

ST. PAUL: DEMON SMASHER

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This story is a mash-up dealing with the battles of St. Paul with demons.

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ST. PAUL: DEMON SMASHER

SAINT PAUL: DEMON SMASHER

Charles Schwenk

(Translator's Introduction) Apart from the Dead Sea Scrolls, the most famous trove of manuscripts from the early Christian era is the Nag Hammadi collection. It is well known that the brothers who found these treasures did not immediately recognize their value. Some manuscripts were sold and others were apparently used as fuel for cooking fires. Some may also have been given to curious friends and others may have been stolen. As a result, the collection is incomplete and from time to time manuscripts that appear to be part of the collection are offered for sale on the antiquities market.

This manuscript was purchased by Charles Schwenk, a private collector who has financed the work by our group in authenticating, translating and publishing it. Radiocarbon dating shows that the document dates to roughly the same period as the other Nag Hammadi texts, between the third and fourth centuries A.D. As is the case with the 52 known manuscripts, this one is a copy of a much earlier text.

The contents of this manuscripts are certainly shocking and inconsistent with the doctrines of both Judaism and Christianity. However, since this is also true of other pieces from the collection such as the Apocalypse of Adam and the Gospel of Thomas we find it plausible that this piece might actually have been part of the original collection and therefore regarded as true by some early Christian communities.

Our translation follows the structural conventions of the King James Bible but we have rendered the actual words into language more consistent with modern usage and speech. We debated among ourselves about whether to issue this translation. The popular reaction to vernacular translations of the Gospel of Thomas suggest that this might be dangerous. However, recent fictionalized renderings of historical accounts of such famous individuals as Abraham Lincoln and Queen Victoria and their own battles against one type of demon, the vampire, have convinced us that people might benefit from our own research. Indeed, our choice of a title for our translation, "St. Paul: Demon Smasher," is modeled on the titles of these earlier accounts.

The author of the piece claims to be the apostle Paul who was probably born a few years after Jesus and is thought to have been executed in Rome around 65 to 70 A.D., though Paul suggests in the letter that he survived and was at least 115 years old at the time he wrote it. Since the letter contains a reference to the Gospel of John, which is known to have been written no earlier than 90 A.D. most of the members of our team believe that Paul could not have been the author. However, textual analysis reveals that the writing style and references are all consistent with what is known of Paul's life and with other letters in the New Testament that are commonly attributed to him. It is possible that the apostle Paul lived long enough to have read the Gospel of John and the letter itself gives an explanation, albeit a disturbing end even frightening one, for his longevity. If the explanation is true, he may be alive still.

The author himself states that eternal life is not necessarily a blessing. In his own words, "there are worse things than death." I can tell you from my own experience that, though a very long life has its advantages, there are many times when a person reflects on its cost and wishes that they had lived only the normal "threescore and ten" years.

ST. PAUL: DEMON SMASHER

E. A. Wallis Budge, Translation Team Leader: London, 2011.

THE THIRD EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS

1 I PAUL, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God send greetings unto the church of God which is at Corinth. My dear brothers and sisters, it has been many years since I last wrote to you and I know you will have difficulty believing I am still alive. I have had my dear friend Philemon deliver this letter so that he can testify to this fact.

2 In the years since my last letters God has caused many of the churches I founded to thrive. Many have produced accounts of the life of Jesus that have inspired the faithful. The authors of these accounts have followed the accepted practice of naming them after Christ's own apostles. I have read many of these and some contain falsehoods. However, there are others, especially those named for the apostles Matthew and John, that tell the truth, though not the complete truth. I hope that some day these may be collected into a book that can be shared among all believers.

3 Another Christian community has written a book and given its author as Luke the Physician, not one of the original twelve but one of the later followers of Jesus the Christ. I read this manuscript and suggested that it be divided into three parts. The first part should describe the life and works of Jesus. This part should be called the good news from Luke (Translators's Note: the word "gospel" means good news). The second part should be called "the Accomplishments or Acts of the Apostles."

4 The final part consists of material excised from "Acts" dealing with the actions of the apostles in fighting various demons. This part should be named, "The War of the Apostles against the Hoard of Demons." and should only be read by those who have matured in the faith and have actually seen and fought demons.

5 As the manuscript called "Acts of the Apostles" describes, I did encounter Jesus during my persecution of Christians when I was a Pharisee named Saul. However, the people who wrote this piece rightly distorted the facts in order to avoid confusing and terrifying the faithful. Now I must tell you the full truth because of what has happened in the Corinth church.

6 In my first letter to you I warned you against some of the unusual powers displayed by some of your members, such as the ability to foresee the future, to speak in tongues, and to perform healing miracles. I told you then that these are not real gifts of the spirit as you assumed. The only true gift of the spirit is love.

7 I did not tell you at the time the true reason I warned you against people who display such powers without showing love. Such powers may come from God but they may also come from Satan. For reasons I will give later, our Old Adversary hates the followers of Jesus more than any other human beings because we fill him with fear. He realizes that we have the power to convert demons and, thereby, to redeem the lost creation.

ST. PAUL: DEMON SMASHER

8 I will first tell you of my encounter with Jesus and my subsequent part in the war against the servants and allies of Satan. Then I will tell you what you must do about the evil that has infected your own community.

2 Before I became an apostle of Jesus Christ I did persecute some of his followers, but not because I disagreed with their religion. I knew that some of them were guilty of murder and worse. Indeed, when I set off for the town of Damascus I intended to arrest some of them for the crime of murdering children and consuming their bodies.

2 I was not struck blind on the road to Damascus. I arrived with my sight intact. There I met with Jesus Christ himself.

3 When I arrived the local magistrate informed me that one of those being held claimed to be Jesus, risen from the dead. Though he had not been told, he seemed to know I was coming and asked to meet with me.

4 When I entered his cell he said, Saul, why do you persecute me? (Translatorsâ Note: the book of Acts, Chapter 22, reports that these were the first words spoken by Jesus to Paul but gives a different story of the encounter, stating that Paul was on the way to Damascus when he was enveloped by a bright light and fell to the ground, blinded). I said, â Jesus, you seem very lively for one who has been crucified. Perhaps the Romans did their work badly.â

To this he answered, The Romans were efficient in my crucifixion as they are in all things. When I was near death I was saved by a power greater than Rome. Why are you now trying to finish the Romansâ work for them?

I replied , â I persecute your followers because they do terrible things and I believe some are possessed by demons.â I shall never forget his next words, You see part of the truth now but your view is clouded. Now you see as through a dark glass. Soon you will see clearly, even as you are seen. (Translatorsâ note: see First Corinthians: 13)

5 He said, there are many varieties of demons, including the children of Lycan , who turn into wolves, the spawn of Lilith, the drinker of blood, and the sons and daughters of Tiamat, who resemble a cross between humans and snakes. (Translatorsâ Note: werewolves are sometimes called lycanthropes. This term comes from the Greek story of Lycan, who was turned into a wolf by the gods. This â mythâ can be found in Ovidâ s Metamorphoses and elsewhere. Lilith was a demon in Hebrew â mythologyâ who was the first wife of Adam and roamed the night drinking the blood of sleeping children. In the Babylonian creation â mythâ the Enuma Elish, Tiamat was the ruler of the primordial chaos and the mother of the Babylonian gods. She was eventually killed by one of her sons, Marduk. Tiamat is traditionally pictured as a giant snake but the earliest texts do not describe her in this way and in fact suggest that she had legs. The monster Leviathan in the Bible was modeled on Tiamat.)

6 Those of you who have hearing, let them hear. Jesus said to me, I was once a man but when I was crucified I agreed to become a demon. There are two types of demons, good and bad. The good demons are a terror to the Prince of darkness, not because we kill the evil ones, but because we do far worse, we convert them. Satan fears that through us God will someday redeem the lost creation.

7 At this point, Jesus smiled at me. Anyone who has seen the teeth of a demon will not soon forget them. I recoiled in horror but he had no intention of harming me.

8 He said, It is time for me to go, but before I do I must tell you what to do next. Go to a street called Straight. There you will meet a friend of mine. He used to be an evil demon but now is a virtuous one. He is named Ananias, and he will teach you what you need to know to fight demons.

ST. PAUL: DEMON SMASHER

9 Then, with impossible strength he pried open the door, overpowered the guard, and was gone.

3 As Jesus instructed, I went to the street called Straight where I was met by an odd-looking man named Ananias. (Translatorsâ Note: see Acts 9:11) He said, â Jesus told me you were coming friend. My house is nearby.â

2 As we walked, he said, â Jesus instructed me to teach you how to fight demons properly. So far, your efforts have been futile.â I replied, â Jesus is himself a demon. Why would he fight his own kind?â He smiled, showing me another set of those horrible teeth. â You have much to learn.â he said. â I know well Jesus is a demon. I MADE HIM ONE. I was one of the few demons he converted while he was a human being. As he was dying on the cross I offered him the gift of eternal life so that he might continue his work. He said, I accept.

3 â Even when Jesus was human he expelled demons. Once he confronted a man possessed and asked the demons inside him their names. They replied, â We are called Legion, because we are many.â Jesus then sent the demons into a herd of pigs who promptly drowned themselves in the Sea of Galilee.â (Translatorsâ Note: see Mark 5:9 and Luke 8:30)

4 â Now, however, he is much more effective; demons are absolutely terrified of him. Do you know that among demons he is called The Oncoming Storm?â I replied that I had heard him called The Lamb of God by his followers and again Ananias showed me his teeth. â That is a bit of irony. If you ever saw Jesus at work you would be more likely to call him a leopard than a lamb.â

5 â I was with him once when he entered the tomb of a demon who had fallen into your hands and was crucified. You mistakenly thought you had executed a man guilty of killing children but in fact you had hung a demon on the cross who could easily feign death until it was time to escape from the tomb. Jesus himself pulled this same trick after his crucifixion.â

6 â As Jesus entered the tomb, he looked so meek and mild that I might have called him the Lamb of God, but he always assumed this appearance before making one last attempt to convert a demon. Occasionally these attempts are successful but usually they are not. As we entered, and our eyes became accustomed to the gloom, Jesus spoke softly saying, Child of Lilith, it is time to arise.

7 â Upon hearing these words, the beast who was once a man opened its eyes. Jesus quietly informed him that he had one last chance to take a different path, to follow Jesus and oppose the demons who would corrupt and destroy humanity. The monster listened in perplexity for a moment and then he smiled. Since you have seen our teeth, I need not tell you how frightening this smile was. He lunged savagely at Jesus who deftly sidestepped. Pulling a stake and a carpenterâs mallet from under his robe, he forced the blood-drinker down and pierced its heart, rendering it truly dead.

8 After this unbelievable violence, he turned toward me. His face was peaceful but full of sorrow. For some slayers, killing demons is the greatest pleasure in their lives. It was never so with Jesus. As I faced him, he looked like he had been dipped in blood. All he said was, We must clean this robe immediately or the blood stains will set.

10 â We went to a nearby stream and I asked for the honor of cleaning his robe while he washed the blood from his body. My request was granted.â

11 I, Paul, stayed with Ananias for a long time, learning the differences between different types of demons and how to fight them all. There are many types of demons and an equal number of ways to kill them. For example, the children of Lycan can be killed by being pierced with a knife of silver. The followers of Lilith

ST. PAUL: DEMON SMASHER

can be dispatched by a wooden stake through the heart or by decapitation. The spawn of Tiamat are best killed by decapitation or burning. Since decapitation is effective for so many different types of demons, it is best for a slayer to learn how to use a sword very well. If this sword is coated with silver, it will serve the wielder well in almost all cases.

12 During my time with Ananias I met with a former Roman centurion whose name I never learned for security reasons. He had met with Jesus in Capernaum when Jesus was a human being and healed his servant. (Translatorsâ Note: see Luke 7:1-10) Later on, he learned of Jesusâ s crucifixion and succeeded in being assigned as one of two guards at his tomb. This man had seen Jesus open the tomb with his own supernatural strength by rolling away a rock that blocked the entrance. When he was questioned by his superiors he insisted on telling the straight truth and had, therefore, been dismissed from the army.

13 He had always been very skilled in the use of the gladius. (Translatorsâ Note: The gladius is a sword just over two feet long weighing about three pounds. It was the most important weapon for Roman soldiers as well as gladiators. In fact, our word gladiator is derived from the name of this sword.) Through his instructions, I was able to learn how to use this weapon to slay many demons and protect my own life.

14 I also began to train my body as does a gladiator or an athlete who will compete in the games. These men engage in harsh training and strict discipline. They do it to win a perishable crown but I did it to win an imperishable crown, victory against the hoards of Satan. (Translatorsâ Note: see a similar sentiment expressed in First Corinthians 9:25.)

15 During my training I never called my instructor anything but â Centurionâ and he never called me anything but â Pharisee.â As he often said, â I call you Pharisee because you fight like one.â This was not a compliment. He was a very harsh disciplinarian who made me practice the same simple moves over and over till my limbs ached and my spirit flagged. One move in particular was repeated many hundreds of times, the thrust-downward cut. Both demons and men respond in the same way when a sword is thrust into their guts, they bend over, exposing the back of their necks for the decapitating blow. Thus, a slayer must learn to thrust his gladius as hard as possible and then withdraw it as quickly as possible and make the downward cut to the neck as forcefully as possible. With training this becomes a reflex action, and I received endless training.

16 The centurion seemed to take delight in screaming obscenities at me when I failed to master a new move or when I became fatigued. Numerous times he screamed into my ear, â Pharisee, you WILL master this move or I will decapitate you myself and defecate down your neck!â Once I recall him bending over me after I had collapsed with fatigue and speaking gently saying, â Pharisee, perhaps you can resolve my confusion. When the Lord God made you a woman, why did he not give you a womanâ s reproductive organs?â

17 I often recall his abuse after I have dispatched a demon using the skills he drilled into me. He was indeed the kindest unregenerate scapegrace I have ever known.

18 Finally, when my training was complete, I was presented with the silver gladius that was to be my most important weapon in the battles to come. The centurion then had me recite an oath, â My gladius will be the savior of my life in the battles to come. I vow to keep it with me at all times, awake and asleep. Until all evil demons are dead or converted, I vow to keep my intention pure, and my gladius sharp.â

19 I passed many years battling demons and preaching the good news of Jesus the Christ. If any of you have read â The War of the Apostles against the Hoard of Demonsâ you will know of some of my battles. The most memorable was with a demon who claimed to be Tiamat itself. I did not defeat him and it is only through luck and the help of Ananias that I escaped with my life.

ST. PAUL: DEMON SMASHER

4 Here is the way this contest came about. I received news of a nest of Tiamat spawn causing mischief in the town of Damascus and went there to join Ananias in fighting them. As a demon slayer, I was not as skilled or as powerful as Ananias but as a Pharisee, knowledgeable of the sacred texts, I had one advantage, I had developed a creative idea about how to kill the Tiamat followers without ever touching them.

2 My idea came from the sacred book *Bel and the Dragon*. (Translators' Note: this book is found in the Old Testament as part of the Book of Daniel in the Bible used by Catholics but is excluded from the Protestant Bible). In this book, the prophet Daniel killed a serpent worshiped by the Babylonians. He did this by making cakes out of pitch, fat, and hair with nails in them. The serpent ate them whole as is the custom of serpents and subsequently died of a burst stomach.

3 The children of Tiamat, having the characteristics of both men and serpents, also eat their food whole, unhinging their jaws if their meal is larger than their mouths. I simply followed the recipe of Daniel and made cakes as he did. Then I covered them with my own blood and took them in a bag to the nest of Tiamat's disciples. When I arrived, I cried out in a loud voice, "Tiamat spawn, I have come to kill you." When they came at me I fought them for a time and then pretended to retreat, saying, "These demons are too much for me." As I ran away, I accidentally dropped the bag filled with the bloody treats I knew they could not resist. In contrast to the children of Lilith, the followers of Tiamat can be expected to do foolish things like eating food dropped by an enemy. They are not the brightest lamps in the synagogue.

4 I then passed a full day in useful conversation with my old friend Ananias. Before I confronted Jesus I would never have believed I could call a demon a friend but now I realize that I number at least one demon among the best friends I have ever known in my life.

5 When the full day had passed, Ananias and I returned to the place I had confronted the Hellish beings. As we looked about in the darkened room, we saw them laying dead on the floor. I turned to Ananias and said, "See how easily I have solved the problem." I was shocked to see how grave his face appeared. He seemed to be looking both at me and at something behind me when he said, "Now listen to me, friend. I want you to move toward me slowly and deliberately. Do not look over your shoulder and do not run."

6 I did as he instructed and when I had reached him he said, "Now, turn around." As I did so, I beheld another human-serpent, but one who was larger and more terrifying than any I had ever seen. I said to the monster, "Are you one of the children of Tiamat?" It replied, "No I am not, human. I AM Tiamat. Are you the one who has killed my lovely darlings in this most treacherous and dishonorable way?"

7 "I am proud to say I am. I am called Paul." I replied, attempting to hide my fear and show only my unshakable resolve. The beast looked at me with an expression I could not interpret and said, "I know you, human. Among my followers you are called The Pharisee. It is time for you to die."

8 As the demon advanced toward me I thrust my silver gladius at its gut with all the force I could muster. The point touched but did not penetrate. To my dismay, I saw that its stomach was covered with impenetrable scales and it did not bend forward to receive my killing blow. It simply showed its teeth and said, "That slayers' trick works with most demons but not with me."

9 It continued, saying, "I will now swallow you whole, and it will require me to lie dormant for a week or more to digest you." It unhinged its jaw. My dear Corinthians, believe me when I say that to be eaten alive is horrible but to be drunk alive is unimaginable.

10 I prepared myself for a horrible death, but I had not reckoned on Ananias. Just as Tiamat began to fasten itself on my leg, my demon friend came from behind and hacked off the demon's own leg. As it fell to the ground, Ananias pushed over a stone pillar that crushed the Great Serpent's arm. It fell back saying,

ST. PAUL: DEMON SMASHER

â Ananias, you betrayer of your own demon kind, you have saved this worthless human Pharisee. My limbs will grow back in time, as you well know. I will someday come back for both you and your human friend.â

11 I wanted to make another attempt to kill Tiamat but Ananias wisely told me that we had to run. This is how I managed to survive my battle with the most terrifying demon I have ever faced.

5 As I aged, I spent more time preaching and less time fighting.

2 When I had passed three score and four years , I was preaching in Caesarea. There I was attacked and beaten by a mob. When the authorities came to disperse the mob some of my attackers bore false witness against me, accusing me of preaching against the Gods and the Roman authorities.

3 I was questioned by both the Pharisees and the Roman authorities and over time it became clear that they were considering charging me with a crime. As they questioned me further I came to realize I might even be threatened with death. I told them that I was a Roman citizen and, therefore, had the right to appeal to Caesar. (Translatorsâ Note: Acts, Chapters 21-26 gives a more complete account of this incident.)

4 Appealing to Caesar meant traveling to Rome so the authorities put me on a ship. After some adventures, I arrived in Rome, where I dwelt for two years waiting for my audience with Caesarâ s representatives. (Translatorsâ Note: Acts, Chapters 27-28 describe Paulâ s journey and adventures.)

5 When I did finally receive my hearing, people again bore false witness against me and I was condemned to death. This did not terrify me. There are worse things than death. But as it happened, I was not to die. (Translatorsâ Note: the Bible does not specify how or when Paul died but Christian tradition holds that he was executed in Rome at the age of 65 or 70)

6 As I sat in my cell awaiting my fate I was startled to hear the door wrenched open with supernatural strength and for the second time in my life I was in the presence of Jesus. I bowed my head, and he spoke gently saying, Well done, thou good and faithful servant. (Translatorsâ Note: see Matthew 25:23) I replied, â Lord, I have fought the good fight, I have run the race, I have kept the faith.â (Translatorsâ Note: see Second Timothy 4:7) I smiled and Jesus smiled in return but this time his teeth no longer filled me with horror.

7 At this point, Jesus stared into my eyes, saying, I know that after the life you have lived you no longer fear death. You may even welcome it. However, if you are willing, I have more work for you to do. This work will require that I give you a gift, the gift of eternal life.

7 I knew what he meant and I said, â Lord, I am ready.â He replied, Then come unto me ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light. (Translatorsâ Note: Jesus spoke these words earlier while he was still a human being. See Matthew 11:28).

8 Jesus then opened one of his own veins with his sharp teeth. He bade me open my mouth and tilt my head back then he held his arm above my mouth and let the blood drip into it saying, Drink ye all of it. This is my blood which is shed for you for the destruction of demons. (Translatorsâ Note: Jesus spoke similar words at the last supper. See Matthew 26:27). As others have said before me, there is wonder working power in the precious blood of the Lamb of God. (Translatorsâ Note: the hymn, â Power in the Bloodâ states this point in almost exactly these words. The consensus of our team is that this is a coincidence.)

9 Immediately I was filled with a vigor that has never left me during the long fight to reclaim the lost creation, to convert those few demons who could be converted and, sadly, to kill the rest. Now I no longer live but Christ lives in me. (Translatorsâ Note: see Galatians 2:20)

ST. PAUL: DEMON SMASHER

10 The story I recount happened over two score and ten years ago. Now I come to the point where I must tell you what to do.

6 My brothers and sisters of the church of Corinth, you must now make war against the demons among you. You once believed they were merely human beings who had the gifts of the spirit. Now you know them truly. Please attend to my instructions about how you must behave in the battle to come.

2 First, always try to convert a demon before slaying it. Do you really believe that God's love is so weak that it does not extend to all of His creation, even the lost creation?

3 Even demons are subject to the grace of God and a few will choose to follow Jesus. We followers of Jesus are trying first to convert demons and only after conversion has failed to kill them. Jesus has helped us to understand the true meaning of the word love. (Translators' Note: the word Paul uses here is agape which means the love God shows toward human beings. The followers of Jesus believe that by showing love toward their fellow humans, and even demons and animals, they can actually express the love of God.)

4 Do not worry that if you try to talk to demons and give them the opportunity to convert they will use this opportunity to kill you. Everyone dies. However, some, like you, get the chance to die for a good cause. As the scriptures say, Man that is born of woman hath but a short time to live and is full of trouble (Translators' Note: Job 14:4). James, the brother of Jesus has written, For what is thy life? It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away. (Translators' Note: see James 4:14)

5 Let me repeat the points I made before. First, even while he was still human Jesus fought demons. Second, as he was dying on the cross, he consented to be bitten and converted to demon. But Jesus is a virtuous demon, whose main aim is to convert evil demons, and he kills them only as a last resort.

6 Satan, the father and leader of all evil demons, is more terrified of Jesus and his followers than any other demon slayers, precisely because Jesus attempts conversion. Like any general in any war, the Father of Lies would rather have his troops killed than to have them fighting for the enemy.

7 Because of his fears, our Old Adversary sends his own agents to infiltrate communities of Jesus's followers to corrupt and spy on them. Your path is clear. Convert them or kill them.

8 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you always. Amen.

ST. PAUL: DEMON SMASHER

ST. PAUL: DEMON SMASHER

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