

## A strong man and a stronger one: a Lukan thread

Then the **devil** led him up and showed him in an instant **all the kingdoms of the world**. And the devil said to him, "To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours."  
(Luke 4.5-7)

As he stepped out on land, a man of the city who had demons met him. For a long time he had worn no clothes, and he did not live in a house but in the tombs. When he saw Jesus, he fell down before him and shouted at the top of his voice, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, do not torment me"-- for **Jesus had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man**. (For many times it had seized him; **he was kept under guard [phulassō]** and **bound with chains and shackles, but he would break the bonds** and be driven by the demon into the wilds.) Jesus then asked him, "What is your name?" He said, "**Legion**"; for many demons had entered him.  
(Luke 8.27-30)

**When a strong man**, fully armed, **guards [phulassō]** his castle, his property is safe. But when one stronger than he comes upon him and **overpowers [nikaō]** him, he takes away his armor in which he was persuaded and distributes his plunder. Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters. "**When the unclean spirit has gone out of a person**, it wanders through waterless regions looking for a resting place, but not finding any, it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' When it comes, it finds it swept and put in order. Then it goes and brings seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they enter and live there; and the last state of that person is worse than the first."  
(Luke 11.21-26)

But he said, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and **guard [phulassō]** it!"  
(Luke 11.28)

**A dispute also arose among [the disciples] as to which one of them was to be regarded as the greatest**. But he said to them, "The **kings of the Gentiles lord it over them**; and those in authority over them are called benefactors. But not so with you; rather the greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like one who serves.  
(Luke 22.24-26)

Then **some itinerant Jewish exorcists tried to use the name of the Lord Jesus** over those who had evil spirits, saying, "I adjure you by the Jesus whom Paul proclaims." Seven sons of a Jewish high priest named Sceva were doing this. But the evil spirit said to them in reply, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?" **Then the man with the evil spirit leaped on them, mastered them all**, and so **overpowered [nikaō]** them that they fled out of the house naked and wounded.  
(Acts 19.13-16)