

## Thoughts

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### Spiritual Forces ([View in PDF](#))

[Ephesians 6:12](#) (NASB) *"For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places."*

When defending our faith as Christians, there are multiple ways it can be affirmed, such as through history, science, and archeology. However, one of the more unconventional yet sobering arguments for the validity of our faith stems from the world of the spiritual: namely ghosts/hauntings, and other unexplained activity or "poltergeists" (meaning "noisy spirit"). [Luke 16:26](#) makes it clear that it is impossible for the dead to return to earth and inhabit physical locations, but numerous references are made in Scripture to demons and their earthly activity, such as the demons in [Luke 8:30,31](#) imploring Jesus to not command them to go away into the abyss.

I cannot explain to you how it is possible—let alone why God even allowed—direct contact with the dead, as occurred in [1 Samuel 28](#), where Saul (through a medium) contacts the deceased prophet, Samuel. Clearly, it is actually Samuel he is talking to, and not a demon *impersonating* Samuel, because Samuel not only chastises Saul for his disobedience to God, but is also upset at him for being disturbed (verse 15, whatever the implication of 'disturbed' meant for Samuel): *"Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?"* This was clearly prohibited by God in Leviticus 19:31:

*"Do not turn to mediums or seek out spiritists, for you will be defiled by them. I am the LORD your God."*

It was also not the only time that communication between the dead and the living took place (see the conversation between the rich man and Lazarus in [Luke 16:26](#)).

I also cannot explain how demons are able—again, let alone permitted—to mimic not only the appearance and voices of the dead they are impersonating, but even their intellect—reiterating detailed, historical facts long-forgotten even by family members. More than ample evidence backs this up, such as the well-documented [Enfield Poltergeist](#) account in England in the late 1970s. But the account of Jesus walking on the water in [Matthew 14:22-33](#) reveals that the disciples themselves believed in the existence of ghosts (verse 26):

*"When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear."*

There is no question demons are real—with worldwide evidence of demonic presence, possession, and oppression. Biblical accounts of their power include: imposing muteness ([Matthew 9:32](#)); committing extreme violence through people and preventing others from passing by ([Matthew 8:28](#)); one man physically taking on and beating seven other men by himself ([Acts 19:13-17](#)); slamming a person into the ground ([Luke 4:33-36](#)), forcing convulsions ([Mark 9:15-30](#)), and mauling people ([Luke 9:38-45](#)); foaming at the mouth ([Mark 9:20](#)); mass possession of animals ([Luke 8:32,33](#)); living in tombs ([Luke 8:27](#)); predicting the future ([Acts 16:16](#)); and superhuman strength capable of breaking chains and shackles ([Luke 8:29](#)).

Not surprisingly, there are striking similarities between Scripture and evidence captured by numerous documentaries and TV shows such as [Ghost Stalkers](#), [Ghost Hunters/Ghost Hunters International](#), [Ghost Adventures](#), [The Haunted](#), [Most Haunted](#), [Fact or Faked](#), [Destination Truth](#), [Paranormal Lockdown](#) and [Paranormal Witness](#) who have—and still are—exploring the sometimes near-fatal spiritual realm in literally

hundreds of notorious paranormal locations in at least 38 countries around the world (including all 51 states within the U.S.). Three of these locations are: the [Goldfield Hotel](#) in Nevada; the [Edinburgh Vaults](#) (and adjacent cemetery) in Scotland, and the [Riddle House](#) in Florida.

Things heard and seen, many backed up by law enforcement officers and other credible sources, are chilling: objects and/or people being moved, dropped, or levitating without any scientific explanation, being picked up and violently thrown; people being shoved, pushed downstairs, or physically choked; sensations of confusion or disorientation; unexplainable silhouettes and shadows, lights physically turning themselves on and off; new and thoroughly-tested electronic equipment failing to work without logical cause or explanation; clearly visible people appearing and disappearing without trace; unexplained voices and sounds—some audible only when recorded by electronic equipment; isolated sensations or entire areas of sudden freezing cold unaffected by surrounding humid, ambient temperatures in the 80s or 90s; being touched, struck, or other severe bodily pain that disappears as quickly as it appears.

In [Exodus 7:8-13](#), Moses knew all too well that though God clearly reigned and was supreme, the account of Pharaoh's magicians in changing their staffs into serpents by throwing them onto the ground highlighted just some of the potential power of these demonic forces.

Bringing this closer to home, missionary coworkers have shared various encounters of their own: an undeniable feeling of oppression in certain countries (some even the moment they step off the airplane); the undeniable sensation of a physical presence moving past them during the dedication of a radio station; and chairs in a kitchen literally moving by themselves at night—just a handful of such encounters.

Both non-believers **and believers** need to be wide awake to the truth that spiritual forces **do exist**, and are not to be taken lightly. As an example, while filming for a local San Diego morning show in 1964, well-known Regis Philbin visited the [Whaley House](#) and reported to have had a paranormal encounter with (whom he believed to be) the deceased Mrs. Whaley. Philbin stated:

*"You know, a lot people pooh-pooh it because they can't see it. But there was something going on in that house."*

Regis' statement is an honest acknowledgment by a non-believer that there is a very real and sinister aspect to the spiritual world; a sobering reminder of the spiritual battle we are in.

The new believers in [Acts 19:18,19](#) whom God rescued from involvement in the occult certainly knew best how to destroy their connection to the occult after they had given their lives to Christ:

*"Many also of those who had believed kept coming, confessing and disclosing their practices. And many of those who practiced magic brought their books together and began burning them in the sight of everyone; and they counted up the price of them and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver."*

Though we may rarely see physical evidence of the spiritual battle surrounding us, I trust these facts serve to bolster our faith in the one and only God we serve who is sovereign and far more powerful than any spiritual force we may encounter. Just as Moses' serpent swallowed the serpents of Pharaoh's magicians, [James 2:19](#) reminds us:

*"You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder."*

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