



No authority at all!

November 11, 2019

ACTS 19:5 NKJV - (5) And the evil spirit answered and said, “Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?”

The book of Acts records that, in Ephesus, God was performing “extraordinary miracles through Paul” (**Acts 19:11**). These apostolic miracles were to substantiate Paul’s message. Some of these miracles involved casting out demons from those who were possessed (**verse 12**). Jesus had earlier given His apostles specific authority over demons (**Mark 3:15**). Paul, as an apostle, had received that authority as well (**2 Corinthians 12:12**).

There were some religious charlatans in Ephesus who pretended to have special, miracle-working powers. Sceva, who is identified as “a Jewish chief priest” (**Acts 19:14**), had seven sons “who went around driving out evil spirits” (**verse 13**). Seeing the success that Paul had in exorcising demons, the seven sons of Sceva began using a new formula invoking the name of Jesus. They would say to the demon, “In the name of the Jesus whom Paul preaches, I command you to come out” (**verse 13**).

This strategy of Sceva’s seven sons backfired one day. A demon they were trying to cast out refused, saying, “Jesus I know, and Paul I know about, but who are you?” (**Acts 19:15**). The demon then turned on them viciously. The demon-possessed man “jumped on them and overpowered them all. He gave them such a beating that they ran out of the house naked and bleeding” (**verse 16**).

The problem faced by the seven sons of Sceva was that they had no power over the demon they confronted. They were not apostles. More than that, as religious as they were, they had no relationship with God. They were not believers in Christ. They did not possess the power or the presence of the Holy Spirit. There was nothing in them or their words that would cause a demon to pay them the slightest heed. One proud demon in particular seems to have been fed up with their stage show and gave them a beating they would remember.

Much of this is going on today in our local sanctuaries and people are being oppressed by people who have holes in their pitcher and are unable to pour anything in another. Don’t envy others, but instead, grow closer to God! Let Him use you through His authority. It cannot be about you, but about God! Otherwise, you will get the beating of your life as well.

SCRIPTURE READING: MARK 7:20-23

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: The greatest deception men suffer from is their own opinions.