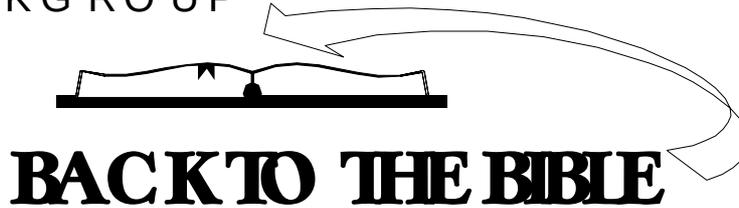


WORKGROUP



**Biblestudy about demons part 4 by pastor ing. Rien van de Kraats  
2012**

Lesson nr. **4**

Dear brothers, sisters, pastors and elders,

In the previous three letters we have been studying in detail the position of demons in the lives of Christians. This is a very important subject in which we need to gain as much clarity as possible. As you read this letter you will notice that wrong teaching has far-reaching consequences. In our last letter we explained that it is necessary to cast out demons in those who are possessed but this is not the case with born-again Christians, as they cannot be possessed. We also looked at the subject of family demons in connection with Christians and the possibility of a Christian being influenced by a family curse from the past. Our conclusion was that a born-again Christian is set free from the past at his conversion. Some of you have commented that in practice this doesn't always seem to be the case. We realise that churches do come across difficult situations, which don't seem so clear-cut as this. In such cases the pastor and church members can become desperate. Demon possession or oppression can then seem to be the likely explanation for the abnormal behaviour of the one in need. We don't find however, much support for this in the bible. We must place more value in the Word of God than in our own experiences, no matter how wonderful these experiences seem to be. To find the right solution to the problems, we believe professional assistance is necessary in combination with a pastor who offers help based on the bible. This will demand from all involved a lot of effort, perseverance, faith, and trust in the Lord.

**In this letter**, we will concentrate on the subject of waging warfare against demons in the heavenly realms, by breaking their power over cities, areas, and lands. Before doing this we will begin with a clarification of what really happened on the cross at Calvary.

**Did Jesus' death on the cross bring us redemption from sins and/or victory over demons?**

Sometimes a hymn writer can express a truth in such a deep and moving way which is a help to us who are "less gifted". The following translation is from a well-known Dutch hymn:

*"Jesus, life of my life,  
Jesus, death of my death,  
.....  
Lord, the Atoner for my sins,  
Saviour, who sought me  
And freed me from bondage  
You paid the price that set me free,  
I who was once unclean, guilty and dead,  
Am now born-again by Your Spirit.  
All my thanks and praise  
I offer Lord to You.*

Another old hymn writer says the following:

*I need no other argument,  
I need no other plea,  
It is enough that Jesus died,  
And that He died for me.*

*Jesus the prisoner's fetters breaks,  
And bruises Satan's head;  
Power into strengthless souls He speaks,  
And life into the dead.*

A modern hymn writer, who faces the same world situation as we do, expresses it like this:

*Praise to the Lamb, praise to the Lamb,  
Slain for our guilt and sin.  
Seated on the throne for ever,  
O God clothed with majesty and splendour.  
Hallelujah!*

We could mention many more hymn writers but this will be sufficient. In these songs the depth and richness of the gospel is expressed. They write about, man's guilt of sin before God, the divine solution for this guilt through the death of Jesus as the sacrificial lamb, God's acceptance of His

sacrifice by seating Him for ever on the throne, the intense gratefulness that comes from being set free from the guilt of sin, the worship of the Lamb by those who have been saved, and the conviction that there is no other way to be set free from sin other than by the Lamb.

What was the victory at Calvary? Was it not the victory over man's sin? Some people teach that at Calvary, God fought a battle with satan in which He gained the victory. Although this appears to be true the bible sees it in a different way. Paul writing about Calvary, says the following:

*".....having cancelled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; He took it away, nailing it to the cross. And having disarmed the powers and authorities, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross." Col. 2:14-15 (see also Eph.2::4-7)*

We certainly read here about a victory over the powers of darkness but this was not a physical (=spiritual) battle between God and satan. In this text we read that He made a public spectacle of them. How did that happen? Firstly, by cancelling on the cross the written code which testified against us. Secondly, He did this by nailing it to the cross. Because Jesus died upon the cross our guilt was also crucified. In this way He disarmed the powers and authorities.

There was no fight, no heroic battle between God and satan, but rather a sacrificial offer of the Son of God who thus disarmed him. Satan lost His power to accuse the brethren and had no more rights over born-again Christians. This simply means that God broke satan's power over man by allowing His Son to become the sacrifice for sin. Since Christ's death, satan has no more authority over those who have put their trust in Christ's finished work.

Satan was actually made a fool of before everyone in the spiritual realms in such an unobtrusive way. This was a disastrous defeat for the most proud of beings. All who trust in Jesus can see how satan failed completely. If this is what the bible teaches, then why is there such an emphasise on the battle in the heavenly realms? We will look into this further, but first we want to share with you the following testimony.

### **A reader's experience.**

Dear brothers and sisters from the workgroup,  
Firstly I want to express our appreciation for your enlightening letters. It is so important to hold on to God's Word. It is about a year ago now that I first was introduced to the workgroup "Back to the Bible", on account of the topic, "Praying through" . In our previous church the teachings of Ken

Thornberg were practised. I had had a painful back, which had been prayed for in the church the year before in a normal fashion and since then I had had no pain for nearly a year. (I do believe in a God who does miracles)

The pain however gradually returned and so I asked the elders to pray with me again. They told me that they would now tackle it differently. I thought it was strange, but felt I should trust my elders. Finally, after two months they found time to pray with me. They placed around me "domes" covered with the blood of Jesus. It was really scary. I started to hyperventilate. This was something, which I hadn't done for the last twenty years. No matter how much they prayed that I would be at peace, it didn't happen.

They then began to summon the chief demon whose name was "Legio". That was a terrible shock! Seemingly there was a huge shadow network. After having spoken with the chief demon for four hours they expelled "all the demons" and I was healed. (According to them).

I spent the whole night in prayer, asking the Lord to show me the right way as I couldn't believe that what had happened was biblical. In the morning, I read the Bible and the first thing that I read was: "did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name drive out demons .....I never knew you. Away from Me, you evildoers!" (Matt.7:21) I do believe that when we are in trouble the Lord answers directly.

To make a long story short, we had a long talk with the elders and pastor and told them clearly, using the bible, what we felt was wrong with this whole carry-on of Ken Thornberg. God's children should seek the Lord and worship Him and not enquire of the evil spirits with their whispering and muttering, Is.8. We should keep our distance from them.

We used to sing the song "I'm redeemed by the blood of the Lamb". God's Word tells us that we have truly been set free. I don't believe that Christ's finished work on the cross was insufficient, for that's what it would be if some demons could slip through (Actually, I don't believe that someone can just happen to have a demon in them). Jesus said, "It is finished", and that leaves no room for doubt.

After a long struggle we left that church. Fortunately, we have found another church, which is grounded in God's Word. We as a family feel at home here and we trust that it will continue so.

Keep up this important work. "Be self-controlled and alert!" My backache has now cleared up, but not because of their doing! Warm greetings and God's blessing. (e-mail July 2000)

### **"God at war" book by the American Prof. Gregory A. Boyd.**

- Old Testament Times. This evangelical writer states in his book that, western Christians need to change their way of thinking to a more eastern one. He explains, the change being one to a "Warfare Worldview" to a "World

of constant War". He wants to transform the present Christian philosophy to a philosophy wherein God is constantly at war. From the very beginning God is involved in a war against evil, this is the demon-world headed up by satan. The reason for all the terrible things that happen on the earth is because God is not always successful in this struggle. Boyd writes that we shouldn't think less of God because of this, but we should however take into account that evil sometimes wins from Him. He mentions the Holocaust as an example and an explanation for his changed way of thinking to a "World of constant war". How otherwise could something so terrible as the holocaust have taken place?

- The writer tries, in his book, to explain the reason for the existence of evil and misery in the world. His deep conviction is that it is because of the constant warfare that exists between God and satan in the heavenly realms. Just as there are casualties in an ordinary war, so there are casualties in the war between God and satan. This is the explanation for all the catastrophes, disasters, and wars amongst man here on earth. His views are largely based on the legends and myths of the peoples surrounding the Israelites in the Old Testament. According to him these people always believed there was a battle between the gods, between a good god and bad gods. The reason that the authors of the Old Testament haven't written much about this is because they took it for granted that this was known. In Israel's case it was the Lord God who protected them from the evil gods in the heavens above them. He calls this area "the world in-between".

- Western Christians need therefore to change their way of thinking to the oriental way, just like Israel and the peoples around them did, and become aware of the continual war which is taking place between God and satan.

Hence the title of the book, "God at war"

- Time between the Old and the New Testament. In this period, which covered roughly four hundred years, no Bible books were written only the Apocrypha books. According to Dr. Boyd it was during this time that the Jew's way of thinking changed. Up until this time they believed that when evil befell them it was because of the sins of the people. Now they began to believe that the cause of the evil was an apocalyptic one, terrible and disastrous. This meant

that the reason had nothing to do with their behaviour towards God but was rather an external one. He writes that this change of thinking, from sin being the problem, to one of an inescapable ramp version can be found in the Scriptures and Apocrypha books.

- New Testament. The Gospels and Acts clearly show us that the teachings of Jesus and the apostles are completely in conformity with the "Worldview of constant war". Dr. Boyd is so convinced of this that he connects everything in this part of the Scriptures with his view, even the crucifixion of Jesus. According to Boyd, Jesus healed the sick, cast out demons, walked on the water, fed the five thousand, as acts of war against satan. Christ's death on the cross wasn't in the first place for our redemption from sin but to gain victory over satan. The resurrection was especially a critical and important victory over the evil powers. The whole purpose of Christ coming to this earth was to regain the lost ground from satan. Redemption from sin was a secondary benefit from His victory and it was not His top priority in coming to earth. The Church of Christ needs to be aware of the fact that she has to fight alongside Jesus in the heavenly realms to gain the victory over sickness, troubles, and catastrophes in order to change the world. \_\_\_\_

**Comment workgroup:** Dr. Boyds assertions are, to put it lightly, biblically very weak. They are based largely on heathen stories, suppositions from the Old Testament writers, the Apocrypha books, and Jewish traditions. It is clear that he has only picked out the verses in the New Testament, which support his case. This book caused us to despair. Dr. Boyd presents to us in this book a different gospel. He has distorted the true meaning of the Lord's crucifixion and resurrection and degraded it. This makes us very angry, incensed. It is also blasphemous to assert that God can sometimes be defeated by satan. We don't want to have any part of this. Fortunately, there are others who agree with us. Some Christian teachers see it however, differently. On the first page of Boyd's book we read the warm recommendations from Dr. Peter Wagner. He writes, *"This is an exceptionally important book for all those who long for the increase of God's kingdom"*. He even uses the word ecstatic when speaking about the contents of the book. What does Peter Wagner believe that he is so enthusiastic about Boyd's book? We have set out for you here his teachings under several headings.

- **Peter Wagner's teaching on spiritual warfare.**

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- For the most of us spiritual warfare is not a new concept. Wagner however does have a different interpretation to its meaning. He is convinced that a Christian when he is born-again has to begin a battle against demons. He doesn't mean this figuratively but literally. His view is that Jesus did win the victory over satan on the cross, but we now have to fight alongside Jesus to cause the demons to retreat even further. Wagner is not the only one who believes this. Several well-known people agree with him. For example: Dr. Neil Anderson, Mrs. Cindy Jacobs, Claudio Freidzon, George Otis jr., Derek Prince and "Youth with a Mission". Wagner bases his argument largely on the words of Paul in Eph. 6:12: *"For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms"*.
- He and the others mentioned above believe that this means that Christians are in a constant spiritual battle against demons. It is taken for granted in nearly all of his books that the reader agrees with this. There is absolutely no question in his mind that it could be otherwise. Elaborating on this, he goes into details of war actions and believes that the Christian needs to train himself as a soldier for this. This is the reason why so many military terms are used.

Comment workgroup: We cannot find in the New Testament ground to support this new teaching on warfare. There are only a few texts, which could point to this if interpreted in a certain way. Wagner and others point to Eph. 6:12 as the key verse. The context of this verse however, is one of satan tempting us to sin. (verse 11) The spiritual armour which, is to be put on (13-18) is clearly not meant for attacking. We are told to defend ourselves against the darts of the evil one but not to attack him. The only part of equipment which, is mentioned for attacking is the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God and that is for the building up of our faith. We believe that as born-again Christians, we have entered into His rest and our task is to resist sin, which takes away our peace with God. Heb. 4:11 says the following: *"Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no-one will fall by following their example of disobedience."*

**Comment workgroup:** In the past we have expressed our opinions about this subject. In letter 17 of 12th October 1999 we wrote that no Christian should get involved in the demon world. If there is anybody that should deal with the devil then that is the Lord Himself. God knows in detail all about the demons and their system. We are warned about getting involved in the occult. In the Old Testament we read the following: *"When men tell you to consult mediums and spiritists, who whisper and mutter,*

*should not a people enquire of their God? Why consult the dead on behalf of the living? To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, they have no light of dawn." Is.8:19-20.*

We also can't understand what the value is in knowing the rank and order of the demons. So much attention is placed on this. It is seemingly very important during the battle in the spiritual realms. Maybe as workgroup, we are not military minded enough.

### **Peter Wagner's teaching on special intercessors.**

- Special intercessors are needed to obtain information about the demons who are causing the problems and their order and rank. They need to spend much time in prayer and in the presence of the Lord to find out what the situation is concerning the demons in question. Not everyone can do this. Only those who have received from the Holy Spirit the gift of prayer. Wagner regards this gift as one of the gifts of the Spirit comparable to those listed in 1 Cor. 12 and 14. Here also, he admits that this gift is not mentioned in the Bible, but that he has received this revelation from God. \*11 These intercessors are chosen by God and are not "ordinary" intercessors. They spend several hours a day in God's presence. After several sessions of "praying it through" God reveals to them the structure and names of the demons. What they receive from the Lord is then shared in the "ordinary" prayer meetings and then the battle in prayer takes place for an ungodly situation in a city or neighbourhood.
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- Wagner sees the position of the special intercessors on the "spiritual ladder" as being the highest of all Christians. God showed to him in a dream that it was like a ladder with three rungs. On the top rung are the special intercessors, then the people like himself and on the bottom rung the rest of the Christians. Intercessors are special because they spend so much time in God's presence in the throne-room and receive the revelations from God Himself. Cindy Jacobs calls the special intercessors "prayer-generals". She is the founder and president of the American organisation "Generals of Intercession". She also regards them as having a very high function and that other Christians should listen to them. Peter Wagner says in his book "Prayer Shield" on page 151-155 in connection with this, the following: *"Amongst other things the Lord told me that Alice Smith would be my most powerful intercessor."*

**Comment workgroup:** We have not been able to discover in the New Testament that there are two kinds of intercessors: the "ordinary" one who just prays and the special intercessor. Prayer is very important in the Bible but it isn't dished out to Christians in different portions. The story in Luke

18:1-8 about the widow and the judge shows us that faith and prayer go together. Our faith should express itself in prayer and our prayers should be motivated by faith. God's Word is the source of our faith. It is a serious, but joyful matter. The widow in the story was simply praying with faith. It is true that one will pray longer than the other will but that doesn't make the one an "elite" intercessor.

It is unbiblical to claim that the one has been given a special gift of intercession from the Holy Spirit. Wagner also admits to this, but adds, that in this case, because of the revelation he has received, it is justified. We do not agree with this train of thought. A great danger with these "special" intercessors is that they believe that they can enter right into heaven itself, to the throne-room and there receive from God new revelations. This leads to "ordinary" Christians being exposed to unbiblical patterns and spiritual confusion is the result.

### **Peter Wagner's teaching on "spiritual mapping".**

- To determine the strategy in spiritual warfare, we need to gain
- insight into each specific situation. Special surveys are made of a city, an area, or a land. This is called "spiritual mapping" and involves gathering together all the information possible about a certain city. This would include: the history of the city, how it got its name, the religion and rituals of the original inhabitants, the first contacts with Christianity, its sinful past, the situation of the church, the influence of different people in the past and the present, etc. Attention is also paid to terrible crimes, which have taken place in the past.

**Comment workgroup:** This is very clearly a matter of a human and rational plan, which is no doubt very interesting, from the point of view of history and sociology, but has no grounding in God's Word. Ez. 4:1-3 is often quoted when stating their case: *"Now, son of man, take a clay tablet, put it in front of you and draw the city of Jerusalem on it. Then lay siege to it. Erect siege works against it, build a ramp up to it, set up camps against it and put up battering-rams around it. Then take an iron pan, place it as an iron wall between you and the city and turn your face towards it. It will be under siege, and you shall besiege it. This will be a sign to the house of Israel."* We don't believe that this represents "spiritual mapping" but is one of the last warnings from the prophet of Jerusalem's downfall. We are not capable of removing hindrances but we are called to join together and bring the hindrances before the throne of God and pray that He would clear them away. Our priority as Church is to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ, otherwise these prayers are to no avail. In the Old Testament we read how Israel came before the throne of God when troubled with natural enemies and how God gave them the victory. Let's learn a lesson from this.

### **Peter Wagner's teaching on district demons.**

- He is convinced that the world is ruled by demons who each are assigned to a specific city, district or land. It is therefore very important to expose them in order to resist them adequately. The principal argument for this assertion is found in the Old Testament in Daniel and Ezekiel. In Daniel 10 we read about the prince of Persia, who resisted the angel from reaching Daniel with a message from God and the prince of Greece whom the angel would fight against. In Ez. 28:12 we read about the king of Tyre, which we could understand to mean an evil prince over the city of Tyre.

**Comment workgroup:** When Daniel 10 speaks about the prince of Persia and the prince of Greece, then we believe that these are dark powers. The same goes for the king of Tyre in Ez. 28. There is no hint given that these princes were to be resisted personally by the prophets or other believers. Where a battle is mentioned then that is waged between the angels. It is also very dangerous to base a doctrine upon visions. A vision is always subject to human interpretations and is often viewed by believers differently. Paul writes in 1 Cor. 13:12, in connection with our knowledge of the things of God the following: *"Now we see but a poor reflection; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known."* It is not very convincing therefore, to base one's belief in district demons solely on Daniel 10 and Ezekiel 28, when this is not mentioned at all in the New Testament.

**Comment workgroup:** These examples from Dr. wagener present a completely different theology. The preaching of the gospel used to be important, but now it is fighting in the heavenly realms. People used to be told that they needed to repent from their sins, but now they are told that it is the fault of demons, described as mythical figures. We now need to resist the Scandinavian god, Thor, before we can organise an open-air meeting. We now need to take into account Leviathan, the coiling sea monster with seven heads before the gospel can have free course. Jesus' last words were not: Go and make war with demons, but: *"All authority in heaven and on the earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age."* Matt. 28:18-20. Why do we not just do this? There are a lot of things slipping in, which look good but are definitely not.

**Final conclusion**

- If the apostle Peter had lived today, he would not have agreed or been a part of the above mentioned spiritual warfare. He writes in his letter the following: *"This is especially true of those who follow the corrupt desire of the sinful nature and despise (heavenly) authority. Bold and arrogant, these men are not afraid to slander celestial beings; yet even angels, although they are stronger and more powerful, do not bring slanderous accusations against such beings in the presence of the Lord."* 2 Pet.2:10-11. The angels (good ones) do not accuse the demon-world but leave that in God's hands. Jude says the same: *"But even the archangel Michael, when he was disputing with the devil about the body of Moses, did not dare to bring a slanderous accusation against him, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!"* Jude 9. In Rev. 12: 7-12 it is not the children of God who fight against the dragon but Michael and his angels. The children of God overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, the cross of Jesus Christ and the word of their testimony, and did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death. **It is therefore wise to stay far away from the demon-world and to humbly act as the Word tells us, through Peter, Jude .**

## Questions Lesson 4

did Jesus death gained at the cross on Calvary?

For the born again Christians it brought salvation of sin, but for satan it was a real blow.

Should Christians go to war against satan and his demons?

Should Christians turn away from sin, the sin satan tried to present for him?

Is not holiness the answer against sin?

### **Foundation: Workgroup "Back to the Bible"**

Mailaddress: Populierenstraat 51, 8266 BK Kampen, The Netherlands

Tel. 038 3328234

e-mail: [byblos@solcon.nl](mailto:byblos@solcon.nl)

website: [www.backtothebible.nl](http://www.backtothebible.nl)

Local board: president                      pastor Rien van de Kraats

Secretary/treasurer A.A.Doorn