

## Lucifer's Arrest by the High Seraph: His Aliases, Incarceration, & Inability to Deceive the Nations, Rev 20:1-3; Examples of Demon Possession; Exorcism Is Demonic; Out Casting Accomplished only by Jesus & the Apostles, Matt 8:16; Acts 19:11-19

High on the Lord's agenda following the destruction of the Gentile armies in the Valley of Megiddo is the arrest and incarceration of Lucifer:

**Revelation 20:1** - Then I saw an angel [ a seraph-rank officer of arms in the angelic college of heralds ] descending from heaven [ the High Seraph with an arrest warrant for Lucifer ]. He had and held a key to the Abyss [ the 4th compartment of Hades ] and a great chain in his hand.

**v. 2** - And he [ the High Seraph ] violently seized [ what follows are Lucifer's aka's or aliases ] the dragon [ Revelation 12:4 ], that ancient serpent [ Genesis 3:1-5 ], who is the devil [ an adversary, i.e., a prosecuting attorney; 1 Peter 5:8 ], even Satan [ an accuser; Zechariah 3:1 ], and bound him for a thousand years.

**v. 3** - Then he [ the High Seraph ] threw him [ Lucifer ] into the Abyss. He both locked and sealed it over him, so that he should no longer deceive the nations [ satanic strategy is to manipulate populations by manipulating their governments ], until the thousand years are completed.

The horror of demon possession is adequately documented in the New Testament; one passage in particular does so with a note of humor:

**Acts 19:11** - God was performing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul [ miracles in the precanon period of the Church Age drew attention to the qualification of the miracle worker so that doctrine could be taught ],

**Acts 19:12** - so that handkerchiefs or aprons were even carried from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out.

This passage describes an event that occurred in Ephesus during Paul's third missionary journey. Ephesus was the religious & economic center of Asia Minor boasting the historic temple of Artemis where her worshippers congregated from all over the region and where demons conducted their nefarious programs of indwelling and influencing the benighted.

One of the delusions that occurs from demon possession is that a person appears to suffer from a physical malady or has contracted some dread disease. In reality, they are demon possessed. The possessing demon controls the body in such a way as to leave the impression a person is afflicted by these problems.

In turn, demon-possessed operatives, functioning as miracle workers, utter incantations over the afflicted at which point the demon exits the body and the person appears instantly healed. This brings glory to the “exorcist” and glowing testimonies from the relieved victim.

When Paul arrives he challenges this system of deceit by performing legitimate out-castings of these demons. He does so by having garments which he had touched carried to the victims causing the indwelling demons to exit their bodies.

What occurred was an “out-casting” of the demons; the Greek word for this is **ἐκβάλλω (ekballō)** and is the legitimate description of demon removal from an individual. Although not used in this context it is implied by comparing it with other passages dealing with the casting out of demons, for example:

**Matthew 8:16** - When evening came, they brought to Him [ Jesus ] many who were demon-possessed; and He cast out [ ἐκβάλλω (ekballō) ] the spirits [ indwelling demons ] with a word, and healed all who were ill.

Paul’s success in casting out demons in Ephesus attracted the attention of seven men who were sons of a chief priest in Jerusalem. They were unbelievers and made a living by traveling around doing exorcisms among the heathen.

Paul’s ability to cast out demons was provided by divine power. The seven sons immediately perceived that if they did not follow up in like fashion they would lose business to Paul. It had been their practice to voice some incantation and decided to fashion a new one for the occasion. Their futile attempts are documented next:

**Acts 19:13** - Then certain of the Jewish exorcists, who went from place to place, attempted to name over those who had the evil spirits [ demons ] the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, “I adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preaches.”

**v. 14** - Seven sons of one Sceva \sē'-va\, a Jewish chief priest, were doing this.

At this point the Magniloquent Seven receive a lesson in the doctrine of “Do not say more than you can back up”:

**Acts 19:15** - And the evil spirit answered and said, “Jesus I know and Paul I know, but who are you?”

This is an **ἐγγαστρίμυθος (engastrimuthos)** demon. The word means ventriloquist as is noted in Liddell and Scott’s *A Greek-English Lexicon* (467) and in the Septuagint’s Greek translation of Leviticus 19:31.<sup>1</sup> The demon cited here has a sarcastic sense of humor and a vicious temper.

<sup>1</sup> Lancelot C. L. Brenton, *The Septuagint with Apocrypha: Greek and English* (London: Samuel Bagster and Sons, 1851; repr., Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2007), 155.

**Acts 19:16** - And the man, in whom was the evil spirit, leaped on them and subdued all of them and overpowered them, so that they fled out of the house naked and wounded.

Observe the humiliation: here are seven young men against one man. From the human viewpoint, odds are good they should be able to take him. Not so. Empowered by the indwelling demon, the man has superhuman strength and with it he tore their clothing off, gave them a good whipping, and allowed them to run for their very lives.

Psalm 76:10a reads, “The wrath of man shall praise You.” These seven were made fools of in front of many witnesses. They had made profit off the citizens of Ephesus with their exorcisms but when they encountered this demoniac, who had a healthy respect for the power of Jesus and Paul, their whole road show came to an embarrassing end. This enabled Paul to have serious impact on the community as is noted in the following verses:

**Acts 19:17** - This became known to all, both Jews and Gentiles, who lived in Ephesus; and fear fell upon them all and the name of the Lord Jesus was being magnified.

**v. 18** - And many of those who had already believed came and confessed, disclosing their practices [ associated with demonic involvement ].

The impact of these events convinced many in Ephesus that true power was in the Word of God and in those who were representatives of the resurrected Christ. Their involvement in demonism included all the accessories one would accumulate in practicing the magic arts—objects related to occult rituals and books of compilations related to the rituals, incantations, and sorceries associated with demonology.

**Acts 19:19** - And many of those who practiced magic brought their books together and began burning them in the sight of all; and they counted up the price of them and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver.

Ephesus was the center of the idolatrous worship of Artemis. People would come from throughout the region to pay homage at the Temple of Artemis. Those involved in sorceries had books that included instruction on how to perform exorcisms. This was before Johannes Gutenberg invented the printing press so all books were handwritten, highly treasured, and very expensive. Paul’s demonstration of divine power in casting out demons and the discrediting of the sons of Sceva sent a chilling message throughout the city and many responded to it. The willful public burning of their expensive books on the occult was a testimony to the impact these events had on so many who were involved in demonism.

6. **Cosmic Panaceas.** Definition: Seeking the solution to the problems of life apart from truth disclosed in the Bible. Instead, there is dependence upon human viewpoint for the resolution of problems.

Cosmic believers and unbelievers, unable to adjust to the reality that life is not fair, resort to human viewpoint solutions to resolve problems that often have no solution at all. Those that do are best resolved by guidance from the Word of God.