
The Concept of Demonic Powers In Ephesians 6:10-20

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The concept of demonic powers is one of the main themes of Eph. 6:10-20. In fact, the whole New Testament is saturated with the language of power.¹ The passage under study deals with important issues regarding demonic identity, strategy, and Christian victory over these powers. It is considered a classic spiritual warfare text and the only place in Scripture wherein believers are urged explicitly to wage war against them.² This paper is divided into two major sections, namely, background study of Eph. 6:10-20 and exegetical study of Eph. 6:10-20.

Background Study of Ephesians 6:10-20

An overview of the background of Eph. 6:10-20 is imperative for a sound interpretation of the passage and a clear understanding of the concept of demonic powers. Clinton Arnold advises that “the best way to determine what spiritual warfare means for us now is to discern what it meant for Paul and his readers back then.”³ He explains:

First of all, spiritual warfare needs to be understood in terms of what it meant to people living in Ephesus and western Asia Minor where occult beliefs flourished and the reality of the influence of the spirit realm was unquestioned. Second, it needs to be

¹ Walter Wink, *The Powers*, vol. 1, *Naming the Powers: The Language of Power in the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 7. Wink adds, “No New Testament book is without the language of power.”

² Clinton Arnold, *Three Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1997), 37. See also Arnold’s *Ephesians: Power and Magic - The Concept of Power in Ephesians in Light of its Historical Setting* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 103.

³ Clinton Arnold, *Powers of Darkness: A Thoughtful, Biblical Look at an Urgent Challenge Facing the Church* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1992), 149.

*understood in the larger context of the entire book of Ephesians.*⁴

This section deals with the historical background of the book of Ephesians and the city of Ephesus. It also includes a description of the religious orientation of the people.

Historical Background

The Epistle to the Ephesians is an important New Testament writing. It has been described as the “quintessence of Paulinism” by Arthur Samuel Peake when he used the phrase as the title of his lecture.⁵ C. H. Dodd’s description of Ephesians as the “crown of Paulinism” is even more appropriate.⁶ In essence Ephesians is a summary of the major themes in Pauline epistles with Paul’s ministry as apostle to the Gentiles as the central motif.⁷ However, the traditional view of Pauline authorship of Ephesians has been challenged by critical scholarship.⁸

It is generally known that Ephesians is not an exclusive letter for the Ephesian believers but is intended as a circular letter to churches in Asia Minor.⁹ Paul wrote Ephesians while he is in prison.¹⁰ Rome is traditionally considered the place of origin but there are contentions in favor of Ephesus or Caesarea, which are inconclusive to substitute the traditional view. The date of Ephesians is largely dependent on authorship

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ The phrase “quintessence of Paulinism” is the title of a lecture by Arthur Samuel Peake in *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library* 4 (1917-18), 285-311; reprinted in *Arthur Samuel Peake*, ed. J. T. Wilkinson (London: n.p., 1958), 116-42; quoted in Frederick Fyvie Bruce, “The Epistle to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians,” in *The New International Commentary on the New Testament*, ed. F. F. Bruce (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1984), 229, n. 1. See W. W. Klein’s annotated bibliography of 1,571 books and articles on Ephesians published in the recent fifty years (*The Book of Ephesians: An Annotated Bibliography*, vol. 8 of *Books of the Bible* [New York: Garland Press, 1996], 1-312). See also Carey C. Newman, “An Annotated Bibliography of Ephesians,” *Review and Expositor* 93, no. 2 (Spring 1996): 271-75.

⁶ C. H. Dodd, “Ephesians,” in *The Abingdon Bible Commentary*, ed. F. C. Eiselen, E. Lewis, and D. G. Downey (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1929), 1224-25.

⁷ Frederick Fyvie Bruce, “The Epistle to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians,” in *The New International Commentary on the New Testament*, ed. F. F. Bruce (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1984), 229.

⁸ The traditional view of Pauline authorship of Ephesians was universally accepted from the first century to the beginning of the nineteenth century. John Stott presents an extensive discussion on the authorship of Ephesians (*The Message of Ephesians* [Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 1989], 16-22). John B. Polhill maintains, “No one questions that the language of the epistle is thoroughly Pauline. The issue is rather whether Paul could have written an epistle so general a nature with a style so drawn from traditional liturgical materials and with theological emphases so differing from his other epistles” (“An Overview of Ephesians,” *Review and Expositor* 93, no. 2 [Spring 1996]: 183).

⁹ Ralph Martin, “Ephesians,” in *The Broadman Bible Commentary*, vol. 11: 2 Corinthians-Philemon, ed. Clifford J. Allen (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1971), 127. The messenger would either bring the epistle from one place to another in the region or fill in the name of the recipients in the blank space in the superscription as he turn over a particular copy to the church (Ibid.).

¹⁰ See Eph. 3:1, 4:1, and 6:20.

and place of origin.¹¹

Ephesians is not written to dispute error or false teaching.¹² “The purpose of the epistle,” Martin articulates, “was to show the nature of the church and the Christian life to those who came to Christ from a pagan heritage and environment, and to remind Gentile Christians that Paul’s theology of salvation-history never disowned the Jewish background out of which the (now predominantly) Gentile church came.”¹³ Paul explains the great doctrine of the unity of humankind through Christ which transcends the boundaries of racial distinction. He marvels at the revelation of the mystery that Jews and Gentiles are now one under Christ through the Church. This lofty theology is balanced with practical application of Christianity in daily Christian living.

Some theologians like Heinrich Schlier postulate that Gnosticism was the source of the terms Paul used for powers.¹⁴ However, Markus Barth declares that “competent scholars in the field of history have questioned rather than confirmed the Gnostic influence upon the NT on which theological interpreters have built their theories.”¹⁵ Gnosticism became a systematic religious thought only after A.D. 70 or even after A.D. 135.¹⁶ Therefore, Gnosticism is irrelevant in understanding Paul’s concept of principalities and powers.

The city of Ephesus is originally a Greek colony but by the time of writing of Ephesians it has become the capital of the Roman province of Asia with at least a quarter million population.¹⁷ It is a flourishing commercial port.¹⁸ Ephesus serves as a good

¹¹ Some possible dates are as follows: (1) A.D. 54 or 55 for Pauline authorship in Ephesus, (2) between A.D.59 to 61 if written by Paul in Caesarea, (3) A.D. 63 if Paul is the author and Rome is the place of origin, and (4) A.D. 90 if a disciple of Paul is the author (A. Skevington Wood, “Ephesians-Philemon,” in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, vol. 11, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin [Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1978], 15-16).

¹² *Ibid.*, 17.

¹³ Martin, 126.

¹⁴ W. Hall Harris III, “‘The Heavenules’ Reconsidered: Οὐρανῶν and Οπουρῆνιος in Ephesians,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 148, no. 589 (January-March 1991), 72.

¹⁵ Markus Barth, “Traditions in Ephesians,” *New Testament Studies* 30, no. 1 (January 1984): 21. Cf. Chris Forbes’s view that Paul’s use of “principalities and powers” does not originate from his apocalyptic heritage nor is he engaged in demythologizing apocalyptic ideas but that he is appropriating popular Greek philosophy in an attempt to express his cosmological ideas (“Paul’s Principalities and Powers: Demythologizing Apocalyptic?” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 82 [June 2001]: 88).

¹⁶ Arnold, *Powers of Darkness*, 92. Gnostic terms for angelic powers were derived “from the reservoir of terms for spirits, angels, demons and gods, which virtually all religious traditions shared” (*Ibid.*). Harris comments, “The question of Gnostic influence in the letter to the Ephesians remains open, though it appears highly unlikely that such influence could be extensive as early as the mid-first century” (72).

¹⁷ Stott, 150.

¹⁸ M. I. Rostovtzeff writes, “Like Miletos, Ephesus not only possessed a major harbour for international trade, but was also a terminus for the great Royal road leading from Persia westwards across Anatolia, which served as an important caravan route in the Hellenistic period (*The Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World*, vol. 2 [Oxfordshire, England:

reference point in studying Ephesians, especially since it is Paul's home base for missions during his three-year ministry in the province.¹⁹

Religious Background

Ephesus is significant as a religious center because of two important reasons. First, it is the "cult centre of great antiquity" of Artemis (Diana).²⁰ Second, it is also the center of magical practices and the people are heavily indulged in spiritism.²¹ The relevance of these two traditions, i.e., Ephesian cult and magic, is "consistently overlooked yet seemingly very significant" to comprehend the reason why the topic on spiritual warfare and the discussion on principalities and powers are the dominant themes in Ephesians more than any of his other epistles.²² Given this background it is not difficult to understand that many of the converts were former magicians, devotees of Artemis, and worshipers of other idols. The Ephesian Christians were previously involved in the occult and made a public renouncement of their magical books.²³ The believers are tempted to syncretize and incorporate other pagan beliefs and practices into their Christian faith. Paul addresses these issues to help them form a Christian worldview in dealing with the gods and goddesses they had previously worshiped and the spirits which they had greatly feared.²⁴

Oxford Press, 1941], 1264; quoted in G. H. R. Horsley, "The Inscriptions of Ephesos and the New Testament," *Novum Testamentum* 34, no. 2 [April 1992]: 106-107, n. 3).

¹⁹ Arnold, *Powers of Darkness*, 150.

²⁰ G. H. R. Horsley, "The Inscriptions of Ephesos and the New Testament," *Novum Testamentum* 34, no. 2 (April 1992): 106-107, 143; Stott, 23. The Ephesian temple was destroyed in mid-fourth century B.C. but has become one of the seven wonders of the world after it was gradually rebuilt (Stott, 23). Edward M. Blaiklock exclaims, "The temple was a shrine of great splendor which endured until the Goths sacked the city in A.D. 263" (*The New International Dictionary of Biblical Archaeology*, ed. Edward M. Blaiklock and Roland Kenneth Harrison [Grand Rapids, MI: The Zondervan Corporation, 1983], s.v. "Ephesus," 181). Arnold reports that there are at least forty-four other gods being worshiped in the temple. He states, "The Ephesian Artemis was worshiped as a goddess of the underworld. She was also believed to wield effective power over the spirits in nature and wildlife. The signs of the zodiac on her cultic image reassured her worshipers that she was a cosmic deity who had influence over the astral spirits who controlled the unfolding of fate" (*Powers of Darkness*, 149-50). He also claims that Artemis has authority and control over the demons of the dead and nature (*Ephesians*, 22).

²¹ Arnold, *Powers of Darkness*, 149. Magic is the manipulation of the spirit world which is based on a worldview that sees both good and evil spirits as influencing all aspects of life (Ibid.). Arnold notes that "fear of the demonic realm was a very important factor in the use of magic" (*Ephesians*, 18).

²² Arnold, *Ephesians*, 40; idem, *Powers of Darkness*, 150.

²³ See Acts 19:13-20.

²⁴ Arnold, *Powers of Darkness*, 150. Arnold outlines three reasons why this background on Hellenistic magic is important in the study of Ephesians: (1) Ephesians could be concerned with tackling issues related to former or probably continuing practice of magic by some converts; (2) the epistle deals with the "Christian response to the spirit world and provides teaching on the power of God"; and (3) it is "likely that the first Christian congregations were composed primarily of

Exegetical Study of Ephesians 6:10-20

The researcher develops this section according to the first four steps of the syntactical-theological method. The four sub-sections are contextual analysis, syntactical analysis, verbal analysis, and theological analysis.²⁵

Contextual Analysis

The contextual analysis of Eph. 6:10-20 is a critical step to ensure that the total context is taken into consideration, not only the specific details of the passage.²⁶ The three levels of contextual analysis included in this research are sectional context, book context, and immediate context.²⁷

Sectional Context

Eph. 6:10-20 is clearly identified as an independent section by the use of $\tau\omicron\rightarrow\lambda\omicron\iota\pi\omicron\rightarrow$ after a series of discussion regarding household relationships. This specific section forms a pericope which ends in v. 20 before the obvious shift in the next verse to a vocative form of address. The passage is intricately bound together by the unifying theme of spiritual warfare.

Book Context

The whole epistle consists of two main parts that are distinct but related in content. The first part included in the first three chapters is the theological, dogmatic, kerygmatic, or doctrinal section while the second part in the last three chapters is the practical, ethical, didactic, or paraenetic section. The concept of calling is the direct link between the two parts.²⁸

The theological section deals with significant doctrines. The doxology in 1:3-14 describes the believer's spiritual blessings in Christ and results in a prayer and thanksgiving in 1:15-23. Paul expounds on the greatness of Christian salvation on a

people coming from a similar background, a background having a 'substance' concept of power and a lively interaction with the perceived spiritual world" (*Ephesians*, 39-40).

²⁵ Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., *Toward an Exegetical Theology: Biblical Exegesis for Preaching and Teaching* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1981), 69-147. The homiletical analysis, the final step in the syntactical-theological method, is not included in this research.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 69. Kaiser cautions, "Unless the exegete knows where the thought of the text begins and how that pattern develops, all the intricate details may be of little or no worth" (*Ibid.*).

²⁷ The canonical context is excluded. See Kaiser's dual criticism of Brevard S. Child's canonical analysis (81-82).

²⁸ Andrew T. Lincoln, "Ephesians," in *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 42, ed. Ralph P. Martin (Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1990), xxxvi. Lincoln notes that chapters 1-3 are a "reminder of the readers' calling" while chapters 4-6 are the "exhortation to live in a manner appropriate to that distinctive calling" (*Ibid.*).

personal level (2:1-10) as well as corporate level (2:11-22) as he reminds them of their sinfulness, salvation by grace, and the peace and unity through Christ.²⁹ Ecclesiology is another important theme that Paul develops in 3:1-21. He expounds on the mystery of Christ wherein Jews and Gentiles were brought together as one body. Paul concludes this part with a prayer and another doxology.

The practical section focuses on the application of these doctrines to daily Christian life. It includes an appeal to unity in the Church (4:1-6) amidst diversity of gifts (4:7-13) and the practical ways to maintain this oneness in the Body of Christ (4:14-16). It also discusses the new humanity in society wherein the old life is set in contrast to the new life (4:17-32) and a warning is issued against the works of darkness (5:1-14). The resulting effect of the new life in Christ is reflected in the area of worship (5:15-21) and harmonious relationships between husband and wife (5:22-33), parents and children (6:1-4), slaves and masters (6:5-9). Finally, the Christian is challenged to gain victory in spiritual warfare through the use of the armor of God and prayer (6:10-20).

Immediate Context

The passage under study serves as the conclusion of the paraenesis in 4:1-6:20 and the last main section of the whole letter.³⁰ The phrase τοῖς λοιποῖς functions as a transition from previous sections that discuss about different relationships in Christian household beginning in Eph. 5:22. There is a need to move further back to Eph. 5:3 to understand the author's frame of mind. The gross and audaciously evil things mentioned in the earlier verses are more obvious "signs of the power of evil in human life than mildly sub-Christian conduct within the family circle."³¹

The τοῖς λοιποῖς in Eph. 6:10 may be traced back to Eph. 4:25-31 wherein the believer is warned not to give the devil a foothold. It even links back to Eph. 4:12, 16 wherein "the Christian warfare is the external counterpart of his (Paul) emphasis on the inward growth and edification of the church."³² In essence this passage is a climax of the

²⁹ D. A. Carson, Douglas J. Moo, and Leon Morris, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992), 305.

³⁰ Andrew T. Lincoln, "'Stand, Therefore ...': Ephesians 6:10-20 as *Peroratio*," *Biblical Interpretation* 3, no. 1 (March 1995): 99-114. Lincoln elaborates, "As such, in rhetorical terms it is the *peroratio*, the closing part of an address that sums up its main themes in a way that evokes the appropriate emotional response in the audience" ("Ephesians," 456).

³¹ C. Leslie Mitton, "Ephesians," in *The New Century Bible Commentary Based on the Revised Standard Version*, ed. Ronald E. Clements and Matthew Black (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1973), 219. "Perhaps, however, it is the writer's intention to insist that whether it be in flagrant wickedness or in apparently slight unfaithfulness to Christ's high standard of human life," Mitton alleges, "it is the same power of evil which is at work, seeking to outwit and defeat the unwary Christian" (Ibid.)

³² Wood, 85. Unity and building up of the body of Christ are essential preparation for the inescapable confrontation with evil (Ibid.).

whole letter which was followed by the final greetings and blessings from Paul in Eph. 6:21-24.

Syntactical Analysis

The syntactical analysis is one of the two key steps in exegesis, the other one is theological analysis.³³ This sub-section examines the literary type and shows the syntactical display of the passage.

Literary Type

Ephesians is an explanatory or expository prose. It maintains the framework of an epistle but it has some features that make it different from other Pauline letters. It is sometimes a sermon and at other times a prayer. Its literary *genre* is not easy to categorize because of its peculiar combination of the homiletical and liturgical.³⁴ More specifically Eph. 6:10-20 is a hortatory speech that issues “a call both to be ready for battle and to stand firm in the battle that is already in progress.”³⁵

Syntactical Display³⁶

Eph. 6:10-20 is a pericope that may be subdivided into three parts. In vv. 10-13 the emphasis is on the importance of putting on the armor of God to be strong and to stand in the spiritual warfare against demonic powers. God’s armor is described in detail in vv. 14-17. Prayer is the focal point in vv. 18-20.

In the first part (vv. 10-13) three imperatives come after τοῖς λοιποῖς immediately, namely, *ἰνδυναμοῖσθε*, *ἰνδβσασθε*, and *ἰναλζβετε*. These three terms have similar meaning which stresses the need for divine empowering to withstand the adversary.³⁷ The first imperative “be strengthened” (*ἰνδυναμοῖσθε*) is linked with two prepositional phrases which reveal the origin of power is “in the Lord,” and “in His mighty power.”³⁸ The second imperative “put on the armor of God” (*ἰνδβσασθε τῷ πανοπλῷ· ἰν*

³³ Kaiser stresses, “The way in which words are put together so as to form phrases, clauses, and sentences will aid us in discovering the author’s pattern of meaning” (89).

³⁴ Wood, 17. Arnold refuses to categorize this particular passage as “an integral part of an early Christian catechetical pattern of teaching” related to baptism. See Arnold’s defense in *Ephesians* (106-7).

³⁵ Lincoln, “Ephesians,” 433. Paul’s battle speech is similar to that of the speeches of generals in times of war (Ibid., 433-35).

³⁶ See Appendix for the syntactical display or block diagram of the passage. The Greek text is taken from *The Greek New Testament* (Kurt Aland and others, eds., 3d corrected ed. [Stuttgart, West Germany: United Bible Societies, 1983], 678-79).

³⁷ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 105.

³⁸ Lincoln, “Ephesians,” 431.

τοῦ θεοῦ) explains how to be strong.³⁹ The “armor of God” (τῶν πανοπλιῶν τοῦ θεοῦ) serves as a contrast to the “wiles of the devil” (τῶν μεθοδεῶν τοῦ διαβόλου) in v. 11. The third imperative “take up” (ἵνα λαμβάνετε) continues the same sense as the *ἵνα δύνασθε* of v. 11.⁴⁰

Robert Wild takes special notice of the rhetorical structure of Eph. 6:10-17. He observes that the Ephesian author highlights the importance of Eph. 6:12 by presenting a series of parallel words and ideas on both sides of this verse like a “ring composition.”⁴¹ It is clear from the syntactical display that “against” (πρὸς) occurs repeatedly in the passage. Specifically the use of πρὸς five times in v. 12 emphasizes the “face to face conflict to the finish” which accents the determined hostility that is confronting the Christian in this spiritual warfare.⁴² This preposition is placed repeatedly before each demonic entity which appears that “each must be dealt with individually.”⁴³

The theme proposition of Eph. 6:10-20 is in v. 14 of the second part (vv. 14-17).⁴⁴ The imperative “stand” is the keyword in the passage. “Stand” (ἵστημι) and its cognate verb “withstand” (ἵκνω) are used four times in this passage in vv. 11, 13 and 14. ἵστημι is a term used in the military for holding on to one’s position.⁴⁵ The verb ἵστημι is followed by six participles and an imperative verb, which are all dependent on the main thought of v. 14, namely, περιζώσμενοι (v. 14), ἵκνωμενοι (v. 14), ἵκνωμενοι

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 105.

⁴¹ See Robert A. Wild’s article “Put on the Armor of God” for a description of this ringlike structure (*The Bible Today* 36, no. 6 [December 1998]: 365). See also Eckel’s similar structural analysis of the passage (289). Lincoln objects, “Verse 12 does not function as the central element in 6:10-20, as Wild claims. Rather it has a supportive role, explaining the exhortation to put on the full armor of God in order to stand” (“Ephesians,” 431).

⁴² Archibald Thomas Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, vol. 4, *The Epistle of Paul* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1931), 550; Wood, 86. Lincoln observes, “The purpose of donning the armor is delineated by means of an accusative and infinitive construction introduced by πρὸς, ‘in order that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil.’ The reason for putting on the armor is further underlined by the ἵνα clause in v 12, which makes clear that the battle in which believers are engaged is not one against human foes but one against spiritual cosmic powers” (“Ephesians,” 431).

⁴³ Eckel, 289.

⁴⁴ Arnold disagrees with Wild that v. 12 is the central element in Eph. 6:10-20 but argues rather it “functions as an explication of the nature of the enemy.” He stresses, “The admonition to acquire divine strengthening and enablement has not been given by the author as an end in itself. The strength required for a particular purpose - that the believer might be enabled to stand against the evil ‘powers’ and successfully resist them” (*Ephesians*, 105). Cf. Wild, 365-70.

⁴⁵ Wood, 86. Arnold highlights the central message as follows: “The passage is not about casting out evil spirits or dealing with territorial spirits. These verses describe the common struggle with evil in the day-to-day lives of Christians. Paul does this by underlining the role of demons as a source of evil influence” (*Three Questions*, 37). Wild states, “The chief concern of Ephesians 6:10-20 is to exhort Christians to rely upon and make use of God’s power in the fight against evil.” He cautions not to dramatize this warfare with the principalities and powers because it is “waged in the course of ordinary daily human activity” (368).

(v. 15), $\square\nu\alpha\lambda\alpha\beta \bar{\nu}\tau\epsilon\varsigma$ (v. 16), $\delta\Xi\xi\alpha\sigma\theta\epsilon$ (v. 17), $\pi\rho\omicron\sigma\epsilon\upsilon\chi \bar{\mu}\epsilon\nu\omicron\iota$ (v. 18), and $\square\gamma\rho\upsilon\pi\nu\omicron\bar{\nu}\tau\epsilon\varsigma$ (v. 18).⁴⁶ Eph. 6:14-17 lists the six items of the armor of God in three groups of two: girdle ($\epsilon\sigma\phi\bar{\nu}\varsigma$) and breastplate ($\theta\phi\rho\alpha\xi$), foot or shoes ($\pi\omicron\beta\varsigma$) and shield ($\theta\upsilon\rho\epsilon \bar{\nu}\varsigma$), helmet ($\pi\epsilon\rho\iota\kappa\epsilon\phi\alpha\lambda\alpha \bar{\nu}\alpha$) and sword ($\mu\varsigma\chi\alpha\iota\rho\alpha$).⁴⁷

The third part (vv. 18-20) seems to be unrelated to the preceding parts (vv. 10-17) in terms of its content. However, this is not the case with regards to syntax. The two participial clauses of v. 18 links it clearly to previous verses; hence, showing the close relation between spiritual warfare and prayer.⁴⁸ Paul emphasizes that prayer is important by breaking the usual pattern of listing the weapons: (1) he does not use a material metaphor to correspond to prayer; and (2) he uses the adjective $\pi\bar{\nu}\varsigma$ four times in v. 18.⁴⁹ The "gospel" ($\epsilon\leftrightarrow\alpha\gamma\gamma\Xi\lambda\omicron\nu$) in vv. 15, 19 and "Spirit" ($\pi\nu\epsilon\bar{\nu}\mu\alpha$) in vv. 17-18 function as conceptual links between the second and third parts of the passage. In the last two verses Paul requested the believers to pray for him. The two $\zeta\nu\alpha$ clauses specify the content and purpose of prayer that the apostle requested from the believers.

Verbal Analysis

In the verbal analysis section the important words in each verse are examined according to the author's intended meaning. Cultural as well as figurative meanings are taken into consideration. Parallel passages (verbal and topic parallel) and some key theological terms are also examined and incorporated in the analysis. This sub-section consists of the following three segments: (1) Eph. 6:10-13, (2) Eph. 6:14-17, and (3) Eph. 6:18-20. The Greek text and the researcher's personal translation of each verse are presented below.

Ephesians 6:10-13

Eph. 6:10 says: $\text{Το}\bar{\nu} \lambda\omicron\iota\pi\omicron\bar{\nu}, \text{f}\nu\delta\upsilon\nu\alpha\mu\omicron\bar{\nu}\sigma\theta\epsilon \text{f}\nu \kappa\upsilon\rho\bar{\nu}\cdot\sum, \kappa\alpha\Re \text{f}\nu \tau\bar{\nu} \kappa\rho\varsigma\tau\epsilon\iota \tau\bar{\nu}\zeta$

⁴⁶ Arnold explains, "All other thoughts are subservient to this ultimate aim. The divine armor and power are provided for the attainment of this goal. The opponents are carefully delineated so that the reader may know the nature of the enemies to be withstood. Even prayer is given with the goal of resistance in mind" (*Ephesians*, 106).

⁴⁷ R. Garland Young, "A Soldier's Armor," *Biblical Illustrator* 21, no. 1 (Fall 1994): 39. Young notes that the javelin and greaves were not included in the list since they had been eliminated from the legionary's standard outfit in Paul's day (Ibid.).

⁴⁸ Bruce asserts that there is no obvious division in the Greek text between this exhortation to prayer and the preceding verses on resisting spiritual enemies. He further contends that the imperatival use of the participle "praying" ($\pi\rho\omicron\sigma\epsilon\upsilon\chi \bar{\mu}\epsilon\nu\omicron\iota$) appears to fit in the series of participles dependent on the imperative "stand" ($\sigma\tau\bar{\nu}\tau\epsilon$) at the beginning of v. 14 (411). Eckel observes, "Reference to 'the Spirit' in verse 17b and immediately again in verse 18 establishes a literary linkage that is more than accidental. The sword 'of the Spirit' is wielded through prayer 'in the Spirit'" (292).

⁴⁹ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 112.

Ὀσχυβος α↔το-. Το- λοιπο- means “finally.” Some texts and text critics would read it as τ∈ λοιπ̄ v.⁵⁰ It refers back to the preceding verses in its immediate context.⁵¹ It does not only introduce the conclusion of the ethical section of the passage but “carries instead the idiomatic sense of something left over; thus the translation “henceforth,” or “for the future,” or during the time that remains.”⁵²

fvδυναμο-σθε is a present passive imperative form of fvδυναμ̄ ω which is translated as “be strengthened.”⁵³ The present tense signifies that the “‘empowering’ is a continuing, day by day, moment by moment, experience.”⁵⁴ The translation “be strong” could wrongly promote self-effort, whereas the rendering “be strengthened” for this passive verb spurs the believer to rely on the Lord for strength.⁵⁵ The imperative mood reveals that it is not an option but it is a command for the believer to depend constantly and totally on God in the face of spiritual battle.

κρςτει is the dative neuter singular noun which may be translated “power” or “strength,” while Ὀσχυβος is the genitive feminine singular noun which may be translated “might.” There is a difference between Ὀσχυβς and κρςτος. The Greek Ὀσχυβς generally connotes physical power, although not exclusively, while κρςτος has a similar meaning “but refers rather to the exercise of authority.”⁵⁶ The three power-connoting terms, i.e., fvδυναμο-σθε, κρςτει, and Ὀσχυβος are chained together to highlight God’s power against the demonic powers which are feeble in comparison.⁵⁷ This verse may be translated as: “Finally, be strengthened in the Lord and in the power of His might.”

⁵⁰ R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul’s Epistles to the Galatians, to the Ephesians, and to the Philippians* (Columbus, OH: The Wartburg Press, 1946), 656. Both are adverbs with very little difference between them (Ibid.).

⁵¹ See the discussion on “Immediate Context” under “Contextual Analysis” in this paper.

⁵² Paul T. Eckel, “Ephesians 6:10-20,” *Interpretation* 45 (July 1991): 289; (journal on-line); available from <http://www.purl.org/atlaonline>; Internet; accessed 28 August 2002. Το- λοιπο- is an incipient adverb which is not an adverb technically but is adverbial in force (Archibald Thomas Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* [Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1934], 550). It is an adverbial expression that may be translated as “henceforth, finally for the rest” (C. F. D. Moule, *An Idiom Book of New Testament Greek*, 2d ed. [Cambridge University Press, 1959; reprint, 1986], 39 [page citation is to the reprint edition]). See also Nigel Turner, *Syntax*, vol. 3 of *A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, ed. James Hope Moulton (Edinburgh, Scotland: T. & T. Clark, 1963), 235.

⁵³ Robertson comments that fvδυναμο-σθε in this verse is a verb that is difficult to classify as middle or passive (*Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, 816).

⁵⁴ Mitton, 220.

⁵⁵ Kenneth S. Wuest, *Ephesians and Colossians in the Greek New Testament for the English Reader* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1953), 140. Wild thinks that Eph. 6:10 is an allusion to Isa. 40:26 that gives emphasis to the awesomeness of God’s power (366).

⁵⁶ Georg Braumann, *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, vol. 3: Pri-Z, ed. Colin Brown (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1978), s.v. “Strength, Force, Horn, Violence, Power,” 711. Lenski says that Ὀσχυβς pertains to the might possessed whether it is practised or not while κρςτος is the strength in its practice (657).

⁵⁷ Arnold, *Powers of Darkness*, 154.

Eph.

6:11

says:

fvδβσασθε τ←ν πανοπλ.:αν το→ θεο→, πρες τε δβνασθαι ↓μ□ς

στ↑ναι πρες τ□ς μεθοδε.:ας το→ διαβ λου. fvδβσασθε is the aorist middle imperative of fvδβομαι which is a call to “put on” or “to clothe” commonly used by Paul. The aorist tense demonstrates that “this is one definite step which the Christian must take” as he appropriates God’s provision of spiritual power.⁵⁸ The middle voice carries the sense of “put on for one’s self or by oneself.”⁵⁹ This reveals the responsibility of the believer to do his part by putting on the armor of God as God does His part of providing strength and armor. It is intended as a command as expressed by the imperative mood of the verb.

πανοπλ.:αν is composed of π□ς which means “all or whole,” and ◎πλον for “weapon,” so it literally means “all the weapons.”⁶⁰ It is used in the figurative sense only in the NT connoting a complete gear of personal armor for offense and defense in spiritual battle.⁶¹ Paul uses the genitive case to describe the armor of God which means that it is supplied and owned by God.⁶² The armor of God is described in different passages throughout the Bible as motif of the divine warrior (Isa. 59, 1 Thess. 5, and Eph. 6).⁶³

⁵⁸ Mitton, 220.

⁵⁹ Thoralf Gilbrant, ed., *The New Testament Study Bible*, vol. 8: Galatians-Philemon, *The Complete Biblical Library* (Springfield, MS: World Library Press, Inc., 1989), 169.

⁶⁰ Wuest, 140. See also W. E. Vine, *An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words with their Precise Meaning for English Readers*, vol. 1: A-D (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1940), 75.

⁶¹ Albrecht Oepke, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 5: =-Aα, ed. Gerhard Friedrich, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1967), s.vv. “◎πλον, ◎πλ.:ζω, πανοπλ.:α, ζφννυμι, διαζφννυμι, περιζφννυμι, ζφνη, θφραξ, ↓ποδΞω, (↓π δημα, σανδςλιον), θυρε ζ, περικεφαλα.:α,” 300; Bruce, 404. Wuest reveals that “in classical Greek, the word was used of the *full armor* of a *heavy-armed soldier*,” therefore, it emphasizes *completeness* without lacking anything (140). T. K. Abbott confirms this by saying that “the completeness of the armament is the point insisted on.” (“A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians and to the Colossians,” in *The International Critical Commentary*, ed. Samuel Rolles Driver, Alfred Plummer, and Charles Augustus Briggs [Edinburgh, Scotland: T. & T. Clark, 1897], 181). On the contrary, Markus Barth disputes that the term πανοπλ.:α “emphasizes the quality of the weapons rather than their complete number.” He proposes the term “splendid armor.” Compare his five arguments against the literal interpretation of the term as “whole armor.” (“Ephesians 4-6,” in *The Anchor Bible*, ed. William Foxwell Allbright and David Noel Freeman [Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co., 1974], 793-95).

⁶² Lenski, 658; Lincoln, “Ephesians,” 442.

⁶³ T. R. Yoder Neufeld, “Put on the Armour of God”: *The Divine Warrior from Isaiah to Ephesians* (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 1-182. Wild believes that Eph. 6:14-17 “unquestionably” alludes to Isaiah 59:17 and that these verses urge believers “to take up God’s very own armor and weapons” (365-66). Paula Qualls and John D. W. Watts identify that Eph. 6:13-17 has similar phrases with Isaiah. They list the following: Eph. 6:14 matches Isa. 11:5b, 59:17. Eph. 6:15 echos Isa. 52:7. Eph. 6:17 and Isa. 59:17 are similar regarding the helmet of salvation. Eph. 6:17 resembles Isa. 11:14, 51:16 regarding the sword of the spirit (“Isaiah in Ephesians,” *Review and Expositor* 93, no. 2 [Spring 1996]: 255-56).

πρ ϵ ς τ ϵ with the infinitive δβνασθαι (to be able) expresses purpose.⁶⁴ στ $\hat{\alpha}$ ναι is the aorist active infinitive form of ζ στημι which appears in different forms in vv. 11, 13, and 14.⁶⁵ It is used as a metaphor in these verses which means “stand against” or “stand your ground.”⁶⁶ It specifies the keeping of the field victoriously while the contest is going on; it is the opposite of fleeing, yielding, being thrown down.”⁶⁷ ζ στημι signifies “stand against” and “remain standing” in battle in vv. 11 and 13; whereas it means “stand ready” in v. 14.⁶⁸ ζ στημι implies the opposite of “falling” or “wavering.”⁶⁹ The aorist active indicative form of ζ στημι (♣στησεν) is used in Matt. 4:5 and Luke 4:9 which describes Jesus being led by the devil to stand on the pinnacle of the temple but he eventually withstands and resists temptation.⁷⁰ When this usage is applied to the passage under study, it offers a hint that the believer can emulate Christ in standing firm and resisting the devil.

μεθοδε:ας, translated as “wiles” or “schemes,” refers to treatment or procedure, but in a negative sense it pertains to “cunning arts, deceit, craft, trickery, or deception.”⁷¹ The plural form indicates multiple and repeated attacks.⁷² διαβ $\bar{\lambda}$ ου is the

⁶⁴ Robertson, *Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, 1003. Ernest de Witt Burton states that “it is occasionally used with the sense *with reference to*” (*Syntax of the Moods and Tenses in New Testament Greek* [Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1900], 162).

⁶⁵ Robertson notes, “In Eph. 6:13 especially στ $\hat{\alpha}$ ναι is stronger alone than with \square ντ:.” (*Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, 563).

⁶⁶ Thoralf Gilbrant, ed., *The New Testament Greek-English Dictionary*, vol. 13: Zeta-Kappa, *The Complete Biblical Library* (Springfield, MS: World Library Press, Inc., 1990), s.v. “ ζ στημι,” 182.

⁶⁷ John Peter Lange, “Galatians-Colossians,” in *Commentary on the Holy Scriptures: Critical, Doctrinal and Homiletical*, vol. 16, trans. and ed. with addition Philipp Schaff (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, n.d.), 222. The word also means “standing firm, holding one’s position, resisting, not surrendering to the opposition but prevailing against it” (Lincoln, “Ephesians,” 442).

⁶⁸ Gilbrant, vol. 13, s.v. “ ζ στημι,” 182. Wood explains that it is essential for a soldier to first maintain his ground before launching any offensive. The word in verse 13 speaks of standing firm in the midst of battle whereas in verse 14 it refers to “standing ready in anticipation of it” (87).

⁶⁹ Michael Wolter, *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 2: $f\xi$ - $\psi\phi\nu\iota\omicron\nu$, ed. Horst Balz and Gerhard Schneider (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1991), s.vv. “ ζ στημι, \supset στ ϵ σ $\nu\omega$,” 207.

⁷⁰ Walter Grundmann, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 7: Γ , ed. Gerhard Friedrich, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1971), s.vv. “στ ζ κω, ζ στημι,” 649.

⁷¹ Wilhelm Michaelis, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 5: $\text{--}\Lambda\alpha$, ed. Gerhard Friedrich, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1967), s.vv.

“ $\textcircled{\delta}$ $\bar{\zeta}$, $\textcircled{\delta}$ ηγ $\bar{\zeta}$, $\textcircled{\delta}$ ηγ Ξ ω, μεθοδε:ας, ε ζ σοδος, ♣ξοδος, δι Ξ ξοδος, ε \leftrightarrow οδ $\bar{\omega}$,” 102; Wuest, 141.

⁷² Lange, 221. Lange adds, “Craft and strength are both present in the assault, but the latter is concealed under the former, thus becoming dangerous and destructive” (Ibid.). Page issues a solemn warning regarding the devil’s schemes. The word *schemes* is used in relation to human beings in Eph. 4:14. However, in this verse it is referring to Satan, indicating that he does not always launch a frontal assault but uses craftiness and deceitfulness to trap his prey unawares. He cautions, “In fact, evil is usually more dangerous when it is cloaked in what appears to be goodness than when it takes its baser

genitive masculine singular form of δισβολος which is the Greek term for “devil.”⁷³ In the New Testament the devil and Satan are interchangeable names that refer to the same supernatural being who is “wholly the enemy of God and righteousness.”⁷⁴ He is the chief ruler of the demons. “The single most important function of the Devil in the New Testament,” Riley states, “is to rule the Kingdom of Darkness which opposes the Kingdom of God.”⁷⁵ This verse may be translated as: “Put on yourself the full armor of God that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil.”

Eph.

6:12

says:

⊙τι ο↔κ ⚣στιν ≡μ ϕν ≡ πζλη πρες αϋμα καϋ ςςρκα, □λλ□ πρες
τ□ς □ρχςς, πρες τ□ς ϖξουσ.:ας, πρες τοϋ κοσμοκρςτορας τοϋ σκ τους τοβτου,
πρες τ□ πνευματικ□ τ↑ς πονηρ.:ας ϖν το ϕς ϖπουραν.:οις.⁷⁶ The personal pronoun
≡μ ϕν,

which is translated as “to us,” is preferred over its variant ↓μ ϕν due to textual difficulty.⁷⁷ πζλη is an ancient word which means “to throw or swing.”⁷⁸ It is a technical term for wrestling.⁷⁹ It is generally considered that there is a change of

expressions. The use of ‘schemes’ in the plural suggests that Satan’s attacks may take a variety of forms and/or may come repeatedly. In either case, constant watchfulness is required” (187).

⁷³ Greg J. Riley, *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible*, ed. Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking, and Pieter W. van der Horst, 2d rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Brill Academic Publishers and Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999), s.v. “Devil,” 244. In ancient Greek δισβολος is used to refer generally to something or someone “slanderous” and “defamatory.” The proper noun denotes that he is the “great Adversary of God and righteousness” in the intertestamental Jewish literature and among Christian writers. The Septuagint uses it as a translation of the Hebrew יָדוּשׁ to refer to the “super-human Adversary of God” (Ibid.). It is also used in the LXX for “accuser, adversary, or seducer” (Werner Foerster, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 2: A–H, ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley [Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1964], s.vv. “διαβζλλω, δισβολος,” 72).

⁷⁴ Peggy L. Day, *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible*, ed. Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking, and Pieter W. van der Horst, 2d rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Brill Academic Publishers and Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999), s.v. “Satan,” 726; Riley, 247. Other names given to the Devil in the NT are the Tempter (Mt. 4:3), the Evil One (Mt. 6:13), the Enemy (Mt. 13:39), the Accuser (Rev. 12:10), and the Ruler of this world (Jn. 12:31).

⁷⁵ Riley, 247.

⁷⁶ Wink calls this verse “the *locus classicus* for the demonic interpretation of the powers.” He exclaims that “no other interpretation except the demonic is possible” (*Naming the Powers*, 85). Markus Barth also believes that “6:12 speaks only of evil powers” (“Ephesians 4-6,” 801).

⁷⁷ Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament: A Companion Volume to the Third Edition of the United Bible Societies’ Greek New Testament* (Stuttgart, Germany: United Bible Societies, 1971), 610. Metzger states, “Whereas the preponderance of external evidence (P⁴⁶ B D* G Ψ 81 *al*) appears to support ↓μ ϕν, the natural tendency of copyists would have been to alter ≡μ ϕν to ↓μ ϕν, since the rest of the paragraph involves the second person. A majority of the committee preferred ≡μ ϕν as being perhaps the more difficult reading (Ibid.).

⁷⁸ Robertson, *Word Pictures*, 550.

⁷⁹ Michael E. Gudorf, “The Use of Πζλη in Ephesians 6:12,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 117, no. 2 (Summer 1998): 331. Joseph Henry Thayer gives the following picture of the term: “a contest between two in which each endeavors to throw the other, and which is decided when the victor is able θλ.: βειν καϋ κατΞχειν his prostrate antagonist, i.e., hold him down with his hand upon his neck.” He adds, “The term is transferred to the struggle of Christians with the powers of

metaphor from the military to athletic sense. There is confusion as to the change of figure from that of a Roman soldier to that of a Greek wrestler because a soldier does not partake in a wrestling contest wearing full armor.⁸⁰ The difficulty disappears when one understands that the wrestling match pictures a contest at close quarters, similar to the battle between the believer and the demons.⁸¹

A comprehensive search of all words consisting of some form of *πζλη* in the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* data base yields some relevant findings. The author of Ephesians made a “clever, if not brilliant, literary touch” by his choice of *πζλη*, instead of *μζχη* which is normally expected.⁸² Gudorf states as follows:

In Plutarch’s Moralia, there occurs an interesting word that combines the concept of a heavily armored soldier (@πλ.:της) with that of wrestling (πζλη). The resulting compound, @πλιτοπζλας, is a term used to describe a heavily armored soldier who also happens to be an accomplished wrestler. As one might imagine, such an individual would be particularly formidable in the arena of close-quarter military combat, where only one is left standing. The picture of an individual such as this fits quite well with the extended metaphor in Eph 6:10-18, where the consistently prominent theme is to remain standing in the face of attack (the exhortation “to stand” occurs four times in these nine verses).⁸³

πζλη is used in Eph. 6 for two important concepts related to spiritual warfare. First, the term is related to arms and close-quarter combat, where it is critical to stay on one’s feet.⁸⁴ Second, the term is associated with trickery, cunning, and strategy.⁸⁵ Gudorf concludes thus:

In Eph 6:10-18, the author’s primary intent was to inspire and instruct his readers how they might successfully stand against the devil, a both cunning and dangerous opponent. This being the case, it made perfect sense for the author to draw upon the figure of a fully armored soldier who also happened to be an accomplished wrestler. By making this adroit selection of metaphorical imagery, the various aspects

Evil: Eph. vi. 12" (*The New Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament with Index* [Lafayette, IN: Christian Copyrights, Inc., 1981], 474).

⁸⁰ Wuest, 142.

⁸¹ Ibid. A hand-to-hand fight is emphasized by the Greek word, not struggle or conflict in general (Markus Barth, “Ephesians 4-6,” 763; Lange, 221).

⁸² Gudorf, 332.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 333.

⁸⁵ Cleon L. Rogers, Jr. and Cleon L. Rogers III. *The New Linguistic and Exegetical Key to the Greek New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1998), 446.

of standing, cunning, and danger, all crucial elements to his intended parenetic instruction, are covered with a single stroke of the brush. Perhaps most importantly, the use of *πζλη* helps impress upon the reader's mind that the battle being described here is one in which close-quarter struggling is involved. In concert with this, then, the extensive armor images presented throughout this section including the baldric, the breastplate, the military sandal, the shield, the helmet, and the sword serve the purpose rhetorically of further impressing upon the reader the dangerousness of the battle being waged. In so doing, it also adds a sense of urgency to the present exhortation.⁸⁶

πρ ζ̄ is used five times in this verse in the sense of “against” or a face to face conflict to the end.⁸⁷ ᾱμα κᾱρ σζρκα means “blood and flesh” and this reverse order only appears here, with emphasis on the contrast between human and superhuman powers.⁸⁸ This phrase refers to “humanity in its weakness and transitoriness.”⁸⁹ Blood is mentioned first to prevent the readers from thinking that flesh is inherently evil.⁹⁰

□ρχςς is the first declension accusative feminine plural form of □ρχΖ, which may be translated “principalities” or “rulers.” Generally □ρχΖ means “primacy” in time or rank.⁹¹ In the New Testament the term is used for “beginning” or “power.”⁹² If □ρχΖ applies to primacy of rank, it is only the context that could determine if it refers to earthly or supraterritorial spheres or figures of power.⁹³ As used in Eph. 6:12 it may pertain to a

⁸⁶ Gudorf, 334.

⁸⁷ Robertson, *Word Pictures*, 550.

⁸⁸ Abbott, 181.

⁸⁹ Lincoln, “Ephesians,” 444.

⁹⁰ Wood, 86. Lenski also suggests that “the point appears to be the avoidance of the connotation of the evil in our nature which is in alliance with the devil, which thus also requires the divine panoply in order to be defeated” (659).

⁹¹ Gerhard Delling, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 1: A–Γ, ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1964), s.vv.

“□ρχω, □ρχΖ, □παρχΖ, □ρχα ρος, □ρχηγ ζ̄, □ρχων” 479. Wuest points out that □ρχΖ refers to the “first ones, preeminent ones, leaders.” (141).

⁹² *Ibid.*, 81-82. Wink states that □ρχΖ may refer to the office itself, or an incumbent, or the structural powers of government, kingdom, realm, dominion. It is a more abstract term for power. . . . He warns, “The fact that almost every extant pre-Christian use of *arch* and *arch* n refers to the role played by some human agent in the exercise of office should caution us against assuming too quickly that their use in the New Testament implies exclusively angelic or demonic powers.” He elaborates, “It is within this language-world that *arch* and *arch* n were occasionally used to designate spiritual powers, good or evil. It was far from the case that these terms primarily referred to spiritual entities; to the contrary, these terms could be extended to take in spiritual powers because they were the normal terms of power in all its manifestations” (*Naming the Powers*, 10, 13-15). See his list of usage of □ρχΖ and □ρχων for spiritual powers in the New Testament period (*Ibid.*, 151-56).

⁹³ Konrad Weiss, *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 1: Ααρφν – Ενφχ, ed. Horst Balz and Gerhard Schneider (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1990), s.v. “□ρχΖ, ης, ≡,” 162.

“title for a supernatural force or power, whether good or evil, which has some control over the activities and destiny of human beings.”⁹⁴ The powers in Eph. 6:12 is spiritual in nature and are part of the evil world of spirits controlled by the devil which engages in conflict with believers.⁹⁵ “There can be little doubt,” concludes Aune, “that the powers mentioned in Eph 1:21 and 6:12, and specifically the *archai* must be understood as evil supernatural powers.”⁹⁶

□ρχΖ is frequently combined with *ἑξουσία* that illustrates a hendiadys for “powers, rulers, spheres of control, authorities, and concretely, governing authorities, and officials.”⁹⁷ Weiss elucidates as follows:

A different sphere, one which extends beyond all inner-worldly boundaries, is that of the powers which exercise their influence throughout the entire cosmos. It is this sphere to which the double expression refers in the Pauline and deutero-Pauline literature, as evidenced by the relationship to and connection with other cosmic powers such as ἄγγελοι δυνάμεις (Rom 8:38), θρῶνοι κυρῶσσητες (Col 1:16), ἐν μᾶτα (Eph 1:21), κοσμοκρῆτορες (6:12) etc., or by the addition of ἐν τοῖς φουρανῶσι (3:10, 6:12).⁹⁸

ἑξουσία is the accusative feminine plural form of *ἑξουσία* which means “right” or “authority.”⁹⁹ It also means “freedom of choice, authority, ruling power, a bearer of authority.”¹⁰⁰ Strictly speaking the plural form does not function as a name “but

⁹⁴ David E. Aune, *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible*, ed. Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking, and Pieter W. van der Horst, 2d rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Brill Academic Publishers and Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999), s.v. “Archai,” 77. Aune points out the three problems in interpreting *archai* in the NT. First, one has to ascertain if it refers to human rulers or supernatural rulers. Second, if it refers to supernatural beings, one has to resolve whether these are good or evil. Third, one has to decide if *archai* is distinct from other categories such as *exousiai* and *dynamis* or these terms are interchangeable (Ibid., 79).

⁹⁵ Hans Bietenhard, *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, vol. 1: A-F, ed. Colin Brown (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1975), s.v. “Beginning, Origin, Rule, Ruler, Originator,” 167; Delling, 82. Lange believes that □ρχης “indicates the organization of the kingdom of the devil, denoting the chiefs and heads of the separate groups” (221).

⁹⁶ Aune, 79. Page affirms that “*arche* and *exousia* are unequivocally used of evil spirits in Ephesians 6:12” (245).

⁹⁷ Weiss, 162. Wuest states that □ρχΖ and *ἑξουσία* are the principalities and powers representing the demons of Satan in the lower realm that constitute his kingdom in the air (141).

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Werner Foerster, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 2: Δ–H, ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1964), s.v. “ἑξουσία, ἑξουσία, ἑξουσία, κατεξουσία,” 562.

¹⁰⁰ Otto Betz, *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, vol. 2: G-Pre, ed. Colin Brown (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1976), s.v. “Might, Authority, Throne,” 606. Wink explains that “*Exousia* denotes the legitimations and sanctions by which power is maintained; it generally tends to be abstract.” He adds, “The New Testament uses *exousia* 102 times, 87 of them for the impersonal capacity for action which is bestowed by an office. . . . 85

as a cultic epithet denoting celestial forces.”¹⁰¹ The term is frequently used with ἄρχαι., δυνάμεις, and κυριότητες as a special term for supernatural powers in NT.¹⁰²

κοσμοκρῆτορας means world tyrant or ruler.¹⁰³ The term is a rare and late word which means “heavenly rulers” and is used for deities and astrological planets.¹⁰⁴ The term is a πᾶξ λεγόμενα that appears only in Eph. 6:12 in the plural form which refers to the “cosmic rulers, the evil spirits, against whom we are to wage war.”¹⁰⁵

σκοτεινότης refers to “darkness” which is not simply an absence of light but rather it is an “absolute antagonism to light and thus denotes the fearful power that is hostile to God.”¹⁰⁶ This dark domain is connected to the “dominion of darkness” from where believers were rescued (Col. 1:13).¹⁰⁷

τὰ πνευματικὰ τῆς πονηρίας refers to evil spirits.¹⁰⁸ πνευματικὸν is the neuter plural form of the adjective πνευματικὸς which carry the sense of belonging to the realm

percent of its uses refer to a *structural dimension of existence*, that permission or authorization provided by some legitimate authorizing person or body. In other words, the *exousia* in the New Testament are, in the vast majority of cases, not spiritual beings but ideological justifications, political or religious legitimations, and delegated permissions” (*Naming the Powers*, 10, 15-16).

¹⁰¹ Hans Dieter Betz, *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible*, ed. Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking, and Pieter W. van der Horst, 2d rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Brill Academic Publishers and Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999), s.v. “Authorities,” 124.

¹⁰² Foerster, s.v. “κρῆτορας, δυνασταί, κυβερνήται, κατεξουσιάζω,” 571.

¹⁰³ Lenski proposes, “‘World tyrants’ is better than ‘world rulers,’ for κρῆτορας in the compound noun contains the idea of exerting strength and utter hardness and thus acting like the worst tyrant” (660).

¹⁰⁴ Wilhelm Michaelis, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 3: Θ–Κ, ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1965), s.vv.

“κρῆτορας, (θεοκρατ.: α), κρατῆς, κραταιὸς, κραταιὸν, κοσμοκρῆτορας, παντοκρῆτορας,” 913; Lincoln, “Ephesians,” 444. Arnold remarks, “The κοσμοκρῆτορας is not considered omnipotent, but is placed alongside the principalities and ‘powers’ under the leadership of the devil! Far from being beneficial or helpful deities, the κοσμοκρῆτορες are regarded as evil spirits (πνευματικὸς) of this darkness” (*Ephesians*, 67). Wink agrees that the term “clearly refers to demonic beings” (*Naming the Powers*, 85).

¹⁰⁵ Braumann, 718.

¹⁰⁶ Lenski, 660. Riley cites, “The evil spirits inhabit the dangerous places like deserts and lonely wastes; they are powerful especially during dangerous situations and times, e.g., at night, during sleep, during a storm, eclipse or heat of mid-day, and childbirth” (236).

¹⁰⁷ Bruce, 406. Robertson deems that these “world-rulers” are limited to “this darkness” here on earth (*Word Pictures*, 550). Lange explains, “Κοινωνία more closely designates the local extension and region of the dominion, τὸ σκοτεινὸν its quality as to origin and corruptness, but it is limited by τοῦτου, which points to something transient and bounded” (221).

¹⁰⁸ William F. Arndt and Felix Wilbur Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 2d ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1979), s.v. “πνευματικὸς, Ζ, ν,” 679. Robertson observes that there is no word for “hosts” in the Greek. He suggests the translation as “the spiritual things (elements) of wickedness” (*Word Pictures*, 550). Abbott contends that πνευματικὸν could be translated as the “the spiritual forces, or elements of wickedness.” He asserts that to give it the meaning of “spiritual armies, or hosts” is to digress entirely from the common use of the word (183).

of spirit, of the essence or nature of spirit, embodying or manifesting spirit.¹⁰⁹ πονηρῆς is the genitive feminine singular form of πονηρῆς which connotes “defectiveness, sickness, imperfection, and lack” with the ethical sense of “baseness, wickedness, depravity, maliciousness, sinfulness, and intentionally practiced evil will” in Classical and Hellenistic Greek.¹¹⁰ The worldview of the first century is that evil spirits and demons are the mysterious powers which control and torment people, and the spirits which dominate the world of man, the spirit or god of this world.¹¹¹

ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς refers to the “heavenly places.” However, they are not the highest places dwelt by the holy angels but the lower heavens or the lower atmosphere surrounding the earth.¹¹² The prepositional phrase applies “primarily to the realm of the evil powers rather than to the locale in which believers are fighting.”¹¹³ The same phrase is used in 1:3 and 2:6 denoting the “location of the exalted Christ and also of believers because of their union with Him.”¹¹⁴ The believers are living on earth and yet are also presently in the heavenly realm with Christ, where the demonic powers are also located.¹¹⁵ If the “air” in Eph. 2:2 refers to the dwelling place of Satan and his demons, then it is synonymous with the “heavenly realms” that are occupied by evil spiritual

¹⁰⁹ James D. G. Dunn, *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, vol. 3: Pri-Z, ed. Colin Brown (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1978), s.vv. “Spirit, Holy Spirit,” 706. The Greek root *pneu-* indicates dynamic movement of the air (Eberhard Kamlah, *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, vol. 3: Pri-Z, ed. Colin Brown [Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1978], s.vv. “Spirit, Holy Spirit,” 689). Arnold proposes that the reason Paul chooses to use the neuter gender (τὸ πνευματικόν) is to associate it grammatically with the neuter term δαιμόνια or demons (*Three Questions*, 38). Markus Barth states that τὸ πνευματικόν “corresponds to the designation of the devil as a ‘spirit’ in 2:2 and the demons as ‘spirits’ in Mark 1:23, 26, etc.” (“Ephesians 4-6,” 803).

¹¹⁰ Günther Harder, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 6: Πε–Ρ, ed. Gerhard Friedrich, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1968), s.vv. “πονηρῆς, πονηρῆς, α,” 562-63; Arndt and Gingrich, s.v. “πονηρῆς, α, ας, ≡,” 690.

¹¹¹ Dunn, 694. Eduard Schweizer expounds, “an evil *pneuma* works in the lost, and evil spiritual powers rule in the air” (*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 6: Πε–Ρ, ed. Gerhard Friedrich, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley [Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1968], s.vv. “πνεῦμα, πνευματικῆς, πνεῦμα, φμνῶ, πνοζ, φκπνῶ, θε πνευστος,” 445). Arnold points out that τὸ πνευματικόν τῆς πονηρῆς is not a new class in the list of “powers” but rather a “comprehensive designation for all the classes of hostile spirit” (*Ephesians*, 68).

¹¹² Wuest, 141. Heaven is described as being “divided into a variety of levels and realms” (Otto Michel, *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 2: φξ–ψφνιον, ed. Horst Balz and Gerhard Schneider [Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1991], s.v. “φουρςνιος,” 46). The heavenly realm may be pictured as having a “succession of levels” with God’s throne on the highest level and evil forces inhabiting the lowest (Bruce, 406).

¹¹³ E. Percy, *Die Probleme der Kolosser- und Epheserbriefe* (Lund: C. W. K. Gleerup, 1946), 181, n. 7; quoted in Harris, 86, n. 45.

¹¹⁴ Harris, 86.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.* Harris adds, “The description of the evil powers as ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς was evidently objectionable to some copyists, perhaps for theological reasons; the phrase is missing from P⁴⁶ and from the version of the text cited by Didymus of Alexandria” (*Ibid.*, n. 46).

forces.¹¹⁶ By comparing 6:12 and 2:2 one seems to understand that “the sphere of influence within which the powers are active extends down to the earth, the world of humankind” and “it is not limited to the upper regions.”¹¹⁷ It may be concluded that *ἐν τοῖς ἰσχυραῖς* refers not only to the current location of the evil powers but also their sphere of influence, which stretches to the location of the current conflict in which believers participate through their presence there ‘in’ Christ.”¹¹⁸ This verse may be translated as: “For to us the struggle is not against blood and flesh, but against the principalities, against the authorities, against the cosmic rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.”

Eph.

6:13

says:

διὰ τὸ τοῦ ἀναλζβετε τῶν πανοπλῶν τοῦ θεοῦ, ἵνα δυνηθῆτε
 ἐντιστῆναι ἐν τοῖς ἰσχυροῖς καὶ πάντα κατεργασμένοι στῆναι.

ἀναλζβετε is second aorist active imperative of ἀναλαμβάνω. It means to “take up in order to carry.”¹¹⁹ In Eph. 6:13 it is used in the figurative sense for taking up the armor of God.¹²⁰ The figurative expression is “a powerful picture of the active fight of the believer against the powers of darkness.”¹²¹ The active voice indicates that the believer has to take the initiative to produce positive action by assertively taking the armor of God. The imperative mood carries a strong command sense indicating that the believer has no other option but to take up the armor of God in the fight against evil.

ἐντιστῆναι is the aorist active infinitive of ἐνθῆμι which basically means “set against, oppose, resist, and withstand.”¹²² It also means “to stand face to face.”¹²³ There are three verses (Eph. 6:13, 1 Pet. 5:9, and Jas. 4:7) that are interrelated in the fight against the devil. The Christian is to take up the armor of God to be able to withstand in the day of evil (Eph. 6:13). He also need to resist the devil and stand firm in his faith (1

¹¹⁶ Page, 186.

¹¹⁷ Harris, 86.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 89.

¹¹⁹ Arndt and Gingrich, s.v. “ἀναλαμβάνω,” 56. It is an old word for “picking up” (Robertson, *Word Pictures*, 550).

¹²⁰ Jacob Kremer, *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 1: Ἄρθρον – Ἐνφχ, ed. Horst Balz and Gerhard Schneider (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1990), s.v. “ἀναλαμβάνω,” 83.

¹²¹ Burghard Siede, *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, vol. 3: Pri-Z, ed. Colin Brown (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1978), s.vv. “Take, Receive,” 749.

¹²² Arndt and Gingrich, s.v. “ἐνθῆμι,” 67. W. E. Vine translates the term as “withstand” when used specifically in Eph. 6:13 (*An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words with their Precise Meanings for English Readers*, vol. 3: Lo-Ser [Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1940], s.v. “Resist,” 286).

¹²³ Robertson, *Word Pictures*, 550.

Pet. 5:9) so that the latter would flee from him (Jas. 4:7).¹²⁴

ἡν τὰ ἐμῶν τὰ πονηρὰ or the “evil day” refers to an exceptionally evil and hostile period of time when it is most tempting.¹²⁵ It is also a “day of distress” which might refer to “an ordinary day, the day of death, the day of judgment, or a day when the devil has special power.”¹²⁶

κατεργασμένοι is the aorist middle participle of κατεργάζομαι which have two basic meanings: (1) complete, achieve, accomplish, or bring about; and (2) overcome, overpower, subdue, or conquer.¹²⁷ Thus in Eph. 6:13 it has two interpretations. Based on the first meaning πάντα κατεργασμένοι could mean “after you have done or performed everything by putting on every single piece of God’s armor to be fully prepared for battle.”¹²⁸ The second meaning could render the phrase as “after you have overcome all opposition, or after proving victorious over everything.”¹²⁹ Most scholars, however, favor the first meaning because of the change from ντιστῆναι to στῆναι.¹³⁰ This verse may be translated as: “Because of this take up the full armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the day of evil and after having done everything, to stand.”

¹²⁴ Thoralf Gilbrant, ed., *The New Testament Greek-English Dictionary*, vol. 11: Alpha-Gamma, *The Complete Biblical Library* (Springfield, MS: World Library Press, Inc., 1990), s.v. “ἡν τὰ πονηρὰ,” 269. Both Jas. 4:7 and 1 Pet. 5:9 use the aorist imperative active form of ἡν τὰ πονηρὰ.

¹²⁵ Bruce, 406. The expression refers to “a time full of peril to Christian faith and steadfastness” (Thayer, 530). Abbott claims that this is day of the power of evil wherein the hostility is most severe (184). Lenski maintains that “Paul has in mind the critical and decisive day which comes for each one of us, sometimes but once, again repeatedly, in which Satan pounces upon us with all his forces (663).

¹²⁶ Harder, 913. Arnold notes, “The time coordinates of the battle reveal a continuity with the Pauline eschatological schema. The key expression in this regard is ‘on the evil day’ (ἡν τὰ ἐμῶν τὰ πονηρὰ, v.13b). The phrase has end-time connotations. This precise Greek phrase is found in three prophetic passages in the LXX (Jer 17:17, 18; Obad 13).” The singular form of “evil day” in v.13 shows that the Ephesian author is referring to “specific times of attack, when the power of attack comes with extraordinary power and the temptation to yield is strong.” He translates v.13a thus, “Put on the armor of God so that you may be divinely enabled to resist diabolic attack during this age preceding the parousia which is particularly treacherous because of the active forces of evil, but especially that you may be able to resist on those occasions when the diabolic hostility against you seems at its strongest” (*Ephesians*, 113-14). With the repetition of article in ἡν τὰ ἐμῶν τὰ πονηρὰ “both the substantive and adjective receive emphasis, and the adjective is added as a sort of climax in apposition with a separate article” (Robertson, *Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, 776).

¹²⁷ Wolfgang Trilling, *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 2: *ἡξ-εψφνιον*, ed. Horst Balz and Gerhard Schneider (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1991), s.v. “κατεργάζομαι,” 271; Georg Bertram, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 3: *Θ-K*, ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1965), s.v. “κατεργάζομαι,” 634; Arndt and Gingrich, s.v. “κατεργάζομαι,” 421.

¹²⁸ Trilling, 271; Arndt and Gingrich, s.v. “κατεργάζομαι,” 421; Bertram, 635.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Trilling, 271. Bertram cautions that whether it “refers to full preparation for battle or to the overcoming of all opposition is an open question” (635).

Ephesians 6:14-17

Eph.

6:14

says:

στῆτε οὕτως περιζωσμένοι τῷ ἀληθείᾳ καὶ ἔσθλην ἰσχυρὰν ἔσθλην

ἰσχυρὰν ἔσθλην ἰσχυρὰν τῷ ἀληθείᾳ. στῆτε is the aorist active imperative of ἵστημι.¹³¹ περιζωσμένοι is the aorist middle participle of περιζώννυμι which means to gird about.¹³² Girding is frequently used in a symbolic sense and connotes readiness for an activity like journey, especially because the garment is usually worn ungirded in the house.¹³³

τῷ ἀληθείᾳ means hip or waist “where a belt or girdle is worn.”¹³⁴ It is frequently used in a figurative sense and Eph. 6:14 alludes to Isa. 11:5.¹³⁵ ἀληθείᾳ is the truth that pertains to ethical qualities or “the divine reality that has come in the gospel and is put on by believers” or both, i.e., doctrine and sincerity of character.¹³⁶

ἰσχυρὰν ἔσθλην or breastplate, according to Polybius, is known as the heart-protector which covers the body from the neck to the thighs.¹³⁷ Eph. 6:14 is an allusion to Isa. 59:17 which emphasizes the readiness for battle rather than a defensive stance.¹³⁸ Similar to the interpretation of truth, δικαιοσύνην or righteousness stands for both uprightness and integrity of character of the believer, and the righteousness of Christ.¹³⁹ This verse may be translated as: “Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, and having

¹³¹ Refer to the word study of ἵστημι in v. 11.

¹³² Arndt and Gingrich, s.v. “περιζώννυμι,” 647. Oepke points out that “the reference is probably the breechlike apron of the Roman soldier” (705). In Eph. 6:14 the verb is used “with accusative of the part of the body that is girded” and thus may be translated as “after you have girded your waists with truth” (Ibid.).

¹³³ Arndt and Gingrich, s.v. “ἔσθλην,” 587.

¹³⁴ Heinrich Seesemann, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 5: =-Πα, ed. Gerhard Friedrich, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1967), s.v. “ἔσθλην,” 496; Arndt and Gingrich, s.v. “ἔσθλην,” 587.

¹³⁵ Bruce, 407; Seesemann, 736.

¹³⁶ Oepke, 705; Bruce, 408; E. K. Simpson, “Commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians,” in *The New International Commentary on the New Testament*, ed. F. F. Bruce (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1957), 146. Wood also chooses to interpret “truth” by combining both the objective truth of the gospel and the subjective truth in the inward being. He argues that “because the Christian has accepted the truth of revelation and is now indwelt by the risen Lord, who is himself the truth, his life has truth (or reality) as its basis and he displays the consistency of character that springs from it (87).”

¹³⁷ Wood, 87.

¹³⁸ Oepke, 705.

¹³⁹ Wood, 87. Wood insists that the believer’s “moral rectitude and reputation for fair dealing results directly from the appropriation of Christ’s righteousness.” Moreover, his protection comes not from his own works but from “what Christ has done for him and in him” (Ibid.). Lange believes that the genitive τῷ ἀληθείᾳ is appositional which means “righteousness of faith and of life, justification and sanctification before God and men” (223). Bruce asserts, “It is truth and righteousness as ethical qualities that are meant, rather than truth of doctrine and justification by faith; though the latter is not unrelated to the ethical qualities” (408).

body.¹⁵¹

Θυρεῖν is the rectangular Greek shield of heavy infantry which is large and oblong, measuring four by two and one half feet, and is sometimes curved on the inner side.¹⁵² It is used figuratively in Eph. 6:16. τῆς πίστεως is the genitive feminine singular form of πίστις that means “faith or trust.”¹⁵³ It pertains to a “divinely given reality,” and not a subjective attitude.¹⁵⁴ It represents one’s present faith in the Lord Jesus to overcome sin and the hosts of the devil.¹⁵⁵

The preposition ἐν combined with the relative pronoun ἧ may be translated “with which.”¹⁵⁶ τὰ βέλη is the accusative plural of βέλος which is an old word for missile or dart or arrow.¹⁵⁷ τὸ πονηρὸν or “the evil one” refers to the devil.¹⁵⁸ πεπυρωμένα is the perfect passive participle of πυρῶ which means “to set on fire or burn up.”¹⁵⁹ It is used symbolically in Eph. 6:16 to refer to the flaming darts of the enemy.¹⁶⁰ The arrows are tipped with tow, pitch, or similar material which are set on fire before they were released.¹⁶¹ They allude to temptations which the devil uses to attack the saints.¹⁶² σβῆσαι is the aorist active infinitive of σβέννυμι which is an old word that means “to extinguish, put out or quench.”¹⁶³ This verse may be translated as: “In addition to all

¹⁵¹ Lange, 224.

¹⁵² Oepke, 706; Wuest, 144. The soldiers would usually hold their shield together to create a solid wall as they fight side by side (Wood, 88).

¹⁵³ Rudolf Bultmann, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 6: ΠΕ–Ρ, ed. Gerhard Friedrich, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1968), s.vv.

“πιστεβω, π.:στις, πιστ̄ ζ, πιστ̄ ω, □πιστοζ, □πιστ̄Ξω, □πιστ.:α, ελιγ̄ πιστοζ, ελιγοπιστ.:α,” 204.

¹⁵⁴ Oepke, 706.

¹⁵⁵ Wuest, 144.

¹⁵⁶ Moule, 77.

¹⁵⁷ Robertson, *Word Pictures*, 551; Rogers, Jr. and Rogers III, 447.

¹⁵⁸ Thayer, 530; Arndt and Gingrich, s.v. “πονηρ.:α, αζ, ≡,” 691.

¹⁵⁹ Arndt and Gingrich, s.v. “πυρ̄ ω,” 731.

¹⁶⁰ Friedrich Lang, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 6: ΠΕ–Ρ, ed. Gerhard Friedrich, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1968), s.vv. “π–ρ, πυρ̄ ω, πβρωσις, πβρινος, πυρρ̄ ζ,” 950.

¹⁶¹ Wuest, 144.

¹⁶² Ibid. Markus Barth clarifies, “The ‘fiery missiles’ to which the saints are exposed (6:16) are not the pangs of carnal desire or the signs of very personal afflictions and conflicts, and sufferings that come from outside upon the community of the saints” (“Ephesians 4–6,” 802). Page believes that the “schemes” of verse 11 and the “arrows” of verse 16 are not clearly distinct. He maintains, “In both cases, the primary reference is probably to temptation to evil, though other types of assault, including persecution, need not be excluded” (188). Lincoln elucidates, “The burning arrows represent every type of assault devised by the evil one, not just temptation to impure or unloving conduct but also false teaching, persecution, doubt, and despair (“Ephesians,” 450).”

¹⁶³ Rogers, Jr. and Rogers III, 447; Robertson, *Word Pictures*, 551.

these, having taken up the shield of faith, with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one.”

Eph.

6:17

says:

καὶ τῶν περικεφαλαίων τοῦ σπῆρος· οὐ δέξασθε καὶ τῶν

μυχαιραν τῶν πνευματός, © ἴστιν Πῆμα θεοῦ. περικεφαλαίων is the helmet covering the head (κεφαλῆ). It is made of bronze with leather attachments.¹⁶⁴ Eph. 6:16 employs this term in a figurative sense and is based on Isa. 59:17.¹⁶⁵ τοῦ σπῆρος· οὐ is a genitive of apposition of the adjective σπῆριος. The adjective belongs to the σῆριος word group in which the stem means “whole, fresh, healthy,” and the verb means “to keep (whole, healthy), to save (from danger, illness, death).”¹⁶⁶ It entails the meaning of “saving, delivering, sustaining, preserving, bringing salvation, beneficent, beneficial.”¹⁶⁷ God’s salvation is in view in Eph. 6:17.¹⁶⁸

δέξασθε is the aorist imperative middle of δέχομαι which means “to receive by deliberate and ready reception of what is offered.”¹⁶⁹ It is an appropriate term for “receive or accept” because of the “givenness” of salvation.¹⁷⁰ The shift from the series of participles in 6:14-16 to δέξασθε in 6:17 is a signal of the “shift from the listing of virtues in a somewhat conventional sense as qualities which involves a certain degree of human effort to objects which are gifts in the purest sense, ‘salvation’ and ‘the word of God.’”¹⁷¹ This shift is apparent when the two Greek verbs λαμβάνω (a cognate verb of ἐναλαμβάνω) and δέχομαι are compared. The former emphasizes the active sense of taking possession or getting hold of; whereas the latter stresses the passive aspect of receiving.¹⁷² Thus, v. 17 focuses on receiving the pieces of armor rather than on actively taking them up. This balances the human and divine aspects of spiritual warfare wherein

¹⁶⁴ Wood, 88.

¹⁶⁵ Bruce, 409; Oepke, 706. Oepke states that this verse has a strong evangelical thrust wherein “the final deliverance that is assured to believers encompasses their heads like a helmet, so that they may confidently commit themselves to the battle against the sinister powers that would harass them” (Oepke, 706).

¹⁶⁶ Thoralf Gilbrant, ed., *The New Testament Greek-English Dictionary*, vol. 16: Sigma-Omega, *The Complete Biblical Library* (Springfield, MS: World Library Press, Inc., 1991), s.v. “σπῆρος· α,” 269.

¹⁶⁷ Arndt and Gingrich, s.v. “σπῆριος, ον,” 801; Werner Foerster, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 7: E, ed. Gerhard Friedrich, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1971), s.vv. “σῆριος, σπῆρος· α, σπῆριος, σπῆριος,” 1021-23.

¹⁶⁸ Foerster, 1140.

¹⁶⁹ Vine, vol. 3: s.vv. “Receive, Receiving,” 255.

¹⁷⁰ Wood, 88. The soldier would receive, instead of pick up, the helmet and sword as his attendant or armorbearer gives to him (Ibid.).

¹⁷¹ Lincoln, “Ephesians,” 450.

¹⁷² Hans-Georg Link, *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, vol. 3: Pri-Z, ed. Colin Brown (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1978), s.vv. “Take, Receive,” 744.

both God and the believer cooperate to achieve victory.

μσχαϊραν is a short and wide double-edged sword “designed for deadly cutting and thrusting in hand-to-hand battle.”¹⁷³ In Eph. 6:17 it is used figuratively. The sword of the Spirit is the only offensive weapon. It implies the complementary rather than alternative idea of being supplied by the Spirit or used by the Spirit.¹⁷⁴ © φστιν is a special idiom wherein the relative pronoun © gives an explanation “without much regard to the gender (not to say the number) of antecedent or predicate.”¹⁷⁵ Π↑μα θεο- means the word of God. Specifically Π↑μα refers to “that which is said, word, saying, expression” and it emphasizes quality.¹⁷⁶ It also denotes “something definitely or expressly stated, i.e., ‘statement.’”¹⁷⁷ In Eph. 6:17 it is difficult to determine “whether the divine word is the OT or the Christian message.”¹⁷⁸ This verse may be translated as: “And receive the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is (the) word of God.”

Ephesians 6:18-20

Eph. 6:18 says:
 δι□ πσσης προσευχ↑ς καθ δεΖσεπς προσευχ μ̄νοι φν παντϩ
 καιρ\ φν πνεβματι, καθ εϩς α⇔τ€ □γρυπνο-ντες φν πςσ→ προσκαρτερΖσει καθ

¹⁷³ Young, 38. It is the primary offensive weapon of the Roman legionary called the *gladius* which was sheathed high on the right side of the body. It is only about 20 inches long that allows “right-handed warriors to draw it quickly and effectively” (Ibid.).

¹⁷⁴ Wood, 89.

¹⁷⁵ Robertson, *Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, 411. Burton claims that it is “an explanatory clause” which describes “what is already known or sufficiently defined.” Thus he translates τ←ν μσχαϊραν το- πνεβματος, © φστιν Π↑μα θεο- as “the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” (119).

¹⁷⁶ Arndt and Gingrich, s.v. “Π↑μα, ατος, τ ,” 735; Lenski, 673. In the LXX Π↑μα and λ γος are considered synonymous and used for רבִּי (Otto Procksch, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 4: 7-; ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley [Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1967], s.vv. “λΞγω, λ γος, Π↑μα, λαλΞω, λ γιος, λ γιον, □λογος, λογικ ς, λογομαχΞω, λογομαχ.: α, φκλΞγομαι, φκλογΖ, φκλε κτ ς,” 92). Both words may refer to human words and divine sayings (Gerhard Kittel, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 4: 7-; ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley [Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1967], s.vv. “λΞγω, λ γος, Π↑μα, λαλΞω, λ γιος, λ γιον, □λογος, λογικ ς, λογομαχΞω, λογομαχ.: α, φκλΞγομαι, φκλογΖ, φκλεκτ ς,” 112). The usual expression λ γος is not used in this verse because it refers to substance (Lenski, 673). Cf. word study on λ γος in v. 19.

¹⁷⁷ Albert Debrunner, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 4: 7-; ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1967), s.vv. “λΞγω, λ γος, Π↑μα, λαλΞω, λ γιος, λ γιον, □λογος, λογικ ς, λογομαχΞω, λογομαχ.: α, φκλΞγομαι, φκλογΖ, φκλε κτ ς,” 75. Eckel elucidates that Paul uses Π↑μα for “specially weighty pronouncements.” He adds, “It may, of course, include words of Scripture quoted to meet a special need. But it may also signify an immediate Spirit-inspired ‘word’ peculiarly applicable to a crisis or a struggle” (292).

¹⁷⁸ Kittel, 511.

δεΖσει περϩ πζντϱν τTMν □γ.:ϱν. The preposition δις when used with the genitive expresses “environment, attendant circumstances” and thus δι□ πζσης προσευχ[↑]ς καϩ δεΖσεϱς may be translated as “with all (possible) prayer and petition.”¹⁷⁹ προσευχ[↑]ς and δεΖσεϱς both refer to prayer with the first term in a more general sense; the second term means special request.¹⁸⁰ There is a difference based on their use. The first noun means “calling on God” while the second noun refers to “petition addressed to man.”¹⁸¹

προσευχ^μενοι is the present middle participle of προσεβχομαι which means pray. “Praying ‘in the Spirit,’” explains Bruce, “means praying under the Spirit’s influence and with his assistance.”¹⁸² The preposition *fn* is used in a temporal sense and may be translated as “again, constantly.”¹⁸³

□γρυπνο-ντες literally means “watching, to lie sleepless, to keep awake, to pass a sleepless night.”¹⁸⁴ It is used in the figurative sense in Eph. 6:18 which means to be alert, attentive, and vigilant, instead of being listless.¹⁸⁵ προσκαρτερΖσει pertains to perseverance. It means giving of uninterrupted attention and care to something.¹⁸⁶ This word is a □παξ λεγ^μενον that occurs only in Eph. 6:18 which reminds the believer that prayer is a serious work that requires endurance and persistence.¹⁸⁷ The prepositions περ.: in this verse and ↓περ in v. 19 are used together in the same sense.”¹⁸⁸ This verse may be translated as: “With all (possible) prayer and petition praying constantly at all times in (the) Spirit, and for this same thing watching with all perseverance and petition for all the saints.”

Eph. 6:19 says:
 καϩ ↓πϱρ *f*μο-ζνα μοι δοθ[±]λ γος *f*ν □νο.:ξει το-στ ματ ζ
 μου, *f*ν παρρησ.: □ γνϱρ.:σαι τε μυστΖριον το-εαγγελ.:ου. λ γος means

¹⁷⁹ Moule, 57, 94; Turner, 267.

¹⁸⁰ Lange, 225; Martin, 176.

¹⁸¹ Markus Barth, “Ephesians 4-6,” 778; Abbott, 187.

¹⁸² Bruce, 411. Wood renders the phrase as “in communion with the Spirit” or “in the power of the Spirit” (89).

¹⁸³ Moule, 76.

¹⁸⁴ Markus Barth, “Ephesians 4-6,” 779; Wuest, 145.

¹⁸⁵ Wuest, 145. The same word is used by Jesus in Luke 21:36 to admonish His disciples to watch and pray.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ Walter Grundmann, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 3: Θ-K, ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1965), s.vv. “καρτερεω, προσκαρτερεω, προσκαρτερησις,” 620.

¹⁸⁸ Turner, 270. Moule suggests that the two prepositions are synonymous (63). Maximilian Zerwick agrees that in this verse “περ.: is used with the same concrete sense as ↓περ, so too ↓περ is found where one might have expected “ (*Biblical Greek* [Rome: Editrice Pontificia Universita Gregoriana, 1963], 31).

“narrative, word, or speech” with varied nuances such as “legend, proverb, command, promise tradition, written account, conversation, sentence, prose, even thing.”¹⁸⁹ In John 1:1 λ̄ γος is “personal, identical with the person in whom it was made flesh” and “the preexistence of the λόγος is that of Christ himself.”¹⁹⁰ λ̄ γος does not refer to Christ in Eph. 6:19 but to words or utterance to be given to Paul as he proclaims the mystery of the gospel.

fv̄ □vō: ξει το̄ στ̄ ματ̄ ζ̄ means “to open the mouth.” This is “a common phrase for making a public address or a long defense” which implies “solemnity of utterance.”¹⁹¹ παρρησ̄: □ means “speaking everything, speaking openly, boldness, openness, candor.”¹⁹² Paul emphasizes apostolic παρρησ̄: □ in both life (Phil. 1:20) and preaching (Eph. 6:19-20).¹⁹³

γν̄ωρ̄: σᾱ is the aorist active infinitive of γν̄ωρ̄: ζ̄ω which means to “make known or reveal.”¹⁹⁴ In the NT γν̄ωρ̄: ζ̄ω is used oftentimes to signify making an announcement or to “make known publicly or explicitly, and at times communicate in a solemn way.”¹⁹⁵ μυστ̄ζ̄ριον connotes “mystery or secret.”¹⁹⁶ The term is used five times in Ephesians to signify a revealed secret that needs to be communicated to the world.¹⁹⁷ The substance of this secret that is now revealed is “the eternal election, carried out in the historical co-option and insertion of Gentiles into full membership in the one

¹⁸⁹ Debrunner, 506. Hermann Kleinknecht states that λ̄ γος emphasizes on the rational and critical aspects in speech whereas Π̄μα focuses on the emotional and volitional expression (*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 4: 7–; ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1967), s.vv.

“λ̄Ξγω, λ̄ γος, Π̄μα, λαλ̄Ξω, λ̄ γιος, λ̄ γιον, □λογος, λογικ̄ ζ̄, λογομαχ̄Ξω, λογομαχ̄: α, fκλ̄Ξγομαι, fκλογ̄Z, fκλε κτ̄ ζ̄,” 77-80). Cf. word study on Π̄μα in v. 17.

¹⁹⁰ Kittel, 513. The independent, personified “Word” of God or λ̄ γος is the “distinctive teaching of the Fourth Gospel that this divine ‘Word’ took on human form in a historical person, that is, in Jesus” (Arndt and Gingrich, s.v. “λ̄ γος, ου, ®,” 478-79).

¹⁹¹ Wood, 90.

¹⁹² Rogers, Jr. and Rogers III, 447; Heinrich Schlier, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 5: =-Πα, ed. Gerhard Friedrich, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1967), s.vv. “παρρησ̄: α, παρρησιζ̄ομαι,” 877.

¹⁹³ Schlier, 795.

¹⁹⁴ Otto Knoch, *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 1: Ξαροφ̄ν - Ξνφ̄χ, ed. Horst Balz and Gerhard Schneider (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1990), s.v. “γν̄ωρ̄: ζ̄ω,” 255.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 256.

¹⁹⁶ Günther Bornkam, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 4: 7–; ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1967), s.vv. “μυστ̄ζ̄ριον, μυσ̄Ξω,” 803.

¹⁹⁷ Markus Barth, “Traditions in Ephesians,” 19. See G. R. Smillie, “Ephesians 6:19-20: A Mystery for the Sake of which the Apostle is an Ambassador in Chains,” *Trinity Journal* 18, no. 2 (1997): 199-222.

people of God.”¹⁹⁸ το-ε↔αγγελ.:ου, translated as “of the gospel,” is used with μυστΖριον instead of the usual το-Πριστο- or το-θεο- (Eph. 3:4; Col. 2:2, 4:3).¹⁹⁹ This verse may be translated as: “And for me that utterance may be given to me in opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel.”

Eph. 6:20 says:

↓πoor o⊗ πρεσβεβω fv □λβσει, ζνα fv α↔τ\ παρρησιςσωμα)ς
δε ρ με λαλ↑σαι. πρεσβεβω is an old word for ambassador which originally means “old man” which later connotes the role of an emissary or representative.²⁰⁰ In Eph. 6:20 Paul as the πρεσβεβω is an ambassador of the gospel and so he “speaks in its favor rather than on its behalf.”²⁰¹

παρρησιςσωμα is the word for “boldness” which literally means “all speech.”²⁰² It means etymologically a boldness shown only in speech, but eventually it also denotes a frank and bold behavior in all ways.²⁰³ The word as it is used here applies to “fearless, confident freedom in speaking.”²⁰⁴ λαλ↑σαι is aorist active infinitive of λαλΞω which means “prattle or babble.”²⁰⁵ It means “to give forth sounds or tones which form a kind of speech.”²⁰⁶ When used to refer to speech “it may denote sound rather than meaning, but also the ability to speak.”²⁰⁷ This verse may be translated as: “For which I am an ambassador in chain, that in it I may speak boldly, as it is necessary for me to speak.”

Theological Analysis

The theological analysis deals with crucial issues regarding demonic powers based on the findings in the previous exegetical steps with the aid of theological wordbooks and arguments from theologians and Christian authors. The theological observations are

¹⁹⁸ Ibid. In Ephesians “*myst rion*’ is neither a fixed plan, nor blind fate, nor a secret communication . . . , nor a magical performance or ritual” (Ibid.).

¹⁹⁹ Metzger, 610. It is significant that there is no other variation which proves that το-ε↔αγγελ.:ου is not a scribal addition (Ibid.).

²⁰⁰ Robertson, *Word Pictures*, 552; Günther Bornkam, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 6: Πε–Ρ, ed. Gerhard Friedrich, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1968), s.vv. “πρΞσβυς, πρεσββτερος, πρεσββτης, συμπρεσββτερος, πρεσβυτΞριον, πρεσβεβω,” 681.

²⁰¹ Bornkamm, s.vv. “πρΞσβυς, πρεσββτερος, πρεσββτης, συμπρεσββτερος, πρεσβυτΞριον, πρεσβεβω,” 683. Cf. 2 Cor. 5:20 where Paul describes himself as Christ’s ambassador.

²⁰² Wuest, 146.

²⁰³ Markus Barth, “Ephesians 4-6,” 783.

²⁰⁴ Wuest, 146.

²⁰⁵ Debrunner, 506.

²⁰⁶ Arndt and Gingrich, s.v. “λαλΞω,” 463.

²⁰⁷ Debrunner, 506.

confined to the “conclusions drawn from the text being exegeted and from texts which preceded it in time.”²⁰⁸ The researcher undertakes the following three areas: (1) area of demonic identity; (2) area of demonic strategy; and (3) area of Christian victory.

Area of Demonic Identity

There is a tendency of modern man to swing to opposite extremes of the pendulum regarding the demonic. Either one is too preoccupied with the demons or he tends to ignore them altogether. It is wise to avoid these excesses and have a balanced view based on the Scriptures. C. S. Lewis warned:

*There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about the devils. One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe, and to feel an excessive and unhealthy interest in them. They themselves are equally pleased by both errors and hail a materialist or a magician with the same delight.*²⁰⁹

Many modern theologians and western missionaries consider the unseen realm of the spirits, ghosts, ancestors, demons, and earthly gods as non-existent.²¹⁰ Karl Barth warns of the “circle of demonic deception”:

*If we ignore demons, they deceive us by concealing their power until we are again constrained to respect and fear them as powers. If we absolutise them, respecting and fearing them as powers, they have deceived us by concealing their character as falsehood, and it will be only a little while before we try to ignore and thus deceived by them again.*²¹¹

The researcher seeks to discuss the area of demonic identity with a balanced view in mind by avoiding the two extremes aforementioned. The following topics are discussed: (1) existence and reality of demonic powers, (2) nature of the powers, and (3) identifying the spirits.

²⁰⁸ Kaiser, 137. See Kaiser’s explanation of “Analogy of (Antecedent) Scripture” (Ibid., 134-40).

²⁰⁹ C. S. Lewis, *The Screwtape Letters* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1943), 9.

²¹⁰ Paul G. Hiebert, “The Flaw of the Excluded Middle,” in *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement: A Reader*, 3d ed., ed. Ralph D. Winter and Steven C. Hawthorne (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1999), 415. Hiebert adds, “This level also includes supernatural forces, such as mana, planetary influences, evil eyes, and the powers of magic, sorcery and witchcraft (Ibid.).”

²¹¹ Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, vol. 3, part 3, trans. G. W. Bromiley and R. J. Ehrlich, ed. G. W. Bromiley and T. F. Torrance (Edinburgh, Scotland: T. & T. Clark Ltd., 1960), 526-27.

Existence and reality of the demonic powers

Paul did not find it necessary to declare the existence of the devil nor did he strive to explain their origin or presence.²¹² Their existence is simply assumed in v. 11 as he states the need for believers to stand against the schemes of the devil. The demonic powers do not only exist but they are real and active. Paul uses the descriptive term “struggle” (πρῶτη) in Eph. 6: 12 to warn the believers that it is a real close fight and is crucial for them to stand firm. This technical term for wrestling also pictures a fight that is characterized by craftiness and is extremely dangerous. The opponents in v. 12 are not mere humans but they possess real power and are active in attacking the people of God. Each of the four terms for demonic powers in v. 12 signifies that they are evil supernatural powers that are capable of harming and destroying Christians.

Nature of the demonic powers

The Devil is the great adversary of God and His people and is called the “evil one” in v. 16.²¹³ He is the chief ruler of all demons and is identified as the master schemer in v. 11. The demons are under his control and authority and they are commonly known as “principalities and powers” based on the four terms used in v. 12.²¹⁴ There are three major views regarding the nature of the powers. The traditional view is to regard the powers as personal and supernatural.²¹⁵ The devil is a personal being and so are the demons under him.²¹⁶ E. Glenn Hinson comments:

In the figure of Satan Christians have recognized the radical and mysterious nature of evil. Satan personally epitomizes the pervasive presence and power of evil. He symbolizes all that stands in the way of God effecting the divine purpose for the world and for humankind. He is the archadversary and archdeceiver of humankind. If

²¹² Arnold, *Powers of Darkness*, 98. The foundation of spiritual warfare is “a belief in evil spirits and a desire to get the upper hand on them before they get it on us.” (Idem, *Three Crucial Questions*, 17). Eckel notes, “Yet, surely, among the devil’s greatest ploy is the intimation that he does not exist or, existing, is but a Halloween joke” (288).

²¹³ See Walter Wink, *The Powers*, vol. 2, *Unmasking the Powers: The Invisible Forces that Determine Human Existence* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), 22-30.

²¹⁴ Eckel notes, “The use of the terms ‘principalities’ and ‘powers’ suggests that the attack against Christ’s people is neither haphazard nor sporadic. Rather it is organized, deliberate, and strategic” (289).

²¹⁵ See Stott, 260-87.

²¹⁶ Dale Launderville states, “In the New Testament, Satan is a proper name for a distinctive personality and is the most powerful figure in the sphere of evil. Both Satan and ‘the devil’ are each mentioned thirty-five times in the New Testament” (“Satan and the Power of Evil,” *The Bible Today* 32, no. 1 [January 1994]: 4). Gerard S. Sloyan observes, “As to the Greek word for ‘devil,’ meaning roughly ‘adversary’ but specifically ‘slanderer,’ it does not appear in the plural in the Synoptic Gospels The devil is always a single one, humanity’s and hence Jesus’ enemy (Matt 4:1-11 and its parallel, Luke 4:1-13). He further comments, “The devil is never called a demon, and demons are never called devils” (“Demons and Exorcisms,” *Bible Today* 32, no. 1 [January 1994], 23).

*God is all that is right with the world, Satan is all that is wrong with it.*²¹⁷

Page cites the historical context of the New Testament as evidence of the personal nature of the powers. He writes:

*Most recent research in this area has favored an interpretation of the powers that identifies them with the impersonal social forces that determine human existence. To demythologize the powers and equate them with sociopolitical structures, however, fails to do justice to the historical context of the New Testament, in which belief in the spiritual realm was widespread, and to the explicit statements about these powers in the New Testament itself.*²¹⁸

The contemporary position concerning the powers is that they are the structures and institutions in our society with corresponding inner aspects.²¹⁹ Wink states:

*I will argue that the “principalities and powers” are the inner and outer aspects of any given manifestation of power. As the inner aspect they are the spirituality of institutions, the “within” of corporate structures and systems, the inner essence of outer organizations of power. As the outer aspect they are political systems, appointed officials, the “chair” of an organization, laws—in short, all the tangible manifestations which power takes. Every Power tends to have a visible pole, an outer form—be it a church, a nation, or an economy—and an invisible pole, an inner spirit or driving force that animates, legitimates, and regulates its physical manifestation in the world. Neither pole is the cause of the other. Both come into existence together and cease to exist together. When a particular Power becomes idolatrous, placing itself above God’s purposes for the good of the whole, then the Power becomes demonic.*²²⁰

²¹⁷ E. Glenn Hinson, “Historical and Theological Perspectives on Satan,” *Review and Expositor* 89, no. 4 (Fall 1992), 475.

²¹⁸ Page, 240. In discussing the use of *arches* and *exousias* in Eph 1:18-21, Page states that “it is generally agreed that Paul is referring, not to human rulers or political structures, but to personal, supernatural powers, and in view of the reference to the heavenly realms, this is surely correct” (244).

²¹⁹ Guelich cites Hendrik Berkhof and Walter Wink as examples of this view (48, n. 72).

²²⁰ Wink, *Naming the Powers*, 5. In explaining Eph. 6:12 Wink articulates, “So formidable a phalanx of hostility demands spiritual weaponry, for it is clear that we contend not against human beings as such (“blood and flesh”) but against the legitimations, seats of authority, hierarchical systems, ideological justifications, and punitive sanctions which their human incumbents exercise and which transcend these incumbents in both time and power. It is the suprahuman dimension of power in institutions and the cosmos which must be fought, not the mere human agent. . . . It is this suprahuman quality which accounts for the apparent ‘heavenly,’ bigger than life, quasi-eternal character of the Powers” (*Naming the Powers*, 85-86). He proposes to interpret “the spiritual Powers not as separate heavenly or ethereal entities but as *the inner aspect of material or tangible manifestations of power*” (*Ibid.*, 104). Arnold disagrees vehemently with Wink. He criticizes the latter’s writings as “seriously flawed” because Wink disregards the tradition of magic as pertinent in understanding the

Markus Barth also believes that the “principalities and powers” are both “intangible spiritual entities and concrete historical, social, or psychic structures or institutions of all created things and all created life.”²²¹

A third view seeks to combine the two views by “affirming their allusions both to the superhuman, sinister ‘spiritual powers’ of demons and/or fallen angels as well as to the evil powers that control the socio-political structures of life.”²²² On the other hand Wesley Carr argues that evil is personified only in the single figure of Satan and it is only toward the end of the second century that the concept of a multitude of demonic powers emerges.²²³

The verbal exegesis in the previous section reveals that each of the four terms in v. 12 refers to evil supernatural powers of personal nature.²²⁴ The various terms for demonic powers connote authority, control, ruling power, evil spirits, cosmic rulers, wickedness, depravity, and maliciousness. Paul uses an entire spectrum of language ranging from concrete terms at one end, through principalities and powers, to “sheer poetic abstraction and metaphor at the other end” to describe the powers in Eph. 6:10-18.²²⁵ Although Paul did not use the more common term of demons in Eph. 6, it is clear that the powers in 6:12 refer to demons and evil spirits.²²⁶ They may influence or manifest themselves through the structures and institutions but this is part of their strategies and not the essence of their nature. The powers are definitely evil in this specific passage although the term may not refer to something necessarily evil in other

first-century view of powers. “The presence of magic in the Hellenistic world,” Arnold reveals, “blatantly contradicts the demythologizing trend that Wink sees in the first century.” (*Ephesians*, 50).

²²¹ Markus Barth, “Ephesians 4-6,” 800-801.

²²² Guelich, 48.

²²³ Wesley Carr, *Angels and Principalities: The Background, Meaning, and Development of the Pauline Phrase “Hai Archai kai hai Exousiai,”* Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 42 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 174; quoted in Wink, *Naming the Powers*, 23, n. 24. Carr believes that all the references of Paul to “powers” are to be understood as referring to “pure angelic host surrounding the throne of God” and not to evil demonic powers (Arnold, *Ephesians*, 47-48). Arnold rejects Carr’s view. He is convinced “that belief in the demonic realm is substantially verifiable for the first century A.D. and that Carr’s handling of the Pauline texts leaves much to be desired” (*Ephesians*, 48).

²²⁴ Page considers Eph. 6:12 as a significant text because “it clearly refers to the powers as supernatural, evil beings” (246-47).

²²⁵ Forbes, 62.

²²⁶ Riley recounts, “The term ‘demon’ is the rendering of the cognate Greek words δαίμων and its substantivized neuter adjective δαίμωνιον ... Thus the word could designate one’s ‘fate’ or ‘destiny’, or the spirit controlling one’s fate, one’s ‘genius’.” He observes that originally the term denotes a neutral sense of an individual god or goddess and it is only in the intertestamental literature during the post-exilic period was there a negative association. He states, “Again after the Exile and the rise of dualism it came to be used for ‘Satanic demons’, especially among Jewish and Christian writers (s.v. “Demon,” 235).

passages or contexts.²²⁷

Identifying the demonic powers

The identities of demons preoccupied the Jews during Paul's time.²²⁸ A. Scott Moreau declares, "The idea of needing the names to have power over spirits is found in magical thinking around the world."²²⁹ Many proponents of SLSW admit that although it is helpful in many ways to know the proper names of demons because there is power in a name, it is not necessary to do so.²³⁰ Paul is not concerned with naming the spirits and he did not go into details to identify the demonic powers in Eph. 6:10-20. It is needless to learn about the names of the spirits in order to overpower them.²³¹

The different power terms in v. 12 are not given for the purpose of identifying the demonic powers but rather to show their variety. They also do not refer to the so-called territorial spirits.²³² The Bible does not state explicitly anything regarding naming, discerning, and praying down territorial spirits.²³³ David Pawson presents his views

²²⁷ Bruce clarifies that it is not always the case that principalities and powers are evil or hostile, but the ones referred to in the Eph. 6:12 are definitely regarded as evil (405).

²²⁸ Forbes writes, "Apocalyptic Judaism was fascinated by the differing duties and ranks of angels, and the organization and 'specialities' of demons, and, more particularly, with knowing the names and types of both angels and demons" (86). The Jews concentrate on "identifying the powers by name, such as Ruax, Barsafael, Artosael and Belbel" (Arnold, *Powers of Darkness*, 98).

²²⁹ A. Scott Moreau, "Gaining Perspective on Territorial Spirits" (article on-line); available from <http://www.gospelcom.net/lcwe/dufe/Papers/terspir.htm>; Internet; accessed 23 October 2000. In magic it is necessary to identify the names of good and helpful spirits so they may be called upon to assist and defend oneself from evil spirits (Arnold, *Powers of Darkness*, 92-93).

²³⁰ C. Peter Wagner, *Warfare Prayer: How to Seek God's Power and Protection in the Battle to Build His Kingdom* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1992), 148. Wagner distinguishes between proper names and functional names. Examples of former names are Kali, Iara, Wormwood, Artemis, and Pele. Functional names, such as a spirit of violence, the false prophet or a spirit of witchcraft, focus on what they do (Ibid., 147). John Dawson thinks that obtaining the specific names of the spirits may not be necessary "but it is important to be aware of the specific nature or type of oppression. He cites the spirit of mammon in New York, spirit of violence in Chicago, and spirit of political intrigue in Miami (*Taking Our Cities for God: How to Break Spiritual Strongholds*, with a foreword by John Hayford [Lake Mary, FL: Creation House, 1989], 156).

²³¹ Moreau, "Territorial Spirits." Moreau adds, "The concept of 'discerning' the names and the functions will always be subjective at best. The model Scripture provides is that demons do indeed have names or designations, but knowing those names does not appear necessary for expulsion (Acts 16:18)" (Ibid.).

²³² Arnold, *Three Crucial Questions*, 39. Paul never relates the powers of darkness to any particular territory or country but uses comprehensive terms. It is not an imperative for Christians to identify exactly the evil power that exercises supreme control over a territory in the demonic order (Arnold, *Powers of Darkness*, 99).

²³³ Ibid., 161. Arnold cautions that the silence of the Bible regarding the topic of territorial spirits does not make the strategic-level spiritual warfare wrong or unbiblical. Rather he urges believers to evaluate how important the new strategy is (Ibid.). Moreau believes that the "rulers" and "authorities" in Eph 6:12 perhaps refers to territorial spirits. It is merely an ontological excursion rather than support for direct warfare against the spirits. The statement is within the context of the Christian's daily struggle and not the strategy of Strategic Level Spiritual Warfare ("Territorial Spirits"). "It seems to me,"

regarding the territorial spirits:

There are only two verses in the whole Bible that explicitly describe “territorial” spirits (Dan 9:13,20). Even then, it is not entirely clear whether the “princes” of Persia and Greece are human or demonic, though most scholars assume the latter. What needs to be noted is that Daniel did not directly engage them, nor was he commanded to do so. They were dealt with by angelic intervention. . . .

There is certainly no trace of starting missions in any single place by binding the local demonic ruler, no hint that Paul sought to identify and bind the spirits of Athens or Corinth before preaching there. Were this an essential prerequisite for releasing a situation, it would surely have been specifically included in the ascending Lord’s missionary mandate (e.g. Matt 28:18-20). There is no apostolic precedent, either in precept or practice. Neither is there any command for believers to “bind” the devil.²³⁴

On the other hand, the SLSW advocates declare that Christians “contend with an even more ominous concentration of demonic power: territorial spirits.”²³⁵ Satan’s inability to be omnipresent necessitates that he assigns demons and evil spirits to carry out his wicked plans.²³⁶ “I have come to believe,” asserts Timothy Warner, “that Satan does indeed assign a demon or corps of demons to every geopolitical unit in the world, and that they are among the principalities and powers against whom we wrestle.”²³⁷ These territorial spirits are seen “chiefly in terms of their alleged ability to prevent the spread of the gospel.”²³⁸

states Arnold, “that it is God himself who sovereignly directs his angels to war against the territorial rulers” (Arnold, *Three Crucial Questions*, 162. Arnold concludes, “Our role is to walk humbly and obediently before our God, bringing our needs and the needs of the people of God before him in prayer. We can take great comfort in the fact that as we pray and intercede for people, God can direct his angels to fight key battles in the heavenly places on our behalf” (Ibid.).

²³⁴ J. David Pawson, *Fourth Wave: Charismatics and Evangelicals, Are We Ready to Come Together?* with a foreword by Clive Calver (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1993), 69.

²³⁵ Wagner, *Warfare Prayer*, 18. The other two levels of spiritual warfare are ground-level spiritual warfare and occult-level spiritual warfare. The former deals with casting out demons while the latter deals with shamans, New Age channelers, occult practitioners, witches and warlocks, Satanic priests, fortune-tellers, etc. (Ibid., 16-17).

²³⁶ Ibid., 62-63. Wagner assumes, “The only way I can imagine that Satan can effectively blind 3 billion minds is to delegate the responsibility. He maintains a hierarchy of demonic forces to carry out his purposes” (Ibid., 63).

²³⁷ Timothy Warner, “The Power Encounter and World Evangelization, Part 4,” *The Missionary on the Attack* (Pasadena, CA: 1988 Church Growth Lectures, Fuller Seminary School of World Mission, 27 October 1988), taped by Fuller Seminary Media Services; quoted in C. Peter Wagner, “Territorial Spirits and World Missions,” *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 25, no. 3 (July 1989): 278, n. 1.

²³⁸ C. Peter Wagner, “Territorial Spirits and World Missions,” *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 25, no. 3 (July 1989): 278. For an evaluation of Wagner’s hypothesis regarding territorial spirits, see Byron D. Klaus, “Territorial Spirits,” in *Wrestling with Dark Angels: Towards a Deeper Understanding of the Supernatural Forces in Spiritual Warfare*, ed. C. Peter Wagner and F. Douglas Pennoyer (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1990), 92-99.

Area of Demonic Strategy

This sub-section deals with the important issues related to the concept of demonic strategy. The various kinds of evil powers are not different with the devil in terms of function or strategy. Hence, believers need to resist the powers just as how they resist the devil. The powers operate in precisely the same fashion as the διςβολος are assumed to have “common nature, objectives, and method of attack.”²³⁹ The succeeding paragraphs present an analysis of the following: (1) nature of the struggle, (2) evil schemes, and (3) hierarchy of power.

Nature of the struggle

Paul uses the picturesque language of a wrestling match to describe the nature of the struggle against the demonic powers. The term πζλη emphasizes that the conflict is at close range and involves trickery. The believer is confronted with a spiritual battle that is fierce and intense. The repeated use of “against” (πρ ζ) in v. 12 accentuates the intensity of the spiritual conflict. The fivefold πρ ζ highlights the ongoing face to face struggle that the Christian encounters. The nature of the struggle is undergirded by the awareness that the demonic powers are real and active.

Evil schemes

The use of μεθοδε.ας in v. 11 stresses that the wiles and attacks of the demonic powers are varied and occurs repeatedly with an element of deceit and trickery. Closely related to this is the use of τβΞλη in v. 16 which further demonstrates the deadliness of the devil’s strategies. In combination the schemes in v. 11 and the flaming arrows in v. 16 may refer to all kinds of assaults that the devil exploits, such as temptation, persecution, false teaching, doubt, and despair. The passage under study does not list any particular technique employed by the devil. An examination of its larger context and other Scripture passages would yield specific examples and teachings regarding demonic strategy in the succeeding paragraphs.²⁴⁰ The researcher enumerates some of the methods the devil uses to attack the believer, such as idolatry, pagan religions, occultism, culture and social systems, demonic strongholds, negative emotions, demonic possession and

²³⁹ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 119.

²⁴⁰ Guelich reviews the Pauline passages that pertain to Satan “consistently depicts Satan as living up to his name as the ‘adversary.’ Satan tempts (1 Cor. 7:5; Eph. 4:27), outwits (2 Cor. 2:11; Eph. 6:11), deceives (2 Cor. 11:14), misleads (1 Tim. 5:15), traps (1 Tim. 3:6-7; 2 Tim. 2:26), impedes (1 Thess. 2:18), and harasses (2 Cor. 12:7) believers (45). Page states, “The activities of the powers of evil are varied. They promote error, whether in the form of pagan idolatry or distortions of the Christian faith; they are involved in the moral and religious struggles faced by believers, tempting them to sin; they adopt the role of prosecutors and bring accusations of guilt against humanity before the bar of divine justice; and they afflict and torment those who do not belong to God” (260).

mental illness.²⁴¹

Idolatry, pagan religions, and occultism. There is a strong link between demonic control and idolatry or pagan religions.²⁴² Satan takes advantage of idolatry and pagan religions to deceive, manipulate, and control his targets.²⁴³ Based on Paul's explanation in 1 Cor. 10, although an idol is nothing, behind it stands the "false teaching, depraved character, and dark forces of demons and demonic religion."²⁴⁴ Paul urges the Corinthian Christians to "flee from idolatry" (1 Cor. 10:14 NIV) and warns that "the sacrifices of pagans are offered to demons" (1 Cor. 10:20 NIV). It is best for Christians to prevent any contact with idols "because they are defiled with demonic ideals."²⁴⁵ Commenting on 1 Cor. 10 George Eldon Ladd states that there is "a power connected with idols that resides in demons" and "to worship idols therefore means to sacrifice to demons."²⁴⁶ Leon Morris writes, "Thus when men sacrifice to idols, it cannot be said that they are engaging in some neutral activity that has no meaning. They are in fact sacrificing to evil spirits."²⁴⁷ Occultism is another area that the devil exploits.²⁴⁸ Examples of this are black magic, fortune telling, spiritism, horoscope, witchcraft, and channelling.

²⁴¹ F. Douglas Pennoyer writes, "Demons seek to gain an increasing influence and mastery over individuals through attacks on the mind, the thoughts, the emotions and the will" ("In Dark Dungeons of Collective Captivity," *Wrestling with Dark Angels: Towards a Deeper Understanding of the Supernatural Forces in Spiritual Warfare*, ed. C. Peter Wagner and F. Douglas Pennoyer [Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1990], 256).

²⁴² William Patrick Hyland mentions that Justin Martyr (ca. 100-65) did not only underscore the possibility of demon possession, "but also identified the gods of pagan religion with the demons in the Bible" ("Demons and Early Theology," *The Bible Today* 32, no. 1 [January 1994]: 28).

²⁴³ See the explanation of Charles H. Kraft on the power of rituals (*I Give You Authority* [Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen Books, 1997], 130-32).

²⁴⁴ Duanne A. Garrett, *Angels and the New Spirituality* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 30. Hyland writes "In *The City of God*, Augustine portrayed Graeco-Roman religion as the work of the devil. He identified its gods with the fallen angels and declared that divination and astrology were the work of demonic forces. These forces opposed the Church and its mission of establishing God's reign" (29). In Rev. 9:20 the author associates the idol worship with the worship of demons (Riley, s.v. "Demon," 238).

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁶ George Eldon Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1974), 400-401. The idea of "table fellowship with pagan gods who are in reality demons carries over into the New Testament." Paul cautions the church of Corinth not to eat sacrificial meals in pagan temples, for "that which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons", meaning, for Corinth, the Greek gods Asklepios, Sarapis, and especially Demeter (Riley, s.v. "Demon," 238).

²⁴⁷ Leon Morris, *The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians: An Introduction and Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1958), 147. Sloyan points out that "Saint Paul believed that sacrifice to idols had the demons as its objects and that Christians should not be 'partners with demons' (1 Cor 10:19-22)." He adds that Christ 'has no agreement with Belial,' the real object of idol worship (2 Cor 6:15)" (26).

²⁴⁸ For discussion on magic and magic charms see Kurt E. Koch, *Occult ABC* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1986), 126-40.

Culture and social systems. Culture in itself is a neutral thing.²⁴⁹ However, the demonic powers maneuvers culture or social systems to accomplish their goals.²⁵⁰ This reveals the “multitude of ways Satan has worked on a corporate level to blind people to the gospel and keep them in bondage through perpetuating beliefs and practices that are contradictory to the gospel.”²⁵¹ One of the contributions of SLSW is to highlight the notion that culture has its “evil spiritual dimension.”²⁵²

Demonic Strongholds. A parallel passage is found in 2 Cor. 10:4-5 where Paul mentions about demolishing strongholds by casting down arguments and taking every thought captive to make it obedient to Christ. Stronghold refers to “the place where the devil and his forces are entrenched.”²⁵³ A stronghold primarily hinders evangelism.

Negative emotions. One of the devil’s schemes is “to exploit strained relations and angry feelings between believers so as to damage their personal or corporate welfare and witness.”²⁵⁴ Many people give Satan the occasion to affect them by clinging on to emotions like “bitterness, unforgiveness, desire for revenge, fear.”²⁵⁵ Kraft comments that “it seems clear that no one has the authority to banish a demon so long as a person

²⁴⁹ Pennoyer writes, “Cultural systems are not inherently evil, but the combined activity of demonized individuals, leading others in traditionally demonic focused activities, creates collective captivity. Individuals sit in collective captivity in their dungeons in the common societal prison surrounded by the collective darkness created by this demonic permeation of their cultural systems” (257). He explains collective captivity as “the idea that demons working through individuals can control the society to some extent and actively use the system to prevent the gospel light from penetrating into members’ lives” (250).

²⁵⁰ Arnold, *Three Questions*, 187.

²⁵¹ Ibid.

²⁵² Moreau, “Territorial Spirits.” Moreau adds, “All cultures have elements which together work as domination systems which entrap people and keep them blinded to spiritual realities” (Ibid.). Sherwood G. Lingenfelter disputes that culture is not totally neutral but is “inextricably infected by sin” (*Transforming Culture: A Challenge for Christian Mission* [Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1992], 20). Pennoyer says, “The demons’ ultimate goal is to keep the society and individuals in the cycle by rotating around to domination of the society’s cultural systems.” The cycle refers to captivity cycle (See Pennoyer, 266-68).

²⁵³ Wagner, *Warfare Prayer*, 64. George Otis pictures strongholds as “nothing less than satanic command and control centers” (*The Last of the Giants* [Tarrytown, NY: Chosen Books, 1991], 93. Wagner cautions, “Those who are active in ministries of ground-level spiritual warfare know that frequently demons find entrance points into individuals through trauma, sexual abuse, abortion, curses, substance addiction, the occult or any number of other footholds” (*Warfare Prayer*, 129-30). Gwen Shaw mentions fourteen national or city strongholds which includes idolatry, pagan temples, shedding of innocent blood such as through murder, abortion or war, witchcraft, mind control, removal of prayer from schools, sexual perversion, substance abuse, fighting and hatred, occult objects, questionable toys, perverted media, relationships and uncontrolled emotions” (*Redeeming the Land* [Jasper, AR: Engentel Press, 1987], 81-104).

²⁵⁴ Bruce, 404. See Scripture reference in Eph. 4:27.

²⁵⁵ Charles H. Kraft, *Christianity with Power: Your Worldview and Your Experience of the Supernatural*, with a foreword by Clark H. Pinnock (Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Publications, 1989), 129. Kraft believes that “there is no problem that a person has with an evil spirit that is not tied to some inner problem” (Ibid.).

hangs onto sin or unforgiveness.”²⁵⁶

Demon possession and mental illness. Eph. 6:12, as well as the other epistles and revelation, is “silent on the subject of possession and exorcism with the possible exception of an allusion in James 2:19.²⁵⁷ Two verbs derived from the root δαίμων, δαιμονίζω and δαιμονίζομαι, are important in Biblical and related literature.²⁵⁸ Both terms originally mean “to be under the power of a god or *daimon*” but later mean “to be possessed by a demon’ which caused bodily infirmity or insanity.”²⁵⁹ The improper translation “demon possession” has caused some confusion among Christians. Many believers assert that it is not possible for a Christian who is redeemed by Christ to be owned and possessed by the devil. However, the confusion disappears when the term is transliterated as “demonization.”²⁶⁰ The etymology of the term “indicates a control other than that of the person who is demonized; he is regarded as the recipient of the demon’s action.”²⁶¹ Although a Christian may not be owned and possessed by the demons, he may be demonized by unwittingly giving them a foothold in his life and allow them access, control, and influence through involvement in occultism, nursing resentment and revenge. Demons do not only exert their influence on people but they may attach themselves to objects, houses, buildings, or animals.²⁶² Demons do not only attack but also indwell humans and cause many kinds of sickness like epilepsy, insanity, and disability.²⁶³ Mental illness may or may not be a manifestation of the demonic. Professional help is needed to discern whether the symptoms are psychiatric (e.g., schizophrenia and

²⁵⁶ Kraft, *I Give You Authority*, 124. Michael Fackerell writes, “When people don’t deal properly with the hurts they receive from others in life, by forgiving them fully, they are going to be opened up to demons. Spirits of resentment, rejection, anger, hatred and bitterness are very common amongst people who have been dealt hard and hurtful blows by others” (“Deliverance from the Evil One” [article on-line]; available from <http://www.christian-faith.com/bible-studies/deliverance.html>; Internet; accessed 28 September 2002).

²⁵⁷ Page, 260.

²⁵⁸ Riley, s.v. “Demon,” 235-36.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 236. In the NT δαίμων·ζομαι occurs once in Matt. 15:22 as a verb and the phrase is translated as “cruelly tormented by a demon.” Most of the times it appears as participle which means “one who is demonized” or “a demoniac” (*Ibid.*).

²⁶⁰ Demonization “means to be affected by demons, to be under the influence of demons or to have demons” (Fackerell, “Deliverance from the Evil One”). B. A. Robinson presents OT and NT passages related to demon possession and exorcism in his article entitled “Demonic Possession & Oppression; Exorcism: Bible Passages” (article on-line); available from http://www.religioustolerance.org/chr_exor1.htm; Internet; accessed 28 September 2002.

²⁶¹ C. Fred Dickason, *Demon Possession & the Christian: A New Perspective* (Westchester, IL: Crossway Books, 1987), 37.

²⁶² Wagner, “Territorial Spirits,” 279. See also Wagner, *Warfare Prayer*, 77. Riley suggests “that a demon needed a host is an idea found also in the New Testament” as seen in Mark 5:12 and Matt. 12:43-45 (237).

²⁶³ Riley, 237. “The main effect of demons on the host in the Synoptic writers was to cause physical and mental suffering, and anti-social behavior” (*Ibid.*, 239).

Dissociative Identity Disorder, formerly known as Multiple Personality Disorder or MPD) or spiritual in nature in order to provide holistic healing.²⁶⁴ There are two practical principles to follow in order to discern and diagnose correctly when dealing with spiritual conflict: (1) the history of physical disease in the person or family needs to be investigated in the presence of physical manifestations, and also a consultation with a physician, and (2) the safest procedure is “to first rule out the mental illness or psychological problems before assuming that it is a spiritual conflict.”²⁶⁵

Being aware of the devil’s schemes does not mean that human responsibility would be set aside and all the blame be placed on the powers. The gist of Jürgen Moltmann’s lead article in *Evangelische Theologie* is that “humankind must take responsibility for human sin even while being aware of the enhanced demonic structures and possibilities for our modern, technological, nuclear society.”²⁶⁶

Hierarchy of power

In Eph. 6 the devil is not the lone enemy of the Christians.²⁶⁷ The devil is the chief of the demonic forces in Eph. 6:12.²⁶⁸ The powers are beings closely allied with the devil and they are not acting independently or erratically but share common strategies and objectives.²⁶⁹ The different terms and titles in v. 12 raise the question regarding the ranks and subordination of angels. Paul neither makes any positive statement about the order of angelic powers nor indulges in elaborate angelology which is a speculative preoccupation at that time.²⁷⁰ The use of different groups of evil powers in v. 12 is not for “schematic

²⁶⁴ See James G. Friesen, *Uncovering the Mystery of MPD* (San Bernardino, CA: Here’s Life Publishers, Inc., 1991), 41-132. See Steven Waterhouse’s chart on how to differentiate between demon possession and schizophrenia (B. A. Robinson, “Demonic Possession & Oppression; Exorcism; Validity; Schizophrenia; News” [article on-line]; available from http://www.religioustolerance.org/chr_exor3.htm; Internet; accessed 28 September 2002). Jerry Mungadze reminds, “Perhaps the real question is not whether spiritual conflict exists, but what is the best way of dealing with spiritual conflict when it can co-exist with psychological, psychiatric, and physical illness. This is further complicated by the fact that there are times when psychological and psychiatric illness exist with no direct link to spiritual conflict. In such cases, assuming the presence of spiritual conflict may lead to serious mistakes in helping others” (“Spiritual Conflict in Light of Psychiatry and Medicine: A Holistic Perspective on Healing and Deliverance” [article on-line]; available from <http://www.gospelcom.net/lcwe/dufe/Papers/mungadzeout.htm>; Internet; accessed 23 October 2000).

²⁶⁵ Mungadze, “Psychiatry and Medicine.”

²⁶⁶ William Hendricks, “Giving the Devil His Due: A Visual Approach,” *Review and Expositor* 89, no. 4 (Fall 1992): 491.

²⁶⁷ Page, 188.

²⁶⁸ Riley, 247-48.

²⁶⁹ Page, 247, 260. Eph. 6:12 “refers to a plurality of powers against whom believers must contend: though the relationship between the devil and these powers is not spelled out, it is obvious that they form a united front” (Ibid., 188).

²⁷⁰ Abbott, 33. Arnold mentions that the Jews during Paul’s time have an elaborate view of angels and their hierarchy. He cites the belief among the Jews that “the same hierarchy existed in the kingdom of evil” and that the angelic hierarchy was patterned after earthly political kingdoms. He clarifies that although Paul used a lot of Jewish expressions like *archai* and

classification or completeness” but rather to emphasize “variety and comprehensiveness.”²⁷¹ The list in v. 12 “do not have different groups, but more or less synonymous designations of the forces of the devil with which believers have to contend.”²⁷² The demonic forces are called “rulers of the world in order to bring out the terrifying power of their influence and comprehensiveness of their plans, and thus to emphasise the seriousness of the situation.”²⁷³ The four terms give various emphases. The first two terms focus on the prominence of power, the third one on sphere, and the last one on character.²⁷⁴ It seems that the different categories of hostile supernatural beings are interchangeable.²⁷⁵ The demonic powers may represent a certain order but “it is as yet impossible to identify exactly the several groups mentioned by Paul or to sketch the hierarchy among them” on exegetical basis.²⁷⁶

exousia, many of the other terms for powers were also used by Gentiles as revealed in their magical and astrological materials. Thus he asserts that it is difficult to distinguish between Jewish and Gentile religious beliefs regarding both good and evil spirits (*Powers of Darkness*, 90-91).

²⁷¹ Lincoln, “Ephesians,” 445. Page comments on the terms generically translated as “principalities and powers.” He states, “The New International Version usually translates the resulting phrase ‘rulers and authorities.’ In the King James Version, the phrase is rendered ‘principalities and powers.’ An expression widely used by modern authors as a comprehensive designation for the spiritual powers that are denoted by *archai*, *exousiai*, and similar words” (240).

²⁷² Michaelis, s.vv. “κρςτος, (θεοκρατ.: α), κρατΞω, κραται ζ, κραται ω, κοσμοκρςτωρ, παντοκρςτωρ,” 914.

²⁷³ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁴ Lange, 221. Kraft believes that the powers mentioned in Eph. 6:12 represent the names of demonic angels. He also presented a picture of the two angelic hierarchies (*I Give You Authority*, 133-34).

²⁷⁵ Aune, 79. Page insists that “the plurality of terms used suggests that the powers are many and varied, but the differences between the listings of such terms renders suspect any proposal concerning their classification” (247). Arnold insists that although the four terms in Eph. 6:12 may imply a hierarchy within the demonic realm, there is no means of discerning the various ranks. He cites, for example, that it would not be possible to establish that the *archai* have higher authority than the *exousiai*. He adds, “There is no special meaning to each of the terms that would give us further insight into the demonic realm. The terms appear to come from a large reservoir of terminology used in the first century when people spoke of demonic spirits” (*Three Crucial Questions*, 39). Wagner himself admits that there is no clear Biblical teaching on hierarchy of powers. He writes, “New Testament scholars cannot find a strict hierarchical order in Ephesians 6:12 since the same Greek terms are used with different meanings and interchangeably in other parts of Scripture” (*Warfare Prayer*, 63).

²⁷⁶ Markus Barth, “Ephesians 4-6,” 801. See Barth’s comparison and contrast between the powers in Eph. 6 and the demons in the Gospels (802). In a related discussion about the use of the phrase “and every title that can be given” in Eph. 1:21, he thinks it implies that the series of words for powers was not extensive but were used “rather loosely and probably did not have well-defined referents.” He then concludes, “It is unwise to attempt to reconstruct a hierarchy of the powers on the basis of the vocabulary used to refer to them. It is unlikely that Paul understood the various words as designations of classes of spiritual forces that could be clearly distinguished from each other. Paul shows no interest in speculation about the particular ranks or functions that the powers may have. His main concern is to affirm that God has placed Christ over them.” (Page, 245). In referring to the demonic powers in v. 12., Eckel concludes, “It is unfruitful to examine these ideas hoping to discover a hierarchy. Separately they lack personality; together they lack coherence. The whole enumeration is designed solely to instill in the Christian a malignant dread, a shudder of horror, a portent of danger and conflict” (289).

Area of Christian Victory

The core of Christian victory in spiritual warfare is resistance through Christian conduct and proclamation of the gospel, not exorcism or elimination of structural evil.²⁷⁷ This sub-section deals with the armor of God and prayer in spiritual warfare.

Divine Empowering

The chain of power terms in v. 10, i.e., *ἰνδυναμο—σθε, κρζεται, and Ὀσχβος*, underscores the importance of depending on divine empowering to stand against the demonic powers and gain victory. This series of terms stresses the need to totally depend on the Lord on a continual basis. The believer is reminded that the Lord is the ultimate source of power and strength. Although exorcism is not mentioned specifically in Eph. 6, a study of parallel passages in the Gospels reveals that the casting out of demons is an authority given to believers.

Armor of God

God has provided the best equipment for Christians to resist and stand against the powers—the armor of God. It is imperative for the believers to put on God’s armor “since the demons are not creatures of flesh and blood and cannot be fought with the weapons of this world.”²⁷⁸ It is complete and sufficient for the believer as he engages in spiritual battle. The key word “stand” (*ἔστημι*) in vv. 11, 13, and 14 serves as the main objective for the exhortation to put on the armor of God. The believer is admonished to put on God’s armor so he may stand against the devil and his evil schemes. The different pieces of armor are described in detail in Eph. 6:14-17. “No one piece can be undervalued or neglected: each one requires the other; they together form one whole,” reminds Lange.²⁷⁹ In the same way that divine empowering is needed constantly, the armor of God is to be worn always especially since the nature of struggle is a day-to-day, face-to-face encounter.

Arnold made the following application for the different pieces of armor: (1) belt of truth--believers are not to lie or deceive others and their lives are to be lived in a such a way that it is consistent with the truth of the gospel, (2) breastplate of righteousness--Christians who have been freed from guilt may develop personal holiness and integrity, (3) feet shod with readiness--Christian soldiers may be ready to share the gospel wherever God may direct them, (4) shield of faith--simple trust in God based on the objective reality of the resurrection of Christ and His exaltation over the supernatural powers,

²⁷⁷ Arnold, *Powers of Darkness*, 154.

²⁷⁸ Oepke, 301.

²⁷⁹ Lange, 228. See Young’s article “A Soldier’s Armor” for some paintings or drawings of a soldier’s armor (37-39).

(5) helmet of salvation--believers are to be secure in their Christian identity, and (6) sword of the Spirit--the child of God is to be “thoroughly familiar with Scripture” and has “an accurate understanding of its relevance for any given situation.”²⁸⁰

Prayer in spiritual warfare

Prayer is the primary weapon in spiritual warfare and “a source of the revelation and power of the gospel.”²⁸¹ Its significance in Christian life and ministry is emphasized in Eph. 6:10-20. An essential part in spiritual warfare “which the Christian has to wage in daily life is the prayer which must be constantly offered in faith.”²⁸² Paul summons the believers in v. 18 to pray with all kinds of prayers in the Spirit, at all times, for all the saints.²⁸³ He even solicits prayer for himself so he may preach the Gospel with boldness.²⁸⁴ Prayer is the “decisive weapon in this struggle--and is often aggressive and violent.”²⁸⁵ It is considered an integral part of spiritual warfare, not an independent act.²⁸⁶ Wink expounds on the essence of prayer:

Prayer is not magic; it does not always “work.” It is not something we do, but a response to what God is already doing within us and the world. Our prayers are the necessary opening that allows God to act without violating our freedom. Prayer is the

²⁸⁰ Arnold, *Powers of Darkness*, 155-58.

²⁸¹ Raymond Bailey, “Preaching Ephesians,” *Review and Expositor* 93, no. 4 (Fall 1996): 546. Lincoln disagrees, “Prayer is not the seventh piece of spiritual armor as some claim. The military metaphors are limited to vv 14-17. Instead, the close link between the material on prayer and what has preceded, through the participles and *δις*, ‘through,’ underlines the spiritual nature of believers’ combat. This is more than a worldly or a human conflict. . . . Prayer for strengthening from God can be seen as a major way in which believers appropriate the divine armor and are enabled to stand” (“Ephesians,” 452-53). Markus Barth remarks, “The choice made in Eph. 6:18 for the more civilian *agrypnē* instead of the more military *grēgorē* indicates that the author did not intend to call prayer and watchfulness for prayer a part of the saints’ military equipment” (“Ephesians 4-6,” 779). See more of Barth’s arguments for and against prayer as the seventh weapon (Ibid., 785).

²⁸² Grundmann, s.vv. “καρτερῶ, προσκαρτερῶ, προσκαρτεῖρησις,” 620.

²⁸³ Eckel writes, “The quartet of ‘alls’ in verse 18 points to the scope of prayer. Nothing less than the whole of a believer’s life—all its strife, seasons, and circumstances—is to be an act of prayer” (292).

²⁸⁴ Wagner writes, “As I mentioned several times, the ultimate focus . . . is world evangelization. Warfare prayer is not an end in itself, but a means of opening a way for the Kingdom of God to come, not only in evangelism, but also in social justice and material sufficiency.” (*Warfare Prayer*, 162).

²⁸⁵ John D. Robb, “Strategic Prayer,” in *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement: A Reader*, 3d ed., ed. Ralph D. Winter and Steven C. Hawthorne (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1999), 147. Robb adds, “The structures and forces of injustice, oppression and war are so overwhelming that all our efforts to help will fail unless we first invite God into the fray. Until we have achieved victory in prayer, it is hopeless to engage the outer world in combat” (Ibid.).

²⁸⁶ Lange observes, “The participle (*προσευχόμενοι*) is closely connected with the summons to the conflict and the putting on of the armor. The summons to prayer did not appear independently. Prayer is rather to be regarded as attending the taking up of the weapons and the conflict, as the present strongly indicates” (225).

*ultimate act of partnership with God.*²⁸⁷

Fasting is not specifically endorsed in Eph. 6. In the Gospels, however, Jesus instructs that some demons may only be driven out through prayer and fasting (Matt. 17:21).

Contrary to the practice of SLSW proponents to engage the enemy through warfare prayer, Pawson reveals that this is not evident in the New Testament. He says:

*One striking feature of engagement with demons by Jesus and others in the New Testament is that they never took the initiative. They never went looking for them. Only when demons manifested themselves were they confronted and banished and even then not always immediately, as if their interference was a distraction (Acts 16:18).*²⁸⁸

“Although we do not have the authority, to directly engage territorial spirits,” Arnold declares, “we certainly have the right to appeal to God to hinder and obstruct the grip of a demonic ruler over an area so that the gospel can be proclaimed and the darkness may be lifted from the eyes of the unbelieving.”²⁸⁹ “Watch and pray” are used together in v. 18 to exhort believers to stay awake and be alert.²⁹⁰ The believer would be encouraged to know that Satan is limited. No matter how powerful he is, he is inferior to God. He is not omnipotent, omnipresent, or omniscient like God.²⁹¹

²⁸⁷ Wink, *The Powers*, vol. 3, *Engaging the Powers: Discernment and Resistance in a World of Domination* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1992), 312.

²⁸⁸ Pawson, 69.

²⁸⁹ Arnold, *Three Crucial Questions*, 197-98.

²⁹⁰ See Matt. 26:41.

²⁹¹ Lauderville writes, “God can use Satan as an instrument to punish sinners (1 Cor 5:5; 1 Tim 1:20). Satan’s temptations can be resisted (Eph 4:27; 1 Pet 5:8-9; Jas 4:7). Above all, Satan’s power has limits because it depends upon his effectiveness in persuading humans to follow his lead. At the final judgment, God will have Satan bound (Rev 20:2), released (Rev 20:7), and then burned (Rev. 20:10)” (9).

