 and Luke 13:32 provide a clear distinction between demonic possession and natural disease, but Luke, the evangelist we focus on in this project, has a different perspective.

As mentioned previously, Luke, unlike any other Gospel author, likes to blur the distinction between psychiatric illness and demonic possession.<sup>203</sup> The reason why Luke is not interested in the latter distinction of the specific symptoms of the demoniacs is because he wishes to portray a different message which exorcism stories convey. As Twelftree notes, ‘in all of his redactional activity Luke is most likely trying to say something about Jesus – that he was powerful, that demons submitted to him, that he was all-knowing and compassionate.’<sup>204</sup> Thus Luke presents a view of exorcisms which does not emphasize the technique or the reasons for possession, but rather Jesus as ‘full of or empowered and led by the Spirit, as preaching the kingdom of God.’<sup>205</sup>

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<sup>200</sup> Derrett, J.D.M. ‘Spirit-possession and the Gerasene Demoniac’ *Man* (n.s.) vol. 14 (1979), p. 287.

<sup>201</sup> Ellis, E.E. *The Gospel of Luke. 2nd edition. New Century Bible.* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans/London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1974), p. 128.

<sup>202</sup> Unger, *Biblical Demonology*, p. 67.

<sup>203</sup> Twelftree, *Triumphant*, p. 104.

<sup>204</sup> Twelftree, *Triumphant*, p. 102.

<sup>205</sup> Twelftree, *Triumphant*, p. 97.

Much can be said about the name *Legion* (gk. Λεγεών; in Latin refers to a large ‘army of supporters’)<sup>206</sup>, and its eschatological aspects (Legion’s cry: ‘Have you come here to torment us before time?’ Matt 8:29). Ben Witherington suggests that the name could be viewed as a metaphor for large military numbers of a Roman occupying force, which would relate to pigs rushing headlong into the water, ‘precisely what every Jewish Zealot hoped would happen to unclean “animals” (Roman).’<sup>207</sup> On the other hand, the name may not necessarily indicate the exact number of demons, as Bock claims, but simply that Jesus ‘faced multiple demons.’<sup>208</sup>

The debate of whether it was a mental illness, identified by Alexander as acute mania,<sup>209</sup> or a demonic possession,<sup>210</sup> and whether the name Λεγεών was an implication to a military oppression by the Romans, or a metaphor for the multitude of demons that Jesus exorcised is endless. However, these brief observations help us see the condition of the demoniac more clearly, and set the stage for the analysis of the methodology that Jesus used to cast the demons out.

#### 4.4.3 The exorcism of the *Legion*

We already touched upon the notion that Jesus was in warfare against the satanic kingdom, whose destruction would be brought about by the spread of the kingdom of God and His Word. Similar to the scenes of the temptation in the desert, and the demoniac in the

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<sup>206</sup> Betz, H. D., ‘Legion,’ in *DDD (Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible)*, p. 507.

<sup>207</sup> Witherington, Ben III. *The Jesus Quest: The Third Search for the Jew of Nazareth*. (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1995), p. 71.

<sup>208</sup> Bock, *Luke, V.1: 1-9:50*, p. 774.

<sup>209</sup> Acute mania is a state of abnormally elevated arousal, affect, and energy level.

<sup>210</sup> More on the connection between demonic possession and illness see, Bhayro, Siam, *Demons and Illness from Antiquity to the Early-Modern Period*. (Leiden: Brill, 2017), p. 81-96; and Notley, R. Steven., and Garcia Jeffrey P. *The Gospels in First-Century Judaea: Proceedings of the Inaugural Conference of Nyack College's Graduate Program in Ancient Judaism and Christian Origins, August 29th, 2013*. (Leiden: Brill, 2016), p. 122-135.



Synagogue, Jesus was again engaging in an active, offensive attack against the satanic realm. The latter is evident in him stepping into the Gentile territory and casting out the multitude of demons named *Legion*.

Against a popular opinion that the scene of the Gerasene demoniac has a political connotation, Jesus' enemy in this warfare was not Rome, along with its political and economic domination,<sup>211</sup> but rather – Satan.<sup>212</sup> In addition, Jesus coming into a gentile territory certainly has implications for his Gospel being available for both Jews and Gentiles.<sup>213</sup> However, in light of how Jesus' exorcisms have been analysed and portrayed so far, it is important to clarify that the location where Jesus cast out *Legion* was not only a gentile territory, but also a place under the satanic rule and grasp.

Nevertheless, the presence of the demonic is not the main focus of the scene in the Gerasenes. Rather, the key factor is the absence of faith in and worship of Yahweh in those lands, which was the reason for demons to possess, harass and rule over people. Now, however, Yahweh was present, and his kingdom was being spread.

Luke presents Jesus' technique of casting out Legion in the following way:

When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down before him and said with a loud voice, 'What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, do not torment me.' For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. (For many a time it had seized him. He was kept under guard and bound with chains and shackles, but he would break the bonds and be driven by the demon into the desert.)

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<sup>211</sup> Stuckenbruck, *The Myth of Rebellious Angels*, p. 165. See also: Eitrem, Samson, *Some Notes on the Demonology in the New Testament*. (Symbolae osloenses Fasc. Supplet 20, Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1966, 2nd ed.), p. 70.

<sup>212</sup> Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, p. 196.

<sup>213</sup> Bock, *Luke, V.1: 1-9:50*, p. 770. See also, Witherington, *The Jesus Quest*, p. 246.

Jesus then asked him, ‘What is your name?’ And he said, ‘Legion,’ for many demons had entered him. (Luke 8:28-30).

The aspect which immediately draws our attention is the word ‘command’ (gk. παραγγέλλω), which we find in verse 29. Luke is especially fond of this word as he uses it multiple times in his writings.<sup>214</sup> In Acts, for example, Luke always uses παραγγέλλω as a ‘directive from an authoritative source.’<sup>215</sup> In Acts 16:18 we read of the following technique of exorcism performed by Paul: ‘Paul, having become greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, “I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.” And it came out that very hour.’ Twelftree comments on the passage by saying that ‘Paul and Jesus – whom Paul is portrayed as modeling – are seen to be issuing a directive to the demons from an authoritative source.’<sup>216</sup> As analysed in chapter 3, apostles and followers of Jesus used his name on the basis of *glorifying* and *knowing* him as Lord and Savior. Thus, Paul’s exorcism and the command (gk. παραγγέλλω) to depart were based not on his own authority or power, but on Jesus’, whom he was glorifying and had a personal relationship with.

In the case of Jesus, his command to depart was grounded on the authority he had as the Messiah, as God in the flesh. Luke emphasizes the aspect of authority of Jesus in several places. First, in Luke 8:28,31 we see demons begging Jesus ‘not to exercise his authority over them and relegate them to the abyss.’<sup>217</sup> Secondly, the very command (v. 29) or the permission to leave (v. 32) resembles Jesus manifesting his authority in forgiving sins (Lk 7:48-49, Matt 9:6) and executing judgment (Jn 5:27). By deed, implication, and word, Jesus claimed power and authority over life and death itself (Jn 11:25). According to Millard

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<sup>214</sup> Luke 5:14; 8:29, 56; 9:21; Acts 1:4; 4:18; 5:28, 40; 10:42; 15:5; 16:18, 23; 17:30; 23:22, 30.

<sup>215</sup> Twelftree, *In the Name of Jesus*, p. 147n115; citing Hauck, Frederick, ‘παραγγέλλω,’ *TDNT* 5:763.

<sup>216</sup> Twelftree, *In the Name of Jesus*, p. 147.

<sup>217</sup> Bock, *Luke, V.1: 1-9:50*, p. 774.

Erickson, the power and authority that Jesus had was entirely due to Jesus' Sonship, and his unique relationship to the Father (Jn 10:30).<sup>218</sup> Jesus was not acting by himself, apart from Yahweh and his Spirit. The latter is an important element in understanding the connection between exorcisms and Yahweh's kingdom. In other words, Jesus was not an isolated miracle-worker casting out demons by unique methods. He and Yahweh were one, and the Holy Spirit was working in him. As James Dunn and Graham Twelftree note:

Jesus' own testimony is that he experienced these healings as an otherly power; God's own power working through him. The dominion of Satan was being confronted and defeated by the effective power of God, the Spirit of God working in him and through him.<sup>219</sup>

In the same article, Dunn and Twelftree recognize the opposite otherworldly power and authority, which belonged to Satan.<sup>220</sup> In the Gospel accounts, however, his authority over illness, human bodies (e.g. possession), and worldly powers (Lk 4:6) was now confronted and overcome by the authority and kingdom of Yahweh.

Notwithstanding, even though Jesus' authority was identified not only by demons but also by the witnesses of the exorcisms (Lk 4:36), in the historical context Jesus' technique of exorcism, and especially its result, in the Gerasenes could be viewed from another angle.

Of the finale of Jesus casting out Legion we read in Luke 8:32-33:

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<sup>218</sup> Erickson, Millard J. *Christian Theology*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013), p. 627-628.

<sup>219</sup> Dunn, James D.G., and Graham Twelftree. 'Demon Possession and Exorcism in the New Testament.' *Churchman, Issue 94.3*, (1980), 210–25. p. 220.

<sup>220</sup> Dunn, James D.G., and Graham Twelftree, *Churchman, Issue 94.3*, p. 222.

Now a large herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside, and they begged him to let them enter these. So he gave them permission. Then the demons came out of the man and entered the pigs, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and drowned.

The casting of Legion into the pigs was a technique of exorcism which could be easily recognized as a common practice among the ancient exorcists. In the Babylonian materials, for instance, we read of demons being cast from people into objects.<sup>221</sup> *Magical Papyri* confirms this notion:

A restraining [rite] for anything, works even on chariots. It also causes enmity / and sickness, cuts down, destroys, and overturns, for [whatever] you wish. 430 The spell [in it], when said, conjures daimons [out] and makes them enter [objects or people]. (*PGM VII.429-433*).<sup>222</sup>

Demons being transferred from the demonized into some object was a customary technique in first-century Palestine. Twelftree also elaborates on the idea by saying that

the intention of the exorcist is that the demons are to be transferred to the water in a container with which he has been working a spell, then to be dissipated when the pot is broken and the water poured onto the ground.<sup>223</sup>

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<sup>221</sup> Davies, T. W., *Magic, Divination and Demonology Among the Hebrews and Their Neighbors* (London: Clarke and Leipzig: Spingatis, 1897), p. 104.

<sup>222</sup> Betz, *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation*, p. 129.

<sup>223</sup> Twelftree, *Jesus the Exorcist*, p. 75.

Thus it is easy to see the connection between the common Jewish exorcistic practices and Jesus' techniques. Similar to the healing of Simon's mother-in-law, where Jesus, like a common exorcist would do, 'stood over her'<sup>224</sup> (Lk 4:39) and 'rebuked' the fever, now we see Jesus resembling another methodology of casting out demons.

After the demons were cast into the swine (which could be viewed as an object in terms of this ritual), the latter rush headlong into the water and are drowned. Consequently, not only is the parallel found in using an object to cast the demon into, we also find the element of water being present in the episode. Interestingly, we read of the demoniac having been shackled and chained, which, according to Twelftree and Geller, could be a reference to 'previous unsuccessful attempts by other exorcists,' since shackling had parallels in the magic bowls.<sup>225</sup> Whereas the latter observation cannot be confirmed, it is possible to assume Jesus succeeding in an exorcism by using the same techniques which were familiar to and in use by other exorcists of the time. However, the theory does not explain why Jesus did not use the techniques of his time in other exorcisms (e.g. Lk 4:33:36), when his mere authority and the command were enough.

Looking deeper into historical and cultural contexts, it is likely that Jesus, when performing an exorcism, could adopt the popular techniques of the time. According to Stuckenbruck, Jesus could be viewed as a charismatic, miracle-working Jew.<sup>226</sup> In addition, the latter author and Vermes propose that his actions could be compared to other Jewish

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<sup>224</sup> In *PGM IV:745, 1229* we read of the healing being directed towards the head of the sick or demonized.

<sup>225</sup> Twelftree, *Jesus the Exorcist*, p. 144. See also: Geller, M. J. 'Jesus' Theurgic Powers: Parallels in the Talmud and Incantation Bowls', *JJS* 28 (1977), p. 141-155.

<sup>226</sup> Stuckenbruck, *The Myth of Rebellious Angels*, p. 165.

charismatics, *hasids*, who were based in Galilee.<sup>227</sup> Commenting on Vermes's perspective above, however, Witherington draws the following comparison:

That Jesus was a charismatic, miracle-working Galilean with an intimate relationship with God does not make him a *hasid*, a Jew devoted to Torah piety and scrupulous observance of the law and of Halakah.<sup>228</sup>

In the cultural context, therefore, Jesus could be viewed both as a *hasid* and an exorcist, copying the techniques which were commonly used at the time. However, ancient *hasids* and charismatic exorcists relied on their 'performance' and on what was said and done,<sup>229</sup> whereas Luke presents Jesus differently. Based on this<sup>230</sup> and Witherington's observation above, the view of Jesus as a *hasid* is incompatible with what exorcisms meant in Luke's writings.

Instead of certain words or actions, or observance of ritualistic patterns, we read of Jesus having authority and power (Lk 4:36) over the demonic, and casting them out by the power of the Spirit (Lk 11:20). Luke's view of Jesus' technique of exorcism was entirely based upon the power of the Holy Spirit; in short, that God was with him.<sup>231</sup> This is also evident in the way Luke's Gospel accounts are structured.

Unlike Mark and Matthew, Luke spends a great deal of time establishing and emphasizing important details about Jesus' mission. Before writing about Jesus' ministry, exorcisms, and the spread of God's kingdom, Luke repeatedly highlights Jesus being filled

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<sup>227</sup> Stuckenbruck, *The Myth of Rebellious Angels*, p. 165. See also: Vermes, Geza, *Jesus the Jew: A Historian's Reading of the Gospels*, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1973), p. 58-82; Morton, Smith, *Jesus the Magician*, (London: Golancz, 1978), also supported the same view.

<sup>228</sup> Witherington, *The Jesus Quest*, p. 115.

<sup>229</sup> Twelftree, *In the Name of Jesus*, p. 44.

<sup>230</sup> See also Chapter 2.

<sup>231</sup> Twelftree, *Triumphant*, p. 100.

with and empowered by the Holy Spirit (e.g. 1:35; 3:16,22; 4:1,14). In addition, in 4:43 ('I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns as well; for I was sent for this purpose') Luke summarizes the purpose of Jesus' ministry as an exorcist. He would later repeat this emphasis in Acts 10:38, which reads: 'How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.' Thus Luke makes it clear that Jesus' exorcisms followed no particular technique or rite. They were not rituals to save a demonized person, but a reflection of a greater, more significant spiritual warfare that Jesus was engaged in. Therefore, exorcisms, according to Wright, served as signs that 'he was winning the battle, though it had not yet reached its height.'<sup>232</sup>

#### 4.5 Conclusion

In this chapter we analysed Jesus' technique of exorcism in different scenes like Luke 4:33-37 and 8:26-39. The observations provided above prove that exorcisms were representations of a grand spiritual warfare between two kingdoms: Satan's and Yahweh's. This was evident both in the devil tempting Jesus in the desert (Lk 4:1-13), in Jesus stating that he would build his Church on a rock (Matt 16:17:19), and in him casting out demonic spirits.

Although his methods might have contained similarities to those of Jewish exorcists, the motif behind them proved the latter statement wrong. In the battle against the satanic agenda, the casting out of demons signified the fall of its kingdom and reign. Jesus, in whom God's Spirit dwelt, portrayed his authority and power by mere commands and rebukes. The study above showed that Jesus was not a charismatic, and certainly did not follow any exorcistic techniques of the time. On the contrary, he was engaged in an active, offensive

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<sup>232</sup> Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, p. 195.

warfare against the satanic kingdom, which took place in a territory which was under the dominion of Satan and sin.<sup>233</sup> Thus exorcism in the scene of the Gerasene demoniac serves as an example of liberation. Echoing the Exodus event (Exod 12), it was the freeing of the captives not only on the personal and physical levels, but also freedom from foreign gods, demons, and their reign over God's people.

Whether it was liberation from the demonic and spread of the kingdom of Yahweh in a synagogue or pagan territory, in a form of an illness (e.g. fever) or a chaotic storm, Luke clearly displays Jesus' authority and might over the demonic powers. However, so far Luke is only building his case. The evangelist will unfold the grand revelation in chapter 11, where Jesus openly proclaims the methodology and purpose behind demons being cast out, and Satan overcome.

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<sup>233</sup> Gooding, *According to Luke*, p. 147.



## Chapter 5

In the previous chapters we saw how the analysis of exorcism scenes repeatedly pointed to a greater, more significant meaning behind this phenomenon. Luke, however, does not make any explicit remarks regarding the true purpose or the methodology of exorcism until chapter 11, where we are finally introduced to the most pivotal passage about Jesus' technique of casting out demonic spirits.

In this chapter we will look closer at the passage from Luke 11:14-26, which both completely unfolds Jesus' methodology of exorcism and leaves the pattern for his disciples to follow. We will not delve into the analysis of the nature of the kingdom of God or its eschatological aspects. We will, rather, look at what its relationship to the performance of the exorcism is, and what it reveals about Jesus' technique of casting demons out.

We will analyse three topics in this chapter: the Beelzebul controversy (Lk 11:14-19); relationship of exorcisms and the coming of the kingdom of God (Lk 11:20-23); and the return of the unclean spirit into an empty house (Lk 11:24-26). The study of the above passages, and their connection to other exorcism passages found in Luke, will provide a clear perspective as to what exorcism scenes tell us about the evangelist's message and Jesus' mission against the demonic.

### 5.1 The Beelzebul controversy

The first point of investigation comes from Luke 11:14-19, which all synoptic authors deemed important to include in their accounts<sup>234</sup>. The passage in Luke is as follows:

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<sup>234</sup> The Beelzebul controversy is found in Matthew 12:24–37 and Mark 3:22–30.

Now he was casting out a demon that was mute. When the demon had gone out, the mute man spoke, and the people marveled. But some of them said, ‘He casts out demons by Beelzebul, the prince of demons,’ while others, to test him, kept seeking from him a sign from heaven. But he, knowing their thoughts, said to them, ‘Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and a divided household falls. And if Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? For you say that I cast out demons by Beelzebul. And if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore, they will be your judges. (Lk 11:14-19)

The accusation that Jesus cast out demons by the power of Beelzebul is a very strong one, which is why this particular passage requires special attention.

Firstly, Baalzebub (gk. βααλζεβούβ) is considered to be the original form of the name of the deity, as later Jewish oral traditions changed the name into Beelzebul (gk Βεελζεβούλ), which is interpreted as ‘Lord of the flies.’<sup>235</sup> This name occurs in the Old Testament four times (2 Kgs 1:2, 3, 6, 16), and he was believed to be a god who could both cause or cure diseases. Moreover, the view that Baalzebub was a name of a deity appears also in the Ugaritic texts.<sup>236</sup>

One of the reasons for Jesus being accused of casting out demons by the power of Beelzebul is because of the ancient understanding of exorcisms, which was analysed in chapter 2. The Pharisees assumed that to perform an exorcism, one must, among other techniques, rely on a power-authority. In Luke 11:14-19, therefore, Jesus’ miracles are seen as being performed by the power of demonic kingdom.

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<sup>235</sup> W. Herrmann, ‘Baal Zebub,’ in *DDD (Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible)*, 154.

<sup>236</sup> W. Herrmann, ‘Baal Zebub,’ in *DDD (Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible)*, 154.

The episode contains a few issues worthy of our attention which might influence our understanding of Jesus' exorcistic techniques. First, Meier proposes rhetorical analysis which argues against the coherency of the passage. In verse 19 we read: 'And if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by who do your sons cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges.' The points of argument are the words *you* and *your*. Analysing the same scene in both Matthew (12:27-28) and Luke (11:19), Meier claims that *you* and *your* addresses make sense only when the referents are different, which subsequently implies two different occasions.<sup>237</sup> Kasemann adds to the idea by stating that verse 19 in Luke chapter 11 is a creation of 'rational' Christians, and was later added to connect the two separate episodes.<sup>238</sup> However, amidst this debate as to whether the two scenes were connected together or not, Dunn concludes that a final consensus cannot be reached, and that it certainly does not impact the authenticity or meaning of the passage in Luke 11:20.<sup>239</sup> Twelftree, on the other hand, leaves no room for doubt that the verses 14-19 are strongly linked to Jesus' activity as an exorcist. He relates the Beelzebul controversy to the Gospel of John, by saying, 'the Fourth Gospel portrays Jesus as relying on no source of power-authority outside himself in performing miracles.'<sup>240</sup> The author later explains his position by suggesting that the uniqueness of Jesus as an exorcist<sup>241</sup> and miracle-worker was firmly established only on the basis of his close relationship to the Father (John 1:1-18).<sup>242</sup> In other words, the accusation of Jesus acting by

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<sup>237</sup> Meier, John P. *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus*. Vol II. (New Haven, NJ: Yale University Press, 2008), p. 409.

<sup>238</sup> Kasemann, Ernst, 'Lukas 11, 14-28,' *Exegetische Versuche und Besinnungen* (2 vols.; 4th ed., Gottingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1965), p. 242-248.

<sup>239</sup> Dunn, J. D. G. 'Matthew 12:28/Luke 11:20 – A Word of Jesus?' *Eschatology and the New Testament*, (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1988), p. 29-49.

<sup>240</sup> Twelftree, *In the Name of Jesus*, p. 193.

<sup>241</sup> Although the Gospel of John contains no stories of exorcism, the point addressed here is his miracles in general.

<sup>242</sup> Twelftree, *In the Name of Jesus*, p. 194.

the power of Beelzebub was strongly connected with Jesus' exorcisms and his own technique, which was unfamiliar to the exorcists of the first century Palestine.

For the purpose of this project we will not continue analysing the debate but will, rather, accept the point of argument as valid and worthy of our attention. However, in agreement with Dunn, we do not think that the above observations influence the meaning of the scene. Whether the evangelists (Matthew and Luke) attached the two separate scenes together, or was it in fact one episode that took place, the meaning of Jesus' words and the theological points regarding the Beelzebub controversy remain unchanged.

In previous analysis we saw the spiritual warfare of two opposing (yet not equal in power) kingdoms taking place. In Luke 11:14-19, the author plainly acknowledges the presence of the demonic agenda (v. 17), and 'that Jesus understands his great foe as the head of a kingdom that, by further implication, opposes God's kingdom.'<sup>243</sup> Therefore, Luke once again establishes the spiritual dualism and warfare before presenting us with Jesus' response in Luke 11:20, which is the subject of our following analysis.

## **5.2 Exorcisms as the re-establishment of the Kingdom**

Before looking closer at what Luke is telling us about the connection between the kingdom of God and the exorcisms of Jesus, we must first see what the Old Testament is revealing to us about the spiritual warfare and the two opposing kingdoms (the devil's and Yahweh's).

Whereas it is not the purpose of this project to delve into the theology of the kingdom of God, we will nevertheless look at some significant passages, which represent the full picture of the cosmic spiritual battle.

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<sup>243</sup> Evans, Craig A. 'Inaugurating the Kingdom of God and Defeating the Kingdom of Satan.' *Bulletin for Biblical Research*, no. 15.1 (2005), p. 67.

### 5.2.1 Re-establishment of Yahweh's Kingdom in the Old Testament

In the Old Testament we see numerous occasions when authors and prophets speak of Yahweh's rule over his people: in the Torah (e.g. Num 23:21; Deut 33:2, 5, 27b; Judg 8:23; 1 Sam 12:12), Psalms (e.g. 44:4; 48:2; 68:24; 74:12; 97:1), and the Prophets (e.g. Isa 6:5; 33:22; 44:6; Jer 10:6–7; 10:10; Dan 2:37). Deuteronomy 33:5, for instance, clearly establishes Yahweh's kingship and reign over his people: 'Thus the Lord became king in Jeshurun, when the heads of the people were gathered, all the tribes of Israel together.' We see the same theme in the verse 27 of the same chapter: 'The eternal God is your dwelling place, and underneath are the everlasting arms. And he thrust out the enemy before you and said, "Destroy."'”

In addition, Deuteronomy 32 presents to us a worldview which is known as the Divine Council (e.g. Psalm 82).<sup>244</sup> Based mainly on the 1 book of Enoch, it is a theory that nations of the world were disinherited by God and given to the dominion of lesser gods (*elohim*).<sup>245</sup> Although this topic is much debated, it presents to us the idea that Yahweh gathers and saves people from all nations of the world, which are under the dominion of other gods (lesser *elohim*). For example, Luke 24:47, Acts 10:35, and Romans 16:26 (among many others), all include, in their context of salvation, the word *nations* (ἔθνος). The term which is found in Ezekiel 37:28, and its plural form is what brings us either to the Deuteronomy 32 worldview, or to an idea that salvation is both to Jews and Gentiles. In Ezekiel we read:

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<sup>244</sup> For more on this topic see Heiser, *The Unseen Realm*; Heiser, Michael S. *Reversing Hermon: Enoch, the Watchers & the Forgotten Mission of Jesus Christ*, (Crane, MO: Defender Publishing, 2017); Stuckenbruck, Loren T. *The Myth of Rebellious Angels*; and Harkins, Angela Kim, Kelley Coblentz Bautch, and John C. Endres. *The Watchers in Jewish and Christian Traditions*, (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2014).

<sup>245</sup> Collins, J. J., 'Prince,' in *DDD (Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible)*, 663.

I will make a covenant of peace with them. It shall be an everlasting covenant with them. And I will set them in their land and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in their midst forevermore. My dwelling place shall be with them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. (Ezekiel 37:26–27)

Interestingly, Paul is using similar language in 2 Corinthians, which may even imply him quoting Ezekiel:

What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, ‘I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Therefore go out from their midst, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; then I will welcome you, and I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty.’ (2 Cor 6:16–18)

The above passage was written to a *gentile* church in Corinth, and its connection to both the Deuteronomy 32 worldview and Ezekiel 37 is obvious: the re-inheriting of the nations, the salvation for both Gentiles and Israelites, and God’s temple, his people (1 Cor 3:16–17, 1 Pet 2:5), being established among them.<sup>246</sup>

The above perspective is also strongly linked to the book of Daniel (especially, chapter 10), which provides the most clear perspective on what the re-establishment of the kingdom of God entails. To the king of Babylon the following words are said: ‘You, O king, the king of kings, to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, and the

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<sup>246</sup> See Piotrowski, N., “‘I will save my people from their sins’”: The influence of Ezekiel 36–37 on Matthew 1,’ *Tyndale Bulletin* 64.1 (2013). p. 39.

might, and the glory' (Dan 2:37). What Daniel is making obvious is that to be given the kingdom essentially meant to be give the 'power', the 'might', and the glory'.<sup>247</sup> In addition, in Daniel 7:22 we read: 'until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was given for the saints of the Most High, and the time came when the saints possessed the kingdom.'

According to Evans, Daniel brings a cosmic dimension into perspective, presenting his readers with the struggle between the divine kingdom and the evil kingdom.<sup>248</sup> Whereas the language of the kingdoms in Daniel may often overlap with the people of Israel (the divine kingdom of Yahweh) and the worldly kingdoms (demons, evil powers, of which we read in Ephesians 6:12), it is, nevertheless, clear that the author is talking about the warfare between two opposing agendas and reigns.

Another example which contributes to our understanding of spiritual warfare is found Daniel 10:20-21:

Then he said, 'Do you know why I have come to you? But now I will return to fight against the prince of Persia; and when I go out, behold, the prince of Greece will come. But I will tell you what is inscribed in the book of truth: there is none who contends by my side against these except Michael, your prince.' (Dan 10:20–21)

The term which immediately attracts our attention is 'prince' of Persia and of Greece (LXX ἀρχων or ἀρχοντος). Biblical scholars are in agreement that the word 'prince' in Daniel 10 refers to supernatural beings, and not humans, since Michael is also among those being called 'the prince' (10:13, 21).<sup>249</sup> This term occurs multiple times in New Testament accounts as

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<sup>247</sup> Evans, 'Inaugurating the Kingdom of God and Defeating the Kingdom of Satan.', p. 54.

<sup>248</sup> Evans, 'Inaugurating the Kingdom of God and Defeating the Kingdom of Satan.', p. 54.

<sup>249</sup> Heiser, *The Unseen Realm*, p. 119.

well.<sup>250</sup> In 1 Corinthians 2:6 Paul speaks of ‘the ruler of this age’, and in Ephesians 2:2 he mentions the ‘prince of the power of the air.’ In addition, in 1 Corinthians 2:8 he talks of the rulers (ἀρχόντων), who would not have crucified the Lord had they understood who he was. While *archon* in the NT may also refer to human rulers (e.g. Acts 14:5; 16:19), it would make little, if any, sense for Paul to see the irony in the fact that humans could not understand God’s secret plan.<sup>251</sup> Thus we see that rulers and princes represent evil supernatural forces<sup>252</sup>, and symbolize the presence of a kingdom which opposes the Messiah and his reign.

These few observations above, therefore, present to us the cosmic spiritual warfare, the Edenic and Messianic language of the re-establishment of Yahweh’s rule and kingdom, and the destruction of the dominion of evil forces, which the authors of the Old Testament were aware of. The same warfare was taking place in the exorcism scenes, and Jesus’ mission in general.

### 5.2.2 Luke 11:20 and the re-establishment of God’s Kingdom

In Luke 11:20 we encounter one of the most explicit declarations as to what an exorcism was and what purpose it served. Although the author of Mark author is silent about such statements by Jesus, Matthew and Luke both share a similar perspective:

<b>Matthew 12:28</b>	<b>Luke 11:20</b>
But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has	But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has

<sup>250</sup> E.g. Matthew 12:24; Mark 3:22; Luke 11:15; 18:18; John 12:31.

<sup>251</sup> Heiser, *The Unseen Realm*, p. 330.

<sup>252</sup> See D. E. Aune, ‘Archon,’ in *DDD (Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible)*, 82–85.



come upon you.	come upon you'
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Matthew's version is a little bit different, as he replaces 'the finger of God' (gk ἐν δακτύλῳ), which is used by Luke, with 'the Spirit of God' (gk ἐν πνεύματι θεοῦ). Hiers suggests, however, that both Luke 11:20 and Matthew 12:28 come from Q and are to be interpreted as sayings signifying 'the *presence* of the kingdom.'<sup>253</sup> Evans expands the interpretation by saying that Luke's use of 'the finger of God' most likely refers to Exodus 8:19, which says: 'Then the magicians said to Pharaoh: "This is the finger of God." But Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he would not listen to them, as the Lord had said.' Evans claims that the connection between Luke 11:20 and Exodus 8:19 lies in the contexts of both episodes, which involve the hardness of hearts, and true and false miracle workers (those who performed miracles through God's power, and those who performed through the demons').<sup>254</sup> Although Exodus 8:19 in the MT does not mention demons, this is not the case in the Rabbinic tradition. In MT, verse 8:19, for example, is in fact 8:15, and it includes the word דִּיָּשׁ, which means 'demon.'<sup>255</sup> Thus we see that Jesus' statement in Luke 11:20 strongly suggests that he was battling not only individual demonic spirits, but the satanic agenda on a more cosmic scale, which involved the warfare of two kingdoms. In addition, in Luke 11:18 we find the word σατανᾶς, which is a Greek translation of the Hebrew word שָׂטָן. The term

<sup>253</sup> Hiers, Richard H. 'Satan, Demons, and the Kingdom of God.' *Scottish Journal of Theology* 27, no. 1 (1974), p. 44.

<sup>254</sup> Evans, 'Inaugurating the Kingdom of God and Defeating the Kingdom of Satan.', p. 70-71.

<sup>255</sup> This word occurs several times in the Old Testament accounts, including Deuteronomy 32:17 and Psalm 106:37. The term itself comes from the Akkadian *shedu*. See Koehler, Ludwig, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, (Leiden; New York: Brill, 1999), 1417. Whereas the topic as to who *shedim* really were is highly debated, scholars of Paul's first letter to the Corinthians are in agreement that when Paul speaks of *daimonion* in 1 Cor 10:20, what he has in mind is Deuteronomy 32:17 and specifically, the word *shedim*. For Paul, there was no difference between the concepts of *shedim* and *daimonion*, which is what led him to warn the Corinthians against the fellowship with the demons. See Waters, Guy, 'The End of Deuteronomy in the Epistles of Paul', *Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament* 221, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006, p. 134. And Heiser, *The Unseen Realm*, p. 34.

occurs multiple times in the Old Testament accounts. Examples like Psalm 71:13 (שׁוֹנֵי נַפְשִׁי), Psalm 109:20,23 (שׁוֹנֵי), and Numbers 22:22 (לִשְׂטָן לוֹ) use the term to signify ‘opposition’. Rausnitz suggests, therefore, that Luke using σατανᾶς in v. 18 implies ‘the same Israelite ideological base as the term δαιμόνιον: both presume the theo-national distinction of us/Jews/Yhwh vs. them/Gentiles/δαιμόνια.’<sup>256</sup> The opposition also bears eschatological significance as well, since Jesus’ ministry, and especially exorcisms, was the sign of the Satanic reign’s destruction, which was already present, but to be fully completed only at the final judgment.<sup>257</sup>

In light of the exorcistic methods used in first-century Palestine, the evident opposition between Yahweh and שׁטן, Jesus’ portrayal of authority, and demonic powers submitting to Jesus’ rebuking, the Messiah revealed his unique technique by saying in verse 20: ‘if it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons.’ In none of the scenes of casting out demons do we see Jesus invoking the power of the Spirit, or exorcising demons by calling unto the name of Yahweh. In other words, in all the exorcistic scenes analysed above, not once does Jesus call upon a power-authority to overcome the demonic.<sup>258</sup> In Luke 11:20, however, we see the mention of the ‘finger’ (Matt 12:28, ‘Spirit’)<sup>259</sup> of God being the source of the miraculous power. Twelftree recognizes three elements in this verse which point towards the understanding of the technique used by Jesus: the exorcist (‘I’), the Spirit, and the meaning of the previous two components – the coming of the kingdom of Yahweh.<sup>260</sup>

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<sup>256</sup> Rausnitz, Samuel, ‘Expelling Demons from the Gospel of Luke: Recovering the Sense of *Δαιμόνιον* in Jewish-Greek Literature,’ (2015), p. 97.

<sup>257</sup> Twelftree, *Triumphant*, p. 105.

<sup>258</sup> Twelftree, *Jesus the Exorcist*, p. 161.

<sup>259</sup> Whether Q had the ‘finger’ or the ‘Spirit’ is highly debated, although there it is generally agreed that the ‘Spirit’ was the term used in Q. Both ‘finger’ and ‘Spirit’ are similar in meaning as they both indicate the direct activity of God: ‘finger’ (Ex 31:18; Deut 9:10; Ps 8:3), and ‘Spirit’ (Ezek 11:5). For more on the debate see: Wall, R.W. “‘The Finger of God’ Deuteronomy 9:10 and Luke 11:20,” *NTS* 33, (1987), pages 144-150.

<sup>260</sup> Twelftree, *Jesus the Exorcist*, p. 108.

The question, therefore, is whether it was Jesus who performed the exorcism, or was it the Spirit within him which aided in accomplishing that.

The answer to the proposed problem lies in the larger context. Firstly, in verse 19 we read the following words: ‘And if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by *whom do your sons cast them out?*’ Twelftree notes on the later passage:

In Q’s present arrangement, with Luke 11:19 and 20 juxtaposed, it has generally been thought that the obvious interpretation is that Q felt that the exorcisms of the Jews were related in some way to the coming of the kingdom of God.<sup>261</sup>

Whereas scholars like Creed<sup>262</sup> and Bultmann<sup>263</sup> consider verse 19 to be a late addition to the text, Twelftree argues that even if ‘late’, it was still ‘part of the Q material that Matthew and Luke used.’<sup>264</sup> Therefore, it is possible to assume that Q did not see the difference between Jesus’ and other exorcists’ source of power-authority. This notion is confirmed by the passage in Luke 9:50, where we read of the strange exorcist and Jesus’ comments about him: ‘Do not stop him, for the one who is not against you is for you.’ Although a highly debated passage, it gives no reason to assume that Jewish exorcists (both in 9:50 and 11:19) were operating by any power other than Yahweh’s. Otherwise, Jesus would not have viewed them as allies.<sup>265</sup>

Although so far it may seem that Jesus’ exorcisms were performed in the same realm (God’s) as those of Jewish exorcists, the question of what Jesus’ unique technique was still

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<sup>261</sup> Twelftree, *Jesus the Exorcist*, p. 107.

<sup>262</sup> Creed, J.M. *The Gospel According to St. Luke*, (London: SCM, 1957), p. 160.

<sup>263</sup> Bultmann, R. *History of the Synoptic Tradition*, (New York: Harper & Row, 1976), p. 14.

<sup>264</sup> Twelftree, *Jesus the Exorcist*, p. 107.

<sup>265</sup> Twelftree, *Jesus the Exorcist*, p. 108.

remains unanswered. It is clear at this point that it involved the power of the Spirit and the spread of the kingdom of God, but from what we saw in the above analysis, Jewish exorcists seemed to operate in the same, or at least similar, fashion. In *Magical Papyri* text, for instance, we see exorcists operating by *God*: ‘After placing [the patient] opposite [to you], conjure. This is the conjuration: “I conjure you by the god of the Hebrews./Jesus.”’ (PGM IV:3019)<sup>266</sup> The main target in this debate is the source of the power-authority. In chapter 2 we saw that it was common among the Jewish exorcists to invoke God or a powerful exorcist to aid in casting out a demon. In addition, different techniques such as prayers and the power of the exorcist himself were used. However, in none of the ancient materials is it evident that the *Spirit* of Yahweh was being invoked or its power used to perform an exorcism.<sup>267</sup>

As analysed previously, those adjurations were not based on *knowing* or *glorifying* Yahweh. Thus, in combination with the fact that operating in the power of the Spirit was unique and new, it is safe to assume that Christ presented a *different* methodology that also belonged in the realm of Yahweh. The latter is evident both in Q (Matt 12:27/Lk 11:19) and Mark (3:23-26), which imply, as Bultmann calls it, ‘willful blindness’ and the accusation of Jesus acting by the power of Beelzebul being nonsensical.<sup>268</sup> In other words, Jesus’ exorcisms did not present a new technique, but rather a *meaning* to what an exorcism was and what purpose it served. Klutz adds to this idea by saying that Jesus’ exorcisms

consisted partly of a prophetic opposition to existing methods of managing the human costs of the demon–impurity nexus (e.g., Luke 11.24–26 and par.), and partly of an

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<sup>266</sup> Betz, *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation*, p. 96.

<sup>267</sup> Twelftree, *Jesus the Exorcist*, p. 109 (footnote 50).

<sup>268</sup> Bultmann, *History of the Synoptic Tradition*, p. 14.

alternative approach that summoned the demoniacs to a new and potentially more promising future (e.g., Luke 8.1–3).<sup>269</sup>

What Twelftree and Klutz propose is that Jesus' exorcisms signified a different message to the demoniacs. Luke makes this also explicitly clear in 10:20: 'Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.' Similar, therefore, to the joy written about in the parables of the lost sheep (Lk 15:1-7), coin (15:8-10), and son (15:11-32), the joy in the Lord is strictly linked to the salvation and invitation to be with God and be called Yahweh's sons and daughters (2 Cor 6:18).

The joy of the seventy-two that the evil spirits are subject to them in Jesus' name (10:17) also perfectly shows the misunderstanding of the *meaning* of the exorcism. What is surprising in the expression of their astonishment and joy is the disciples' usage of the word 'us', which signifies the confidence in *their* authority, and *their* usage of the name of Jesus which was able to cast the evil spirits out. Although Jesus does not seem to be entirely opposed to the idea,<sup>270</sup> his response in verse 20 clarifies that the ability to cast out demons with authority was not some special gift given to a few chosen ones. Rather, it was a believer's privilege and a God-given, Spirit-inspired power to resist the Devil (Jas 4:7). It was an outcome of a true love and devotion to Yahweh, which focused on the relationship to the Father, instead of driving out and battling demonic spirits.<sup>271</sup>

The call that the demoniacs received was not only a one-time liberation from the spiritual or physical (Lk 13:11-12) bondage, but a call to be a part of the kingdom of Yahweh, which was spread through the performance of the exorcism. As Bock notes, the

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<sup>269</sup> Klutz, 'The Exorcism Stories in Luke–Acts.', p. 144.

<sup>270</sup> Since their authority is confirmed in verse 19.

<sup>271</sup> Warner, Timothy, 'An Evangelical Position on Bondage and Exorcism,' pages 77–88 in *Essays on Spiritual Bondage and Deliverance*. Edited by Willard M. Swartley. (Institute of Mennonite Studies, 1988), p. 80.

parables of the kingdom and the spread of it through Jesus' miracles and exorcisms signify the opportunity to embrace God's promised rule which comes through the Messiah.<sup>272</sup> The exorcisms, in other words, was not about a particular 'technique', but a call to accept a liberation from the satanic rulership and bondage, which took place both on individual levels (e.g. Lk 8:26-39) and on a more cosmic scale (Eph 6:12). Schreiner agrees by adding the following: 'Everything Jesus says and does in some way relates to the kingdom and how it is at hand. How can this be so? It can be so because Jesus is *the kingdom*.'<sup>273</sup> What he proposes is that Jesus is a king who sits on the throne of the kingdom which he embodies and personifies.<sup>274</sup> The latter observations are also echoing Isaiah's take on the Gospel: God is present (Isa 40:9) and God is king (Isa 52:7). Thus, in Jesus' exorcisms the King is not separated from the kingdom – the King *is* the kingdom. In addition, comparing the liberation of the Israelites in Exodus 7-10 to the relationship between exorcisms and the kingdom of Yahweh, Evans notes:

Just as God dismantled the kingly authority of Pharaoh and his gods (or demons) and transferred his people under his own authority, so now in Jesus' ministry Satan's kingdom is being dismantled, and Israel is being invited to embrace divine rule.<sup>275</sup>

Evans' observation, therefore, helps us see that in Luke 11:20, the methodology of exorcism that Jesus uses is not a particular set of actions or words or tricks that perform the miracle.

The belief that he was using a power-authority like many other ancient exorcists is false,

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<sup>272</sup> Bock, Darrell L. *Jesus According to Scripture: Restoring the Portrait from the Gospels*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002), p. 291.

<sup>273</sup> Schreiner, Patrick. *The Kingdom of God and the Glory of the Cross*, (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018), p. 87.

<sup>274</sup> Schreiner, *The Kingdom of God and the Glory of the Cross*, p. 87.

<sup>275</sup> Evans, Craig A. 'Inaugurating the Kingdom of God and Defeating the Kingdom of Satan.' p. 71-72. Also see, Bock, Darrell L. *Luke, Vol.2: 9:51-24:53*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1996), p. 1079; and Dunn, James D.G. *Jesus and the Spirit*. (London: SCM Press, 1975), p. 46.

since Luke never mentions him appealing or imploring the Spirit or Yahweh himself to aid him in his exorcisms. On the contrary, there is no passage more obvious in the Gospels as Luke 11:20 that constitutes that exorcisms are themselves the coming of the kingdom. As Twelftree suggests, ‘in themselves the exorcisms of Jesus are the kingdom of God in operation.’<sup>276</sup>

Therefore, Jesus’ ‘technique’ of exorcism in the Gospel of Luke can be summarized in three aspects which we mentioned above: the exorcist (*I*), the Spirit, and the meaning – the coming of the kingdom. However, the success of his exorcisms lie not in the particular methodology. The emphasis falls on *why*, rather than *how*. Jesus, God incarnate, filled with the Holy Spirit of Yahweh, was showing that exorcisms were signifying the fall of the strongman (Lk 11:21-26), which also involved his kingdom and reign. The language of the cosmic warfare and fall of Satan’s reign is also found in the Testament of Moses: ‘Then his kingdom will appear throughout his whole creation. Then the devil will have an end. Yea, sorrow will be led away with him.’ (10:1)<sup>277</sup> According to Evans, the words ‘have an end’ match exactly the passage from Mark 3:26, which says, ‘is coming to an end’ (τέλος ἔχει, lit., ‘has an end’).<sup>278</sup> The reason the analysis outside the Gospel of Luke is important is to establish the ancient understanding of the cosmic warfare which was perfectly represented in Jesus’ exorcisms. Regarding the relationship between exorcisms and Yahweh’s kingdom, Wright says:

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<sup>276</sup> Twelftree, *Jesus the Exorcist*, p. 170.

<sup>277</sup> Charlesworth, James H. *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*. Vol 1,2. (NY: Doubleday and Company, Inc. 1983), p. 931.

<sup>278</sup> Evans, ‘Inaugurating the Kingdom of God and Defeating the Kingdom of Satan.’ p. 67.

This [Luke 11:20] evokes the same implicit narrative: Israel's god will one day become king; the establishment of his kingdom will involve the defeat of the enemy that has held Israel captive.<sup>279</sup>

What Wright proposes is that Israel, and all the nations of the world, are now being liberated. Not through exorcism, but through the presence of Yahweh (the 'I' method), through the power of Yahweh's Spirit (the Spirit method) and through the ultimate goal which was in God's plan since the first fall – the re-establishment of Yahweh's reign. The exorcisms, therefore, as Hiers suggests, were clues to the disciples and the eye-witnesses that Satan was being bound because in God's kingdom there is not sickness or uncleanness, let alone demonic possessions.<sup>280</sup>

As analysed in Luke 11:20, the success of exorcisms was not based on specific prayers or invocations of the power-authority. It was *Yahweh* that demons fled from, and His authority and presence alone which they feared and obeyed. If Jesus is viewed as a mere miracle-worker, the search for a particular technique will be endless. Moreover, we shall be like Pharisees seeking for a sign. The only sign the evangelist shows is that God is with us. Luke also is clear about the methodology and the reason for Jesus' exorcisms: God's Son, empowered and full of the Holy Spirit, brings the satanic reign to an end by spreading and re-establishing Yahweh's ultimate rule and kingdom.<sup>281</sup>

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<sup>279</sup> Wright, N. T. *Jesus and the Victory of God*. p. 268.

<sup>280</sup> Hiers, 'Satan, Demons, and the Kingdom of God,' p. 42. Also see, Campbell, Colin. *Critical Studies in St Luke's Gospel Its Demonology and Ebionitism*. (Edinburgh and London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1891), p. 141.

<sup>281</sup> Maddox, Robert. *The Purpose of Luke-Acts*. (Edinburgh: Clark, 1985), p. 133.



Luke seals his perspective on exorcisms and Jesus' methodology in what he writes later in 11:24-26, which is the subject of the next analysis.

### 5.3 Luke 11:24-26

Following the Beelzebul controversy and the analysis of Jesus casting out demons by the power of the Spirit, we see Luke providing an astonishing conclusion as he builds the most solid foundation as to *how* an exorcism should be understood, and *what* its purpose is.

In Luke 11:24<sup>282</sup> we read:

When an unclean spirit has gone out of a person, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and finding none it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' And when it comes, it finds the house swept and put in order. Then it goes and brings seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they enter and dwell there. And the last state of that person is worse than the first.

In the LXX, the 'house' (gk. οἶκος) usually refers to an inhabited place, a house in the traditional sense.<sup>283</sup> In the verse quoted above, however, we see a metaphorical usage of the 'house', which has a twofold meaning: the nation of Israel, and a person's soul.

#### 5.3.1 House of Israel as a Nation

In the Gospels we see Jesus traveling from town to town, proclaiming the Good News and offering a spiritual cleansing to both the people of Israel and the Gentiles. In most cases,

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<sup>282</sup> The parallel passage is found both in Matthew and Luke, although for the purpose of this study we shall focus our attention only on Luke's perspective.

<sup>283</sup> E.g. Gen 12:17; Num 24:13; Jdg 9:5.

however, the restoration, which was meant to be preparatory, had stopped short, leaving Israel's house 'empty.'<sup>284</sup> This becomes more evident when compared to Matthew's wording in 12:45, which includes (whereas Luke omits) the phrase: 'So also will it be with this evil generation' (Matt 12:45). Race or generation (gk. γενεά) undoubtedly refers to the Jewish nation, which, according to Unger, had so obviously committed its crime and merited the word 'evil' by its appalling unbelief and rejection of its rightful Messiah.<sup>285</sup> Interestingly, Luke also used the term γενεά only in verse 29, where Jesus compares himself to Jonah and the people of Nineveh (Lk 11:29-32). Regarding the generation, which rejects both the signs and the prophet, Jesus says in verse 32:

The men of Nineveh will rise up at the judgment with generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here. (Lk 11:32).

Thus both Matthew and Luke, soon after the passage about the empty house and evil spirits returning with seven more, refer the passage to Israel's nation, who did not accept Jesus as the Messiah, and refused to repent. However, if the passage in Luke 11:24 is linked to the performance of the exorcism, how was this notion applied to Israel as a nation? We certainly do not see any evidence of Jesus casting out demonic spirits on a more global scale; for instance, on the entire nation.

As we saw in the previous analysis, Jesus did not follow any particular technique of casting out demonic spirits; neither for demonized individuals, nor for the multitude of

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<sup>284</sup> Pfeiffer, Charles F., and Everett Falconer Harrison. *Wycliffe Bible Commentary*. (Chicago, IL: Moody, 1962), p. 951.

<sup>285</sup> Unger, *Biblical Demonology*, p. 212.

people at once. The exorcisms were the symbols, or rather signs, of the spread of the kingdom through the power of Yahweh.<sup>286</sup> Therefore, as analysed above (see 2.2), Jesus was the kingdom.<sup>287</sup> He himself was the reason for demons to flee, both on individual and global levels. Jesus' presence, the Spirit of Yahweh within him, and the kingdom of God – the Good News – was the liberation Israel and each Jew and Gentile personally were offered. Frederick Bruner, commenting on the same scene in Matthew's accounts, agrees by suggesting that the cleansing of the house and the departure of the unclean spirit was not necessarily accomplished by an exorcism (although it is not excluded), but by the mere presence of Jesus either in some town in Israel, or a person's soul and life in particular.<sup>288</sup>

Viewing the text in a larger context, we can remember Moses leading the Israelites out of Egypt. In Exodus 12:12 we read:

For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and *on all the gods of Egypt* I will execute my judgments: I am the Lord.

The notion of other gods, other *elohim*,<sup>289</sup> being the main target is also evident in passages like Numbers 33:4: 'On their [Egyptians'] gods also the Lord executed judgments.' Other gods, the *elohim*, were not just divine beings who served Yahweh with devotion. Whereas the study of other *elohim*, and the nations being assigned to the authority of other gods is vast, for the sake of this research we will limit our perspective to the understanding that the *elohim* we

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<sup>286</sup> Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit*, p. 48.

<sup>287</sup> Schreiner, *The Kingdom of God and the Glory of the Cross*, p. 87.

<sup>288</sup> Bruner, Frederick Dale. *Matthew. A Commentary. Volume 1: Matthew 1- 12*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2004), p. 578.

<sup>289</sup> On the analysis of *elohim*, who are generally defined as 'lesser gods' assigned to rule the nations of the world see Heiser, *The Unseen Realm*, p. 150-151; and Stuckenbruck, *The Myth of Rebellious Angels*, p. 219-225.

read about in Exodus 12:12<sup>290</sup> are the supernatural beings who were not meant to be worshipped, and are considered to be demons.<sup>291</sup> The biblical support of the latter observation is found in Deuteronomy 32:17, which says: ‘They [the Israelites] sacrificed to demons [לַשִּׁדִּיִּם] that were no gods, to gods [אֱלֹהִים] they had never known.’ The author of Deuteronomy clearly identified the other *elohim* as *shedim*, which are known and translated as ‘demons.’<sup>292</sup> Demons, whom the nations of the world worshipped and followed. Therefore, in Exodus 12:12 we read of the proof that the plagues of Yahweh were not only aimed at Egyptians in particular but at the gods they represented and worshipped.<sup>293</sup> It was not the warfare against the humans, but rather, a spiritual warfare between the demonic realms and Yahweh.

However, the reason we see the exodus from Egypt being linked with Luke 11:24-26 is the response the Israelites give to God having witnessed his mighty acts against the Satanic reign. In Exodus 32 we read about the Israelites’ response to what they have witnessed: the golden calf was built. Both in the book of Exodus and Luke 11:24-26 the question is given by Moses to all: ‘Who is on the Lord’s side?’ (Exod 32:26). Yahweh is almighty and he destroyed the gods of Egypt (*shedim*) just as he cast out demons from the demonized. He needed no techniques or special methods to accomplish the latter. Therefore, the question at stake is the response of those who have been set free: ‘Who is on the Lord’s side?’ (Exod 32:26).

As we see in Luke 11:24-26, the physically and spiritually liberated nation had a choice to make: whether to accept Jesus and fill their ‘houses’ with Yahweh’s presence and Spirit, or suffer the condition which was worse than the first. As Heiser correctly observes,

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<sup>290</sup> Other examples about the ‘lesser elohim’ include: Judges 11:24; Psalm 82; 89:5-7; and 97:09.

<sup>291</sup> Heiser, *The Unseen Realm*, p. 33.

<sup>292</sup> Riley, G. J. ‘Demon,’ in *DDD (Dictionary of Deities and Demons)*, p. 238.

<sup>293</sup> Heiser, *The Unseen Realm*, p. 150.

‘The spiritual war brought on by the inauguration of the kingdom of God offers no neutrality.’<sup>294</sup> Thus Luke, just as Moses, calls the liberated and healed people to serve the kingdom of Yahweh, and follow only Him.

Thus it is evident the ‘house’ language in Luke 11:24 demonstrates much more than a parable about a demonized person and his liberation. It implied the whole nation of Israel and its rejection of the Messiah and his message.<sup>295</sup> Therefore, had Israelites accepted Jesus and the Good News, the liberation from the demonic strongholds would not have taken place through the performance of a national exorcism ritual. Along with the previous analysis, we again see the same pattern of exorcistic methodology – the acceptance of the Messiah and his kingdom would have been the point of liberation and salvation both from individual demonic possessions, and Satanic rulership over the nation.

### 5.3.2 Individual ‘House’

In addition to the term ‘house’ representing the whole nation of Israel, the context of Luke 11:24 may also imply the casting out of a demonic spirit from a demonized person.

The individual analysis provides more insight as to what Luke was saying regarding the swept house and spirits returning into it. To understand the context better, we must go back to v. 19, which states: ‘And if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out?’ As argued before, Jesus may not have viewed other Jewish exorcists as operating outside of God’s realm.

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<sup>294</sup> Heiser, *The Unseen Realm*, p. 343.

<sup>295</sup> Wright, N. T. *Jesus and the Victory of God*, p. 456.

Although scholars like Caragounis believe that Jesus' exorcisms were unique due to the fact that they lacked the features of other Jewish and Hellenistic exorcisms,<sup>296</sup> Twelftree disagrees by suggesting that the accusations of the Pharisees were directed not to the inbreaking of Yahweh's kingdom, but rather, to Jesus' source of power authority.<sup>297</sup> Thus, according to Twelftree, due to the fact that Jesus seems to be tolerating other exorcists (e.g. Lk 9:50), Q may be possibly implying that Jesus saw himself and other exorcists sharing the same power-authority.<sup>298</sup> However, if we read Luke 11:24-26 as implying the exorcism practice for a demonized *person*, the returning of the spirits and the possession of the house being more severe requires a more thorough examination of the issue.

The confusion between Jesus' exorcisms and those of his contemporaries arises when we think that Luke 11:24-26 presents the problem of *how* a proper exorcism should be performed. However, such assumptions are false. There is no doubt that in Gospel accounts Jewish exorcists were casting out demons by the power of Yahweh. This is clearly evident in Luke 11:24, where we read of the spirit departing from the house. As Stuckenbruck correctly notes, the problem of spirits returning lies not in the exorcistic technique, but in the absence of further means of prevention.<sup>299</sup> Such an idea presents an exorcism which is ineffectual, and it may have been addressed both to Jewish exorcists and Jesus' disciples as well.<sup>300</sup>

Klutz, on the other hand, proposes a different perspective by suggesting that if verse 24-26 refer to Jesus himself and his ministry, then they would imply that Jesus

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<sup>296</sup> Caragounis, C. C., 'Kingdom of God, Son of Man and Jesus' Self understanding' *Tynbul* 40, (1989). p. 230-231.

<sup>297</sup> Twelftree, *Jesus the Exorcist*, p. 107.

<sup>298</sup> Twelftree, *Jesus the Exorcist*, p. 107.

<sup>299</sup> Stuckenbruck, *The Myth of Rebellious Angels*, p. 175. Klutz also agrees with this notion by saying the following: 'While they admirably drove out unclean spirits in certain cases (Luke 11.19), they unfortunately did nothing to prevent them from returning and causing an even worse state of affairs (Luke 11.24-26).' See: Klutz, *Society For New Testament Studies Monograph Series* 129, (2004), p. 133.

<sup>300</sup> Stuckenbruck, *The Myth of Rebellious Angels*, p. 175.

saw these healers as giving their patients no reorientation of eschatology, no reconceptualisation of impurity, and no programme of post-exorcism resocialisation comparable to what he himself provided.<sup>301</sup>

Whether the verses 24-26 were directed only to Jewish exorcists or also to the disciples of Christ, the main idea is clear: an exorcism was purposeless unless it offered an alternative and a liberation which was more than a one-time miracle.

In addition, this short-term effect of exorcistic practices does not fit within the entire analysis of how Jesus understood exorcisms and what they were meant to convey. As Wright suggests,

if Jesus really thought that this would be the long-term effect of the exorcisms he was performing, then his claim that he had won a decisive battle, and that he was now conducting exorcisms on that basis, would be called into serious question. Indeed, if this were the case, it would be better not to perform exorcisms at all.<sup>302</sup>

Therefore, in verses 24-26 Jesus does not talk about a badly performed exorcism. Rather, about the misconception of what an exorcism is in the first place. The key to the problem is not the success or failure of the casting out of demons, but, as Bock proposes, the failure to ‘respond to God’s work’, which leaves the demonized in an even worse position than before.<sup>303</sup> The latter observation refers back to Luke 10:20, when Jesus specifically instructs his disciples not to rejoice because of the departure of demons, but rather, because their

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<sup>301</sup> Klutz, Todd. ‘The Exorcism Stories in Luke–Acts.’ p. 132.

<sup>302</sup> Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, p. 455-6.

<sup>303</sup> Bock, *Jesus According to Scripture*, p. 194

names are written in heaven, and that they belong to the kingdom of Yahweh. Analysing this particular scene, Meier notes that no human being can be in a neutral state and freely choose to be free of the supernatural forces.<sup>304</sup> The author also adds the following: ‘One was dominated by either one or the other, and to pass *from* one was necessarily to pass *into* the control of the other.’<sup>305</sup> Therefore it is evident that an exorcism was not about *casting out a demon* in particular, but about repenting, accepting God’s rule,<sup>306</sup> and filling the ‘swept’ and cleansed lives and houses with obedience and service to Yahweh alone.

The evidence analysed above shows that Jesus did not see the main purpose of the exorcism to be the casting out of a demon. This explains the lack of technique or particular methodology in his approach to exorcisms; meaning that he did not offer a *cure* full of incantations and spells. He offered *himself*. As a result, the demon is not the main subject of the story. According to Twelftree, what is at stake in Luke 11:24-26 is the ‘house.’<sup>307</sup> Jesus was not concerned about the miraculous exorcisms which would leave his audience in awe. His main concern was people’s hearts and their repentance.

In spiritual warfare, neutrality, as mentioned above, is impossible. In the battle between Christ and Satan, the people’s choice was vital, and especially after they had been personally liberated from the demonic oppression.<sup>308</sup> It is a mistake, therefore, to see an exorcism as a one-time act of liberation. On the contrary, it was a daily, ongoing spiritual warfare between two kingdoms and two rulers. As Leon Morris suggests, ‘Throughout this entire section [Luke 11:14-26] the theme is the conflict with Satan, and this is not an isolated

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<sup>304</sup> Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus*. Vol II, p. 415.

<sup>305</sup> Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus*. Vol II, p. 415.

<sup>306</sup> Evans, Craig A. ‘Inaugurating the Kingdom of God and Defeating the Kingdom of Satan.’, p. 72.

<sup>307</sup> Twelftree, *Jesus the Exorcist*, p. 112.

<sup>308</sup> Zuck, Roy B., and John F. Walvoord. *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament*. (Colorado Springs, CO: David C Cook, 1983), p. 236.



incident. There is a continuing warfare, a battle which does not cease.’<sup>309</sup> The idea that in Luke 11:24-26 Jesus emphasizes more the *filling* of the house with Yahweh’s Spirit than the *emptying* of it is also supported by Bruner, who states: ‘Our empty, swept, tidy houses will be filled sooner or later by something, because houses are for occupancy.’<sup>310</sup> Although several views exist regarding what Luke could have implied by the ‘house’,<sup>311</sup> Wright, along with other scholars mentioned above, is inclined to see the whole passage as Jesus’ warning that even if the house is cleaned up, none of the methods other than the Spirit of Yahweh could prevent demons from coming back with even greater force.<sup>312</sup>

In Luke 11:24 we encounter a peculiar term, which clarifies the meaning of the passage even more. The phrase ‘I will return’ in Greek is ὑποστρέφω. Whereas Matthew 12:44 has ἐπιστρέψω, the usage of ὑποστρέφω by Luke is most likely reflecting the author’s style of rhetoric since he uses it twenty-one times in his Gospel accounts, whereas Matthew never uses the term.<sup>313</sup> However, according to Bock, although the concept of ‘returning’ in Luke 11:24-26 refers to evil spirits, in New Testament accounts the idea of ‘returning’ is more common in regards to the Holy Spirit residing ‘in a believer or in the community of believers (1 Cor 3:16; 2 Cor 6:6; Eph 2:22).’<sup>314</sup> Interestingly, what is implied in the above observations is that Luke may have had in mind the possibility and a chance of return of a spirit other than demonic; namely, the Holy Spirit. According to Twelftree, Jesus ‘thought that the destruction of Satan’s kingdom in an individual was only part of the ministry of exorcism,’ and that ‘there needed to follow the coming of the Holy Spirit to the individual’s

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<sup>309</sup> Morris, Leon. *The Cross In The New Testament*. (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1965), p. 96.

<sup>310</sup> Bruner, *Matthew. A Commentary. Volume 1, the Churchbook: Matthew 1- 12*, p. 579.

<sup>311</sup> N.T. Wright proposes several: the movement of the Maccabean revolt in order to ‘clean the house’; Herod’s massive building plans, which produces a ‘house’ great in magnitude, but in which Yahweh did not dwell; and even some reforming movements within the Judaism. See more in: Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, p. 456.

<sup>312</sup> Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, p. 456.

<sup>313</sup> Bock, *Luke, V.2: 9:51-24:53*, p. 1091.

<sup>314</sup> Bock, *Luke, V.2: 9:51-24:53*, p. 1091.

life.’<sup>315</sup> In Luke’s perspective, therefore, provided that he often uses the language of being filled with the Spirit (e.g. Lk 1:15, 41, 67; 4:1),<sup>316</sup> the key to understanding exorcisms of Jesus was not the departure of evil spirits, but the response and the acceptance of the Holy Spirit in one’s ‘house.’

The analysis provided in this section, therefore, proves that the key to answering the question of *how* Jesus performed an exorcism is to see the bigger picture of the phenomena and ask *why*. Jesus was not a magician or a shaman who demonstrated a technique of exorcisms that no one else knew about.<sup>317</sup> The greater perspective on the spiritual warfare provides evidence that Jesus did not see exorcisms as one-time<sup>318</sup> miracles achieved by a special technique at all.

In the study of the ‘house’, which represents both the nation of Israel and an individual soul, we see Jesus offering something greater than just a liberation to a demonized person, or a proof of the victory over Satan.<sup>319</sup> Through the Spirit of God working within him (*how*),<sup>320</sup> Jesus was offering a place in the kingdom of Yahweh (*why*). According to Dunn, he was showing that the kingdom was present wherever the Spirit that was working within him was present.<sup>321</sup> However, as we saw earlier, Twelftree sees the exorcisms of Jesus to consist of three elements: Jesus (*I*), the Spirit, and the kingdom of God.<sup>322</sup> The two perspectives are not opposed to each other. Rather, they complete the understanding of the exorcisms, since

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<sup>315</sup> Twelftree, *Triumphant*, p. 82.

<sup>316</sup> Marshall, Howard I., *The Gospel of Luke: a Commentary on the Greek Text*. (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2008), p. 199.

<sup>317</sup> Stuckenbruck, *The Myth of Rebellious Angels*, p. 184.

<sup>318</sup> On seeing life with and acceptance of Jesus as depending on a one-time event see Schreiner, Thomas R. *New Testament Theology: Magnifying God in Christ*. (Nottingham: Apollos, 2008), p. 547.

<sup>319</sup> Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit*, p. 48

<sup>320</sup> Swartley, Willard M. *Essays on Spiritual Bondage and Deliverance*. (Elkhart, IN: Institute of Mennonite Studies, 1988), p. 19.

<sup>321</sup> Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit*, p. 49.

<sup>322</sup> Twelftree, *Jesus the Exorcist*, p. 108.

all three factors were inseparable.<sup>323</sup> In other words, the inbreaking of the kingdom, the power of the Spirit and Jesus, Yahweh incarnate, can be summarized as follows: God is present.

Through exorcisms, as Schreiner suggests and as we saw before, ‘Jesus contests Satan,’ and thus crushes his kingdom with the ‘kingdom of Yahweh.’<sup>324</sup> Satan, therefore, was being overcome by *Yahweh himself*. Schreiner also supports Origen’s view, who also saw Jesus as *αὐτόβασίλεια*.<sup>325</sup> Although scholars like Bultmann see interpretation of Luke 11:24-26 as offering a caution warning regarding the demonic powers,<sup>326</sup> what Jesus implied was greater than a one-time liberation from the demonic oppression or warning against the spirits which might come back if precautions are not taken.

Both for the whole nation of Israel and each individual in particular, Jesus was offering the same power which was operating within him – the Spirit of Yahweh.<sup>327</sup> It was meant to be accepted by the people, in order to take part in the kingdom of God and belong to Him. The importance of Yahweh’s presence in a nation and a person’s life and heart is one of the most important reoccurring themes in the Old and New Testaments, and it inevitably brings us back to the choice between Yahweh and idols, kingdom of God and kingdom of Satan, and the ultimate decision whom to serve and how to live.

#### 5.4 Luke 11:23

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<sup>323</sup> This is inevitably linked with the Trinitarian theology, which can be best describes in the following way: The Father is Yahweh, and Jesus, the embodiment of Yahweh, *is but isn’t* the ‘Father’ Yahweh, as well as Spirit *is but isn’t* Yahweh. See: Heiser, *The Unseen Realm*, p. 294.

<sup>324</sup> Schreiner, *The Kingdom of God and the Glory of the Cross*, p. 89.

<sup>325</sup> Malaty, Tadrous Y. *The School of Alexandria*. (Jersey City, NJ: Coptic Orthodox Church, 1995), p. 467.

<sup>326</sup> Bultmann, *History of the Synoptic Tradition*, p. 164.

<sup>327</sup> Hiers, ‘Satan, Demons, and the Kingdom of God.’, p. 47.

The key element and the conclusion to the analysis above comes from Luke 11:23, which says: ‘Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.’ This saying in the Gospel of Luke, which follows Q, most likely refers to exorcisms since it is carefully ‘sandwiched’ between the Beelzebul controversy (which includes the sayings about the strong man) and Jesus’ teaching about the ‘house’ and the departing and the coming back of the evil spirits.<sup>328</sup> As both Twelftree and Green note, the saying in v. 23 clearly calls the readers to choose sides.<sup>329</sup> As seen previously, Jesus’ exorcisms in essence were a call not only to be liberated, but also to join God’s kingdom, be filled with the Holy Spirit, and follow Jesus by being God’s people and His representatives. Verse 23, therefore, placed in between the two sayings by design, provides a stunning conclusion as to what Jesus is talking about in verse 14-22 and 24-26.

As Wright observes, it also suggests a warning regarding neutrality: ‘those who are not joining in this battle are fighting on the enemy’s side.’<sup>330</sup> Neutrality is an issue we already touched upon, and it clearly seems to be one of the key warnings in Luke 11:14-26. As Bock notes, in verse 23 Jesus is straightforward about the issue: ‘when it comes to deciding about Jesus, there is no neutral ground.’<sup>331</sup> However, this verse and its idea of neutrality<sup>332</sup> propose a problem which is linked to Luke 9:50, where we read: ‘But Jesus said to him, “Do not stop him, for the one who is not against you is for you.”’ The passages (11:23 and 9:50) may seem to contradict each other,<sup>333</sup> although it is not the case. As Ryle proposes, in Lk 9:50 Jesus is

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<sup>328</sup> Twelftree, *In the Name of Jesus*, p. 96.

<sup>329</sup> Twelftree, *In the Name of Jesus*, p. 96; and Green, Joel, B. *The Gospel of Luke*. (Grand Rapids and Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 1997), p. 458.

<sup>330</sup> Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, p. 453.

<sup>331</sup> Bock, Darrell L. *Luke, V.2: 9:51-24:53*, p. 1084.

<sup>332</sup> Many scholars agree that verse 23 is referring directly to neutrality. Besides the scholars already mentioned in the project, see, Morris, Leon. *Luke: An Introduction and Commentary. Vol. 3. Tyndale New Testament Commentaries*. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), p. 217; and Butler, Trent C. *Luke. Vol. 3. Holman New Testament Commentary*. (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000), p. 187.

<sup>333</sup> Osborne, *Luke*, p. 307

speaking of those who work against the same enemy, although may not do that ‘in the wisest way.’<sup>334</sup> In Luke 11:23, however, Jesus addresses a different audience – those who ‘refused to join him and become his disciples.’<sup>335</sup> Therefore, speaking of two different classes of persons, Jesus was not contradicting himself, but rather – conveying the same idea of *choosing sides*.

In addition, the words ‘whoever does not gather [gk. *συνάγων*] with me scatters’ may refer the reader to the Lk. 15:3-7, where we read of the sheep being gathered, and the shepherd watching over them so that none would be lost.<sup>336</sup> Plummer, however, expands the interpretation, and connects the term *συνάγων*, used in verse 23, to the passage from Lk. 12:17-18, where we find the same term (gk. *συνάξω*) and the same idea of ‘gathering.’<sup>337</sup> The term *σκοπίζει* appears in LXX to refer to the eschatological scattering and gathering of the people of God.<sup>338</sup> As both Twelftree and C. F. Evans note, Isaiah 40:10-11 is the perfect example of that as the verses present a clear transition ‘from God as the mighty one with his spoil – the rescued exiles – to that of shepherd gathering Israel.’<sup>339</sup> Thus, both scattering and gathering terminology inevitably points to the eschatological battle, which was already present during the exorcisms of Jesus. The disciples and followers of Christ, therefore, as noted before, were not engaging only in one-time miraculous healings and exorcisms. It was, rather, a call to be gathered back to the kingdom and rulership of Yahweh, to make a choice, and serve only Him.

The passage from Luke 11:23, therefore, shows once again the true purpose of the exorcism. Once more it draws us back to the conclusion that it was not *how* but *why* were

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<sup>334</sup> Ryle, J. C. *Expository Thoughts on Luke*. (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 2012), p. 28.

<sup>335</sup> Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on Luke*, p. 28.

<sup>336</sup> Osborne, *Luke: Verse by Verse*, p. 307.

<sup>337</sup> Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary*, p. 303.

<sup>338</sup> E.g. Ezek 5:12; Zech. 11:16; Isa. 11:12; Ezek. 34:12-13.

<sup>339</sup> Twelftree, *In the Name of Jesus*, p. 96. See also, C. F. Evans, *Saint Luke*. (London: SCM; Philadelphia: TPI, 1990), 493.

disciples to exorcise and engage in this form of spiritual warfare. It was not to be miracle-workers, but to spread God's already-and-not-yet kingdom and rule, re-gather the scattered people and nations, and thus proclaim the Good News of what has come and what is yet to take place in the final eschatological battle, when Satan is finally defeated.

## 5.5 Conclusion

In the analysis of Luke 11:14-26 we saw the grand conclusion as to how Luke saw Jesus' exorcistic mission, and how he meant it to be understood and used by his followers. The study of the Beelzebul controversy (Lk 11:14-19), connection between exorcisms and the coming of the kingdom of God (Lk 11:20-23), and the return of the unclean spirit into an empty house (Lk 11:24-26) showed us that an exorcism was never to be understood as a one-time miraculous act. Neither Jesus Christ nor the evangelists saw exorcisms as merely 'healings' or acts of 'liberation' from demonic oppressions. In other words, the essential key was not to be liberated *from*, but what to be called *into*.

From the analysis of Luke 11:20 we learned that Jesus' exorcisms were a call to join God's kingdom, to choose Him, and to become His children. Satan and demons were not opposed to a particular technique of exorcism, they were opposed to Jesus Christ, Yahweh's Spirit, and the kingdom which was now being spread through word and deed. It was the presence of Yahweh and his Holy Spirit in the Son that cast the demons out, and what Jesus' disciples and those liberated from demonic powers were to do was to choose to join God's kingdom, and engage in the spiritual warfare by spreading the kingdom of God further.

Luke 11:23, therefore, placed in-between two significant scenes (Luke 11:14-22, and Luke 11:24-26), calls the listeners and the liberated to choose Jesus, Yahweh's kingdom, and to be filled with his Holy Spirit not to be freed for a short while from a demonic possession, but to partake in an everlasting victory over the entire kingdom and rulership of Satan. Thus,

through exorcism as one of the means, the spread of the kingdom of Yahweh and the re-gathering of the nations and individual people was to take place, and God's rulership established forevermore.

## Chapter 6. Conclusions

The study of Jesus' methodology of exorcism in the Gospel of Luke presented in this project forms a clear picture of what the definition of an exorcism was in the minds of Jesus and his followers. The questions raised in this project led us to the answers about the true purpose of the performance of the exorcism, as well as what the true meaning behind the act of spiritual liberation was.

First, by analysing such material as the *Magical Papyri*, *The Book of Tobit*, the Testament of Solomon and others, we looked at the topic of how an exorcism was understood in the time of Jesus and what methodologies were either common or in use. As planned in the beginning, this created a picture for us as to how Jesus' exorcisms fit into or contradicted the methodologies used at the time. Jesus' methodology did not match any of the exorcistic techniques used either before or during the Messiah's life on earth. In light of the latter study, we observed that Jesus' methodology did not contain any specific incantations or rites. This picture helped us better understand how Jesus' exorcisms must have been viewed in first-century Palestine.

Another topic analysed in this project was the Name of Yahweh and Jesus. The arguments presented were the key elements to understand the relationship between demons being cast out and Jesus disciples using the name of Jesus (Mk 16:17; Lk 10:17; Acts 19:13). As studied in chapter 3, to use the name of Yahweh meant much more than just to identify

the syllables and the sounds of the actual name. It implied identification and the glorification of it. As is evident both in Old and New Testaments, the name was the personification of Yahweh and Jesus. The names Yahweh and Jesus were not used as magical spells or incantations. On the contrary, to *know* the name and use it, meant having a relationship with God, based on utter submission and reliance on His will alone. The latter was particularly evident in the analysis of Acts 19:13-16, and the examination of the passage showed that using the name of Jesus meant carrying his name as his true representatives by glorifying and serving him, by spreading his word and his kingdom.

As we turned to the study of the methodology of exorcisms found in the Gospel according to Luke, we saw that the Messiah came to earth not with tricks or spells, but with power (gk. δύναμις), authority (gk. ἐξουσία), and the kingdom (gk. βασιλεία) of Yahweh itself. From the analysis of Jesus' temptations in the desert to Jesus' proclamation that his exorcisms signified the coming of the kingdom of Yahweh (Lk. 11:20), we observed how Luke developed and unfolded Jesus' exorcistic mission, and connected it with the inbreaking and the spread of God's kingdom. Jesus' exorcisms, therefore, called his followers and the liberated ones to step into the kingdom of Yahweh. He clearly instructed not to rejoice because demons were subject to them, but because they were Yahweh's children who belonged to his kingdom (Lk. 10:20). This was said to emphasize the greater purpose of the exorcisms, which exceeded mere singular acts of liberation or miracles.

The re-gathering of the nations, the mission against the Satanic kingdom and its powers, and the beginning of the final defeat was explicitly unfolded in Jesus' exorcisms. It was not the techniques or carefully designed prayers that would spread Yahweh's reign and kingdom until the final judgement, but rather – the Spirit which was working both in Jesus and in his followers. It was God himself who would work through people, cast demons out, and bring about the spread of his Gospel and liberation to the oppressed, possessed, and lost



ones. The fall of the Satanic reign has begun (Lk 10:18), and it was not by means of human techniques, but by the power of the Spirit of Yahweh, who dwells in and keeps both His church and each individual personally. The analysis of the disciples not being able to cast out a demon (Luke 9:40) is a perfect example of that. It was not merely prayer or fasting that the Apostles lacked (Matt. 17:19-20; Mk. 9:28-29; Lk 9:37-41). As Bruner notes, neither faith nor prayer trusts its own competence, as both aspects imply strong reliance on Yahweh alone.<sup>340</sup> It was God's power in his disciples and followers that could drive demons out and spread the kingdom of Yahweh. Jesus' words to exorcise demons mainly included 'rebuke' (gk. ἐπετίμησεν), and his commands (gk. παραγγέλλω). He did not need techniques to cast the demons out. He, being God in the flesh, had all authority and power, which was used not to showcase the miracles he was able to do, but to begin the re-establishment of Yahweh's rulership and kingdom.

Thus, in light of the study done in this project, the question of *how* Jesus performed his exorcism, has led us to see a more important question – *why*. The two aspects are not mutually exclusive, since both served the same purpose. His presence, word and power, which he displayed in casting evil spirits out, proved that he was more than a miracle-worker. His mission was greater, which leads to see his means – the presence of the King entailed the coming of his kingdom. Therefore, Jesus' entire methodology of exorcism consisted only of *who* he was, and *what* he came to do.

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<sup>340</sup> Bruner, *Matthew 1–12*, p. 402. Reliance on the Lord only is a constantly reoccurring theme in the OT as well. E.g. Exod 14:14; Deut 1:30; Ps 81:13–14.

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