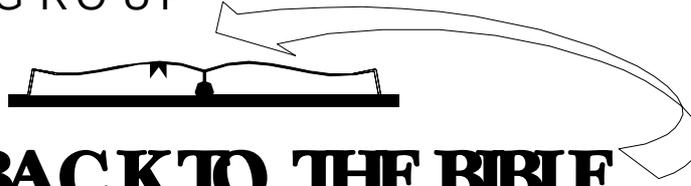


WORKGROUP



BACK TO THE BIBLE

Biblestudy about demons part nr. 3 by pastor ing.R.v.d.Kraats Kampen, 2012

Lesson nr. **3**

Dear brothers, sisters, pastors and elders,

Warm greetings in the name of Jesus. We'll continue to discuss in this letter, the place of demons, in the life of a born-again Christian. In our previous letters we saw that it is possible for satan to place one or more demons in a person's life. This possession can only take place in non-Christians. If such a person seeks help from the Lord then the pastor or elder who is involved should cast the demon out. This sounds very simple but it isn't. Those with such a pastoral responsibility need to be prepared by the Lord and receive wisdom from Him.

In the previous letters we explained that it is very improbable unlikely that a born again Christian can be possessed or bound by a demon. The Bible doesn't give us any grounds to believe that it could be so and when we take a closer look at the "indwelling" demons we recognise the works of the flesh as described in Galatians 5:19-21. The Bible does assure us that all who repent and turn to Christ are set free from the power of sin. By means of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit sanctification begins in the persons life and so satan has less and less chance to have a hold over him. Some of you have written to us asking about certain Bible verses, which seem to point to the possibility that a Christian can be bound or possessed. We have suggested, in our answer, to read Albert Dager's study. A copy is available at our address and is actually an extension of this letter. It's impossible to thoroughly cover such a subject in a letter. Nearly all the verses in question are dealt with in his study.

In this letter we will cover the aspect of "indwelling family demons" and living under a curse, which has been placed upon born-again Christians or inherited from ancestors. Albert Dager's study is also very helpful on this topic.(see address at the end of this letter)

Did satan become king of the world after the Fall?

The main source of information about The Fall and the consequences of this, are found in Genesis. Here we read: *"So the Lord said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all the livestock and all the wild animals.....And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."* (Gen. 3:14-15).

The serpent, a metaphor for satan, didn't receive a higher position from God. The very opposite happened. He was cursed. God ordained that the relationship between man and satan be one of hostility. Satan's position became the very lowest, as man will crush his head. This is very painful for man, as the serpent will strike his heel. This became and is the relationship between man and the devil. There is enmity, a deadly serious enmity. There are Christians who believe that the above mentioned verses are a prophecy of the redeeming work of Christ. This is called the pre-gospel. These two interpretations don't contradict each other but rather confirm one another. Jesus said in a discussion with the Jews: *"You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire"*. (John 8:44) Here we see the huge influence that the devil holds over man. He leads people to sin and that's why God has cursed him. Nowhere is it suggested that satan has been given the authority over the earth which man had been given. The same is true concerning Adam. We do not read in Genesis that his authority over the earth was removed from him. In Gen.9:1-2 God confirms it again when He says: *"Then God blessed Noah and his sons, saying to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth. The fear and dread of you will fall upon all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air, upon every creature that moves along the ground, and upon all the fish of the sea; they are given into your hands"*. David writes the following in Psalm 8:6: *"You made him ruler over the works of Your hands; You put everything under his feet"*

We would be honouring satan tremendously if we believed that he had taken over Adam's position, after the Fall. He doesn't deserve any honour. God Himself cursed him in Paradise. This is an important fact as there are Christians who believe that God lost His authority over the earth to satan when the devil got the victory over Adam at the Fall. Since then, they conclude, God has been doing His best to retrieve what He lost. In letter 8 of Feb. 28 1997 we wrote about this being taught by E.W. Kenyon. He believes that it wasn't until the crucifixion that God retrieved His power. For this, Jesus had to descend into hell, fight with the devil and arise victorious by His resurrection. This is not true and blasphemous. God has never lost His power to satan. He is high and lifted up above everything and everyone. Throughout the whole Bible He is proclaimed as King and honoured as such. The Psalms speak much about His power and kingship. We'll mention just two here: *"God reigns over the nations"* Ps.47:8- *"The Lord reigns, He is robed in majesty"*. Ps.93:1 At Calvary, God placed all the sins of the world upon His Son. Satan lost his power over man when Jesus died and rose

again on the third day. Man could now be forgiven for his sins by putting his trust in the perfect work of Christ and also be set free from the power of sin by accepting Him as his personal Saviour.

The situation therefore, is as follows: God was and is and will be King of the world; after the Fall man kept his position of authority, responsible to God; man has sadly failed in his responsibilities; he kept sinning by listening to his own sinful flesh and the temptations of satan; the relationship with God was a damaged one; because of Jesus Christ's sacrifice on Calvary the relationship was restored; satan's role was only that of tempter; he desperately tries to catch as many people as possible, one way being to have demons living in people; there is, thanks to Christ's victory at Calvary deliverance from demon possession; born-again Christians don't need to be afraid of demon possession as they have been ransomed. Why then is there still a problem with ancestral demons?

Ancestral demons and/or bondage.

It often happens in deliverance meetings and in pastoral care that demons connected to ancestors are cast out of Christians. It is believed that certain problems that one has, are because of demons, which have been inherited and have now lodged themselves in the person. The Englishman, Derek Prince describes, in his latest book, (1998) his personal discovery of a family demon. He calls it an oppressive demon, which he inherited from his father. He writes: *"This new insight made me realise that this terribly "dark spirit" had followed me all my life from the time I was a child".* *1 In the same book he also writes: *"I have discovered that often babies are demonised while they are still in the womb. This is especially true for those with links with eastern religions,..."*. Derek Prince suggests the possibility that the influence of satan can reach over four generations; parents, grandparents, great-grandparents and great-great-grandparents.

The well-known American, Neil T. Anderson asks those who come to him for help to make certain declarations, such as: *"I here and now reject and disown all the sins of my ancestors. As one who has been delivered from the power of darkness and been translated into the Kingdom of God's dear Son, I cancel out all demonic working that may have been passed on to me from my ancestors."*

Joost Verduijn from the Centre for Pastoral Counselling asks the following question in his new book: *"How can a child be bound demonically when he hasn't yet reached an age of distinction and hasn't been involved with occultism?"*

The American couple, Charles and Frances Hunter also believe that a child even from the time of birth can have a demon. They write in their book, "How to heal the sick" the following: *"It is possible for demons to be present at our birth or when we were being formed in the womb and this can cause problems in our development. Seeing, they are spirits who live eternally they transfer from one generation to the next and can cause sickness and handicaps via genes and disfigurement."*

And so, we could go on. Practically all deliverance preachers and a number of pastors who are involved in this ministry believe that counselees can be possessed or bound by demons from earlier generations.

Far-reaching conclusions.

If this is true then, it means that every mother and every father needs to be prepared for the possibility that their baby will be born possessed or bound by a demon. This applies to Christian couples too. When one peeps into the cot it must be realised that although we see such a lovely baby he could have one or more demons living in him. Grandparents can't be certain either that their grandchildren are free from demons. Even great-grandparents have cause for apprehension. It is possible that they are to blame for the baby being possessed. Derek Prince believes that it can be traced back to great-great-grandparents. The Canadian deliverance preacher, Ray McGraw recommends tracing it back to the tenth generation.

The question, which now arises is, when does the demon move from the one generation to the next. Could it be at the conception when the ovum fuses with the semen, or could it be whilst the foetus is developing in the womb or could it be later at birth? If the demon moves on from generation to generation, does that mean that the older generation are then set free? This would mean deliverance for one generation and disaster for the other. We do assume that it's not possible for a demon to multiply itself and possess more people at the same time.

Another question, which arises is, who has passed on the demon? Did it come from the father's side or from the mother's? If it is decided that a child is possessed then it will also be necessary to know who the "guilty" one is. The same problem arises with an adult who is possessed. Which of the parents, grandparents or great-grandparents is responsible for this? This can bring a lot of tension in a marriage and in a family.

Maybe some of you are thinking that we are exaggerating and making a fool of things. This is absolutely not true. We are seriously studying a teaching, which at the moment is very popular in churches. We mustn't give up using our brains. On the contrary we need to seriously put our minds to work. To underline this, we will quote several Bible passages:

"Give me understanding, and I will keep Your law" Ps. 119:34; "a man of understanding keeps a straight course" Prov.15:21; "but let him who boasts boast about this: that he understands and knows Me..."Jer.9:24; "Everyone who heard Him was amazed at His understanding and His answers" Luke 2:47; "In regard to evil be infants, but in your thinking be adults" 1 Cor. 14:20; "Prepare your minds for action" 1 Peter 1:13.

Not to use our intellect in spiritual matters is unbiblical. It is also unbiblical to only use our intellect and disregard the spiritual. They are both necessary.

What does the Bible say about "indwelling" demons via ancestors?

Most of the deliverance preachers are convinced that their teaching is based on scripture. They nearly all would point to the passage in Exodus 20:3-5 which says: *"You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sins of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me"* It is very important that we take time to study this passage.

** This passage is part of the Ten Commandments, this being the third one.

The Ten Commandments, or the Law, was written by God Himself on two tablets of stone and given to Israel by Moses. Jesus summed up the Law in the following way: *"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind...Love your neighbour as yourself"*. Matt.22:37-40. Our passage, the third commandment, is summarised by Jesus in the first part. It is clear that this passage in Exodus is a very important one.

** Those who believe that family demons can be inherited, see in the sentence, " I, the Lord your God, am a jealous god, punishing the children for the sins of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me" enough biblical proof for this. They claim that for the father's sin, the children, the grandchildren and the great-grandchildren are also punished. Unfortunately, we haven't been able to

find any argument to back this up in their books. They simply point to this passage and give no further comment. The sin, which the text is talking about is the sin of idolatry. The prophets, Jeremiah and Ezekiel describe this in detail. Here follows a summary: sacrifices to idols on the high places; worship of man-made idols of wood, silver, gold or other materials; worship of moon and sun; burning of incense to idols on the temple walls; placement of a huge idol in the temple; sacrifice of children on altars; burning of living children as offer to Molech. The prophets wrote that Israel's sin of idolatry was far greater than that of their

heathen neighbours. God describes the people who do such things as those

who hate Him. They hate God and serve their own idols to such an extent

that they even are prepared to murder their own children. According to our text

in Ex.20:4-6 and Deut.5:8-11, such people will be punished by God.

** What does it mean when God says: "punishing the children for the sins of

the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me"?

Does this mean, He punishes the children because of the sins of their fathers, even when they themselves are innocent? Is this the train of thought which we find in the Bible? Does God punish the innocent? The answer is, no, God only punishes the guilty! This is proclaimed through

out the whole Bible. If in a particular situation God has to punish, He saves the righteous first. Examples of this are: Noah and his family in the Flood; Lot and His daughters in Sodom and Gomorrah; Rahab and family;

Ezekiel describes in a vision how a man dressed in linen had to go through Jerusalem and place a mark on the foreheads of the righteous before God's anger fell on the idolaters. Ez.9. There are many more examples which together make for a certainty that it is not possible for God to punish the innocent.

** If God only punishes the guilty how do we explain this verse: "punishing the children for the sins of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of

those who hate Me"? Taking into account the above we can only conclude that the children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren were also guilty. Like their fathers they too served idols. This is often the same for us, we too, follow the bad examples we see. In Old Testament times this was even more true as family ties were much closer. Often four generations lived together and were closely knitted together. The great-grandchild saw, in a manner of speaking, his great-grandfather sinning through idolatry. Because of this joined sin God punished them both.

There

is no unfairness in this.

** The prophet, Ezekiel dedicates a whole chapter to the responsibility of each individual for his own sin. He writes that a father can't carry the burden of his son's sins and the son can't be punished for the sins of his father. In a couple of these passages he says this: *"But suppose this son has a son who sees all the sins his father commits, and though he sees them, he does not do such things: He does not eat at the mountain shrines*

or look to the idols of the house of Israel.....He will not die for his father's sins; he will surely live. Ez.18:14-18....."Yet you ask, 'Why does the son not share the guilt of his father?' Since the son has done what is just and right and has been careful to keep all my decrees, he will surely live." Ez.18:19. The kings of Israel are an example of this. We read in the Bible that sometimes a king did evil in the eyes of the Lord but their son did right in the eyes of the Lord. But we also read that sometimes a king served the Lord and his son followed idols. Undoubtedly, Ezekiel had this in mind when he wrote chapter 18. The writers of Kings and Chronicles didn't mention that demons were first

cast

out of the king or son before they could serve the Lord.

** The third commandment of the Ten Commandments, says the following:

"punishing the children for the sins of the fathers...." It doesn't say: because of the sins of the fathers the children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren will have demons living in them. Hermeneutically it is like

jumping into deep water without being able to swim. There is no mention

whatsoever, of demons in the whole of chapter 20. This goes for practically

all of the Old Testament. There is written a lot about sin and unrighteousness

but not about demons, which through their indwelling cause men to sin. It

is written that God visits those who sin with punishment. In the Old Testament the words, visit and visitation, are used forty five times. It always is meant literally. In Judges 15:1 Samson visits his wife and in Psalm 65:9 AV, God visits the land and blesses it. In both cases the Hebrew word for visit is the same.

** The majority of these visitations bring disaster. He punishes sinners, such

as the Israelites, in our text, who were guilty of terrible idolatry. God's visitations to people also bring salvation. It is very clearly stated in the second part of our text: *"showing love to thousands who love Me and keep My commandments."* It is therefore, clearly impossible to defend the teaching of family demons based on this text.

** We will drop this subject now and go on to the question of curses in the life of a born-again Christian. Let's look, first of all, at a few statements from deliverance preachers.

"Blessing or Curse" book of Derek Prince 1991.

It says in the foreword the following: *"In 1978, not long before our marriage, Derek and I were lying on the beach at Fort Lauderdale in Florida. I said to Derek: 'would you pray for my legs? They are so painful.' Immediately, he knelt down and laid his hands on my calves and began to speak to them: 'thank you, legs. I want you to know that I really appreciate you. You've safely brought Ruth everywhere where she needed to be and now you have brought her to me. Legs, thanks very much!' I thought this was a very peculiar way for a serious Bible teacher to pray for his fiancée! But the pain disappeared. Later Derek told me what he could remember about it. He had, through his words, rectified something, which I had perhaps, said about my legs. I remembered something, which had happened in the girl's dressing room at school, at the age of fifteen or sixteen. Another girl came in and began to comb her hair. I looked at her lovely legs and then compared my own and said: 'I hate my legs!' I had actually cursed my own legs!... Nine years later, I was being rushed by ambulance to a hospital in Jerusalem with thrombosis in both legs.....It seems there was still a curse on my legs-and maybe on my whole body. The deliverance from the self-inflicted curse was just the beginning of the process. The Holy Spirit revealed to me curses from previous generations through occultism, curses from specific sins and many other things."*

What does curse or to be cursed mean?

Prof. Sterkenburg wrote a book in 1997 containing of no less than 440 pages on the subject of curses. It is only sensible to look at his findings when dealing with this subject. First of all it's important to state clearly that we will not cover this subject in its broadest sense. We are not concerned here with cursing in the sense of, taking the name of the Lord in vain. There is a well-known establishment here in the Netherlands who has been protesting against this, for already eighty years now. We are dealing here with a curse in the sense of being cursed.

To be cursed or to curse means; *"a calling on God or the gods to send evil to some person or thing; to pronounce a curse or damnation on someone, to damn someone, to wish someone disaster. The main concept here is 'cursing, damning' . The important factor being that the curse is always directed at someone, from someone who utters the curse, calling on God or heavenly or demonic powers to bring it about.*

Curses were also known in the distant past. The best known story in the Bible is that of Balaam who was summoned by Balak to curse the people of Israel. Num.22:1-20. In ancient Egypt the priests painted curses on the tombs in order to protect them. The Greeks and the Romans engraved curses on clay tablets and thus implored their gods to bring curses down on their victims. Not long ago fifty of such tablets were found in Israel.

In the Middle Ages, and later, it was often the Roman Catholic Church, which made use of curses. If a person didn't obey the Church then a curse was placed on him. Those curses had to do with being banned from the church fellowship and/or the state of his eternal welfare. The resolutions of the council of Trente (1545-1563) include a number of such curses.

Curses in the Bible.

Very shortly after the creation, the first curse was uttered. God cursed the serpent, satan, because he led Eve to sin. The curse was one of enmity leading to battle between man and satan which satan eventually would lose. The second curse, which God uttered, was one against the earth. Because of the Fall, God cursed the produce of the earth and now the ground would produce thorns and thistles. It now meant man must work hard before he produced a harvest. Gen.3:14-20; 5:29. After Cain killed his brother, God cursed him and drove him away from his family and home. Gen.4:11. During Jesus' time on earth He cursed the fig tree because it bore no fruit. The next day the disciples were amazed to see that it had withered. Mark 11:21. In all of these examples we see that when God curses it also happens. For centuries man has tried to make a paradise of the earth but they haven't succeeded. Since the Fall up until now the enmity between man and satan has continued. We can do nothing to change this. The Bible says that in the future satan will be cast into the fiery lake. His destination is still the same today, nothing has been changed and it won't change as there is no plan of

redemption for satan and his demons. There are not only curses from God in the Bible but also curses from man to man. Noah cursed his son, Canaan for laughing at him when he was drunk. Joshua cursed the man who would rebuild Jericho after it had fallen. He predicted that it would be at the cost of his firstborn son. This was fulfilled. Jos.6:26; 1 Kings 16:34. Goliath cursed David, when he confronted him.

1 Sam.17:43. Job cursed the day of his birth during his terrible trials. Job 3:1. Jeremiah did something similar when he was in difficulties. Jer.20:14. Peter cursed himself when the Lord was on trial. Mark 14:71.

The curses made by Noah and Joshua have come about. The other curses, which we have mentioned haven't. We can conclude from this that only a few of the curses made by man are effective.

We do not read in the Bible that satan has any part in placing curses on someone. He was and is himself cursed of God and has therefore no rights whatsoever, in this area. We also notice in these examples that not one of the cursed people passed on the curse to the next generation. The curses, which God uttered, were not at all for the children or grandchildren.

Perhaps, one could imagine it was so with the curse on the earth. This curse however, effects the whole of the world's inhabitants and isn't passed on from one generation to the next.

Summarised commentary from the workgroup:

The deliverance preacher's ministry comprises of the above three subjects, which we have just dealt with. They teach that born-again Christians can be bound or possessed by demons. These can be family demons, which are passed on. Curses are often a very important factor in this. Their methods of expelling demons are very nearly synonymous in the different categories. They talk about casting out demons, breaking the bonds with demons and breaking the curses from the past. The Bible teaches us that a born-again Christian has been set free through Jesus Christ by His death on Calvary. The above-mentioned teachings take away our freedom and are detrimental to the gospel. Satan still tries and often succeeds to tempt us to sin but he has no rights over a born-again Christian!

According to the testimony in the Bible, curses uttered by man have no effect on a Christian. Only curses uttered by God have effect on people or situations. God however does not curse a born-again Christian.

Paul cursed in the book of Galatians those who brought a different doctrine to his. Gal.1:8. Other than this we do not read of any other curses in the New Testament. There is also no mention of casting out of demons, breaking the powers of demons or breaking the power of curses. It is important to state that this teaching is not only being spread in charismatic circles but, in the last years, it has become popular in "normal" evangelical circles too. Dr. Neil T. Anderson is an example of this. As a non-charismatic preacher/teacher he has a large following amongst evangelical Christians. His seminaries and books are very popular.

Questions about lesson 3

Is satan king of this world on this moment?

Can it be that demons or curses can be inherited?

Show from the open Bible that satan has not one right on our soul!

All the theories about indwelling demons, are just theories because...!

Subject next letter.

We will continue with the subject of satan and his demons. We will look at the aspects: spiritual warfare, spiritual mapping, prayer walks.

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