

**Jesus as Anathema (1Cor 12:3)  
in light of *Didache* 16:5 in translation by A. Świderkówna**

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This article is the translation of the article: W. KOSEK, *Jezus jako «Anathema» (1Kor 12,3) w świetle Didache 16,5 w tłumaczeniu A. Świderkówny*, in:  
B. STRZAŁKOWSKA (ed.), *Więcej szczęścia jest w dawaniu aniżeli w braniu. Księga pamiątkowa dla Księdza Profesora Waldemara Chrostowskiego w 60. rocznicę urodzin [It is more blessed to give than to receive. Memorial Book for Professor Waldemar Chrostowski in the 60th Anniversary of His Birth]*, Warszawa 2011, vol. 2, pp. 872-890.  
ISBN: 9788372329837

**Abstract**

In detailed lexical and grammatical analyses, the present article proves that a correct understanding of the statement of St. Paul in 1Cor 12:3 is as follows:

Just as “there is no idol in the world, and there is no God but one” (1Cor 8:4), so also the spirit of no god (from among so-called gods – cf. 1Cor 8:5; 2Cor 11:4) will reveal the fullness of the mystery of neither Jesus-Anathema nor Jesus-Lord, but only the Holy Spirit, who is absolutely unique spirit of the only God. Thanks only to the Holy Spirit, a believer can proclaim with an understanding “Jesus is Anathema,” “Jesus is the Lord”!

Jesus is Anathema means that He accepted in His life and mission the position of a man cut off from the People by priests as the official representatives of God. Acclamation “Jesus is Anathema” is not a cursing thrown towards Jesus but a liturgical proclamation of the whole mystery of Him who humbled Himself by the acceptance of humiliation, contempt and finally crucifixion (cf. Phil 2:5-8), to receive from the Father the state of lordship/giving eternal life to those who believe in Him and love Him (cf. 2Cor 8:9; Phil 2:9-11). It is in a strict connection with the second acclamation, “Jesus is the Lord.”

Such an understanding of Jesus-Anathema in 1Cor 12:3 is the same as in *Didache* 16:5, where Cathathema-Jesus is the savior for those who believe in Him.

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## Introduction.

In the First Letter to the Corinthians (12:3), St. Paul wrote:

οὐδείς ἐν πνεύματι θεοῦ λαλῶν λέγει· Ἀνάθεμα Ἰησοῦς

How to understand this text, and in particular the phrase Ἀνάθεμα Ἰησοῦς – it is a central problem of the present article.

In modern translations, one assumes the following understanding of this text:

Nobody speaking by the spirit of God says, “**Jesus is Anathema,**”

where the expression ‘Jesus **is Anathema**’ – Ἀνάθεμα – means ‘let Jesus be accursed.’

Is it a correct understanding?

### 1. *Didache* 16:5 in translation by A. Świderkówna.

The possibility of a new look at Paul’s sentence appears thanks to Professor Anna Świderkówna, died in 2008, who made a faithful translation of the Greek original of “The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles” (*Didache*). For in *Didache* 16:5 there is the word **κατάθεμα**, similar to Paul’s **Ἀνάθεμα**:

*Didache* 16:5 with the words to be analyzed:

τότε ἕξει ἡ κτ ἕως τῶν ἀνθρώπων εἰς  
τὴν πύρωσιν τῆς δοκιμασίας,  
καὶ σκανδαλισθήσονται πολλοὶ καὶ ἀπολοῦνται·  
οἱ δὲ ὑπομέναντες ἐν τῇ πίστει αὐτῶν σωθήσονται  
**ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ τοῦ καταθέματος.**

In the translation of A. Świderkówna<sup>1</sup>:

Then humanity will enter  
the fire of trial,  
and many will break down and die,  
but those who persevere in faith **will be saved**  
**by the One who has become a curse for us.**

καταθέματος – it is the genitive of κατάθεμα; the word κατάθεμα is equal in meaning to the word ἀνάθεμα<sup>2</sup>.

One should note in the beginning that in the translation of A. Świderkówna the word κατάθεμα / ἀνάθεμα referred to the Savior is affirmative and therefore contrary to what is in the contemporary translations of Paul’s sentence 1Cor 12:3. In the understanding

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. A. ŚWIDERKÓWNA (translation and comments), *Ojcowie Apostolscy [Apostolic Fathers]* (series: *Pisma starożytności pisarzy*, vol. 45), 61-65.65. See also S. PIĘSZCZOCH, *Patrologia [Patristic]*, Gniezno 1998, p. 197.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Z. ABRAMOWICZÓWNA (editor), *Słownik grecko-polski [Greek-Polish dictionary]*, vol. I-IV, Warszawa, 1958, 1960, 1962, 1965, vol. II, p. 577: κατάθεμα; cf. *ibid.*, vol. I, p. 140: ἀνάθεμα – 1. a thing dedicated to the deity, a votive offering; 2. a thing or person cursed. See also R. POPOWSKI, *Wielki słownik grecko-polski Nowego Testamentu [Great Greek-Polish dictionary of the New Testament]*, Warszawa 1997, p. 322: κατάθεμα: this word is a compound κατά + τθημι + μα; p. 34: ἀνάθεμα, which is a compound of analogous parts ἀνά + τθημι + μα. There is no difference between the set of all meanings of κατά and ἀνά (cf. *Ibid.*, p. 319-320 and p. 31, point: *w złożeniach* [in compounds]) except that ἀνά more emphasizes an upward movement, while κατά – a downward movement. Both κατάθεμα and ἀνάθεμα, however, have the same two main, mutually opposite areas of meanings: 1) something brought down, humiliated – a curse; 2) something brought up, offered to ‘the heaven’ – a victim, a votive offering.

of A. Świderkówna, this term shows how Jesus saved those who believe in Him. Behold, the Savior allowed Jewish leaders to see Him as a deceiver of the People, and thus as a κατάθεμα / ἀνάθεμα / the curse. Jesus, sentenced by them to death on the cross, offered Himself as an atoning sacrifice for those who believe in Him as God's Chosen One.

Before this article presents a new understanding of Paul's sentence, made possible by *Didache* 16:5 in the translation of A. Świderkówna, it is worth proving the reliability of her translation.

One should note that the discussed text has an entirely different meaning in the translation by A. Lisiecki<sup>3</sup>:

At that time, the humankind will go to the fire of trial, and many will be offended and perish, and those who persevere will be saved from this curse.

A significant difference concerns the translation of the phrase:

σωθήσονται ὑπ' αὐτοῦ τοῦ καταθέματος, and in it especially: ὑπ' αὐτοῦ.

A. Lisiecki gives σωθήσονται ὑπ' αὐτοῦ as 'they will be saved **from this...**', and A. Świderkówna as 'they will be saved **by Him who...**'.

The following analysis will show the correctness of A. Świderkówna's translation.

The compound ὑπ' αὐτοῦ one should understand as ὑπὸ αὐτοῦ, that is ὑπὸ + genitive, which according to the dictionaries<sup>4</sup> means that the noun following ὑπὸ αὐτοῦ represents the performer of an act (here: of an act of salvation expressed by the verb σωθήσονται, preceding that compound). It is, therefore, necessary to translate as: "they will be saved by this Catathema."

It is also worth noting that σωθήσονται (they will be saved), contained in *Didache* 16:5, is the verb σώζω for the third person plural future indicative **passive voice**. The passive voice, termed by biblical scholars as 'passivum theologicum',<sup>5</sup> points to the acting God, the Savior. So in *Didache* 16:5, the author talks about salvation by God Jesus – Catathema – the Savior.

The understanding of the compound ὑπὸ αὐτοῦ is worth verifying in Septuagint. There are two places with the phrase "σώζω + ὑπὸ + genitive"<sup>6</sup>:

Deut 33:29a:

Blessed are you, o Israel! Who is like you, o People **saved by the Lord?**

μακάριος σύ, Ἰσραηλ· τὸ ὄμοιός σοι, λαὸς **σφζόμενος ὑπὸ κυρ ἰου;**

Isa 45:17:

Israel is saved by the Lord with an everlasting salvation

Ἰσραηλ **σφζεται ὑπὸ κυρ ἰου** σωτηρ ἕν αἰώνιον·

In the Septuagint, there is also one place with the analyzed compound, but in the reverse order<sup>7</sup>:

2Macc 1:11a:

**Having been saved by God** out of grave dangers...

ἐκ μεγάλων κινδύνων **ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ σεσωσμένοι**

<sup>3</sup> Cf. A. LISIECKI, *Pisma Ojców Apostolskich [Letters of the Apostolic Fathers]*, Poznań 1924, p. 40.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. R. POPOWSKI, *Wielki słownik grecko-polski Nowego Testamentu*, op.cit., p. 627.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. A. JANKOWSKI, *Aniolowie wobec Chrystusa. Chrystocentryczna angelologia Nowego Testamentu [Angels and Christ. Christocentric Angelology of the New Testament]*, Kraków 2002, p. 78, 151.

<sup>6</sup> One searched with BibleWorks 6.0, giving the command for BGM: 'σώζω υπο.

<sup>7</sup> One searched with BibleWorks 6.0, giving the command for BGM: 'υπο \*5 σώζω.

These three places confirm the correctness of the *Didache* 16:5 translation, made by A. Świderkówna.

## 2. 1Cor 12:3 in a new light – an introduction.

In light of *Didache* 16:5, proclaiming Jesus as Catathema/Anathema does not mean insulting the Savior. It is to show Him as the One who voluntarily accepted death at the hands of the people who did not understand Him. He has thus become a Sacrifice acceptable to God, an Anathema in a positive sense. **In the eyes of people condemning Jesus to death, He was Anathema in a negative sense – someone whom God rejected from Himself.** However, people's view was wrong: **Jesus in the eyes of God was and is an Anathema – a sacrifice acceptable to God.**

The positive meaning of Anathema as a sacrifice worthy of God is present in both the Old and New Testaments, although it occurs much less frequently than the negative one: this word, written as ἀνάθεμα or ἀνάθημα, appears in total 34 times (27 in the Old Testament, 7 in the New Testament), of which 5 (Lev 27:28n; Jdt 16:19; 2Macc 2:13; 9:16; Lk 21:5) in a positive sense (not counting 1Cor 12:3).

It is especially worth noting that Lev 27:29 says that every positive ἀνάθεμα is the most sacred thing for the Lord! The analogous positive sense of κατάρα, the other Greek word depicting somebody cursed – used in connection with the typology of scapegoat as a foretold of the death of Jesus – one can observe in the post-Pauline writings, namely of Barnabas (*Epistle of Barnabas* 7:7-10), Justin Martyr (*Dialogue with Trypho* 40.4 and 111.2), Tertullian (*Adversus Marcionem* 7:7)<sup>8</sup>.

In the Old Testament, how meaningful is the command from Lev 27:28-29!: “<sup>28</sup> And every Anathema which a man shall dedicate to the Lord of all that he has, whether **man** or beast, or of the field of his possession, he shall not sell it, nor redeem it: Each Anathema shall be **holy of holies** (ἅγιον ἄγ ἴον, or the most holy thing) **to the Lord.** <sup>29</sup> Moreover, whatever of men shall be dedicated as Anathema (πᾶν ὃ ἐὰν ἀνατεθῆ), shall not be ransomed, but shall be surely put to death.”

Lev 27:29 in the Hebrew Bible states: “Every **man** consecrated as *herem* (חֵרֵם = Greek *Anathema*) cannot be redeemed; he must be killed.”

Jesus, as Anathema, really was not redeemed, but He became a redeemer by the death that He wanted to receive as a gift for us. Hanged on the tree of the cross, He saved us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us (cf. Gal 3:13)<sup>9</sup>.

Lk 21:5 – “some people were speaking about the temple as adorned with costly stones and votive offerings (ἀναθήμασιν)” – shows the currentness of the affirmative meaning of *Anathema* in the New Testament. Moreover, is not Jesus the greatest gift of the new temple?

In the writings of St. Paul, this dual dimension of the word *Anathema* is present, revealing the fullness of the mystery of Jesus: humiliated, despised by men, and exalted by God in a glorious resurrection. The Apostle reveals firstly in Phil 2:5-8 the necessity for the Son of God to humble himself, and immediately in the next verses 9-11 he shows the fruit of this: the exaltation of Jesus by the Father. In other places, the Apostle reveals that Christ is a curse (κατάρα – Gal 3:13), **offense, scandal** (σκάνδαλον – 1Cor 1:23, Gal 5:11), **sin** (ἁμαρτία – 2Cor 5:21).

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<sup>8</sup> Cf. S. FINLAN, *The Background And Contents Of Paul's Cultic Atonement Metaphors* (series: Academia Biblica; no. 19), Leiden, Boston 2004, p. 119-121.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. G. BARBAGLIO, *La Prima Lettera ai Corinzi. Introduzione, versione e commento di Giuseppe Barbaglio* [*The First Letter to the Corinthians. Introduction, Translation, and Comment by Giuseppe Barbaglio*], Bologna 1996, p. 640.

This ‘shameful’ naming of the Lord Jesus hides in itself the Apostle Paul’s characteristic admiration for His mystery, which he ardently expressed in the First Letter to the Corinthians: “For Jews demand signs and Greeks look for wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified, **an occasion of falling** to Jews and **foolishness** to Gentiles, but to those who are called, Jews and Greeks alike, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God” (1Cor 1:22-24).

The analysis carried out above shows that one can understand the Pauline sentence from 1Cor 12:3 in a new way: the naming of Jesus as ‘Anathema’ is not the act of cursing Him. However, does not this *affirmative* understanding contradict the whole of Paul’s sentence, οὐδείς ἐν πνεύματι θεοῦ λαλῶν λέγει· **Ἀνάθεμα Ἰησοῦς**,” which the scholars commonly translated until now as “nobody speaking by the spirit of God says, ‘**Jesus be accursed**’”?

Probably a reader accustomed to the current translation will find the new one to be something contradictory. He will say at once: If it is right to call Jesus ‘Anathema’, Paul’s sentence would have to be: “**Every one** speaking by the spirit of God says, ‘Jesus is Anathema,’” which does not happen, however, because it is written: “**No one** speaking by the spirit of God says, ‘Jesus is Anathema.’”

### 3. 1Cor 12:3 in a new light – the list of exegetical issues.

The problem of exegesis of this sentence, however, is not only in the meaning of ‘Anathema’ but in the meaning of other issues, namely:

- θεός in the Bible does not always mean the true God, but it can mean the god of pagans,
- πνεῦμα θεοῦ in the Bible is an abbreviation for two compounds: πνεῦμα θεοῦ ἁγίου (The Holy Spirit of God) and πνεῦμα θεοῦ πονηρῶν (The evil spirit of God),
- πνεῦμα θεοῦ in the Bible does not always mean the Spirit of the true God, but it can mean the spirit of the god of pagans,
- The Bible states that pagan worship is a service to demons who take the place of the true God in the lives of them,
- The pagans knew the concept of πνεῦμα θεοῦ and just as the Israelites understood it as a designation of some mysterious factor of inspiration coming from their god or idol; philosophers have created, developed and disseminated this concept among people,
- 1Cor 12:3 has the same grammatical structure as 1Cor 8:4.

It is worth mentioning here, how biblical scholars commented on verse 1Cor 12:3 so far<sup>10</sup>:

- In which situations among Corinthians could it come to curse Jesus? The answer was:
  - during the pagan liturgy
  - during the Christian liturgy in the time of prophesying of Corinthians, the recent Gentiles,

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<sup>10</sup> Cf. E. DĄBROWSKI, *Listy do Koryntian. Wstęp – przekład z oryginału – komentarz* [*The Letters to the Corinthians. Introduction – Translation from the Original – Commentary*], Poznań 1965, pp. 240-241. See also F. A. SULLIVAN, *Charyzmaty i odnowa charyzmatyczna. Studium biblijne i teologiczne* [*Charisma and Charismatic Renewal. A biblical and Theological Study*], translated by T. M. MICEWICZ, Warszawa 1986, p. 18: “I would paraphrase the meaning of the second and third poems: The first thing I would like to remind you concerning spiritual gifts is that more than one is a spirit that can ‘inspire.’ You know how inspired you were when you were pagans. No one under the inspiration of the Spirit of God can say, ‘May Jesus be cursed.’ Nor can anyone say, ‘Jesus is the Lord’ without being inspired by the Spirit of God.” See also H. LANGKAMMER, *Pierwszy i Drugi List do Koryntian* [*The First and the Second Letter to the Corinthians*], Lublin 1998, p. 64; K. ROMANIUK, A. JANKOWSKI, L. STACHOWIAK, *Komentarz praktyczny do Nowego Testamentu* [*Practical Commentary to the New Testament*], vol. 2, Poznań – Kraków 1999, p. 147; R. POPOWSKI (translation, introduction, comments), *Nowy Testament. Przekład na Wielki Jubileusz Roku 2000* [*New Testament. Translation for the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000*], Warszawa 2000, p. 234; R. PINDEL, *To co z Ducha Świętego. Egzegeza wybranych tekstów Nowego Testamentu* [*That which is of the Holy Spirit. Exegesis of selected texts of the New Testament*], Kraków 1997, p. 86.

or the Corinthians, the gnostics, rejecting the historical Jesus<sup>11</sup>; the main culprit here would be an evil spirit<sup>12</sup>, giving a delusory inspiration to the prophets

◦ during the Christian liturgy in a situation when someone was overly excited and consequently losing control over what he says

- What did St. Paul want to say to Corinthians?

The answer is: The distinguishing mark between a true and a false prophet is whether he curses Jesus (i.e., he casts anathema upon Him) or praises Him (as the Lord)

- The other comments show, in turn, that St. Paul is not so much to teach how to distinguish a false prophet from the true one, but he uses a rhetorical method that emphasizes the irreplaceable role of the Holy Spirit in prophesying. The difference between prophets was too evident for Corinthians and Paul had not to remind them that someone cursing Jesus does not prophesy under the influence of the Holy Spirit<sup>13</sup>.

#### 4. The word θεός in the Bible.

In the Scriptures, the word θεός does not mean only the True God, but more than once ‘the gods’ of pagans, who worshiped their ‘gods.’

Acts 8:9-13 record the conversion of Simon, the magician, about whom the pagans were previously saying with admiration, “This man is the ‘Power of God’ that is called ‘Great’”(verse 10). It is worth noting that the Greek text does not speak about the power of the idol (it would have to be: ἡ δύναμις τοῦ εἰδώλου), but about the power of the god (ἡ δύναμις τοῦ θεοῦ).

In the New Testament, the word θεός for the description of **pagans’ gods** occurs 14 times<sup>14</sup> and not only in the statements of the pagans: the only God, the God of Israel, uses this word through the prophets to name the idols; some contemporary translations do not even reflect it.

For example, in *Biblia Tysiąclecia*, the prophet Amos, quoted by St. Stephen (quoted according to the *Septuagint*), states:

“You took up the tent of Moloch and the star of **the idol Remphan**” (Acts 7:43), whereas according to the original the second verse should read: “and the star of your **god Remphan**” (τοῦ θεοῦ [ὑμῶν] Ραιφάν). English-language translations render this terminology correctly.

The use of the word θεός indicates the pedagogical approach of the prophet to the People: he uses the term consistent with the belief of unfaithful Israelites about *the divinity* of the idol.

Like Amos to the Israelites, so Paul to the Christians of pagan origin adapted the way of teaching to the thinking of the addressees. The Apostle familiarized himself with the mentality of many pagans, both the Corinthians themselves, for whom he proclaimed the Gospel for 18 months (cf. Acts 18:11), and of the inhabitants of Ephesus, where he edited the First Letter to the Corinthians<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> Cf. J. MURPHY-O’CONNOR, *Pierwszy List do Koryntian [The First Letter to the Corinthians]*, in: R. E. BROWN, J. A. FITZMYER, R. E. MURPHY (scientific editor of the original edition), W. CHROSTOWSKI (scientific editor of the Polish edition), *Katolicki komentarz biblijny [The Catholic Biblical Commentary]*, translated by K. BARDSKI and others, Warszawa 2001, pp. 1321-1347.1340.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. R. POPOWSKI, *Nowy Testament. Przekład na Wielki Jubileusz Roku 2000*, op.cit., p. 234.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. G. BARBAGLIO, *La Prima Lettera ai Corinzi. Introduzione, Versione e Commento di Giuseppe Barboglio*, op. cit., 638-641 – the author thoroughly comments on the text and quotes many various attempts to understand it by the most eminent biblical scholars.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. R. POPOWSKI, *Wielki słownik grecko-polski Nowego Testamentu*, op. cit. p. 270: θεός I.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. E. SZYMANEK, *Wykład Pisma Świętego Nowego Testamentu [The Lecture of the Holy Scriptures of the New Testament]*, Poznań 1990, p. 299.

In Ephesus, St. Paul experienced one of the most meaningful events: the vigorous reaction of the pagans in defense of the honor of the goddess Artemis of the Ephesians, because he, according to them, violated the goddess's dignity. The pagan Demetrius cried out to the crowd of worshippers: "As you can now see and hear, not only in Ephesus but throughout most of the province of Asia this Paul has persuaded and misled a great number of people by saying that gods made by hands **are not gods** (θεοῖς ἴσθι) at all. The danger grows [...] that the temple of the great **goddess** (τῆς μεγάλης θεᾶς) Artemis will be of no account" (Acts 19:26f).

For these words, the people cried "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" for almost two hours (19:34), which is an expressive disclosure of their religious thinking.

The people fell silent not before when the town clerk forced it on them and announced, "Citizens of Ephesus! Is there anybody who does not know that the city of the Ephesians is the guardian of the temple of great Artemis and of her statue that fell from heaven?" (19:35), and when he stated about the Apostles, "they are neither sacrilegious nor blasphemers of our **goddess** (τὴν θεὸν ἡμῶν)" (19:37).

### 5. Biblical expression πνεῦμα θεοῦ as an abbreviation for two compounds: πνεῦμα θεοῦ ἅγιον and πνεῦμα θεοῦ πονηρὸν.

To illustrate the specificity of the Hebrews' thinking about πνεῦμα θεοῦ (a spirit of God), it is worth quoting two texts from the First Book of Samuel. They show God as the first cause of all action<sup>16</sup> – it is God who sends every **spirit of God**, good and evil one:

1Sam 16:14-15: "14 And **the spirit of the Lord** (πνεῦμα κυρ ὄυ) departed from Saul, and **an evil spirit from the Lord** (πνεῦμα πονηρὸν παρὰ κυρ ὄυ) tormented him.

15 And Saul's servants said to him: 'Behold now, **an evil spirit from the Lord** (πνεῦμα κυρ ὄυ πονηρὸν) is tormenting you.'"

1Sam 19:9a And **an evil spirit from God** (πνεῦμα θεοῦ πονηρὸν) came upon Saul

Similarly, Judg 9:23 shows the dependence of the evil spirit on God: καὶ ἐξάπέστειλεν ὁ θεὸς πνεῦμα πονηρὸν – And God sent **an evil spirit**.

The Old Testament connects the coming of the longed-for Messiah of God with God's outpouring of His Spirit (see Joel 3:1-2). Although every Israelite was 'the son of God,' the Messiah was known to be **the unique 'son of God.'** The same is right about the expected Spirit – although Israelites experienced the activities of many spirits of God, they known that the Messiah is to be accompanied by **the unique 'spirit of God.'** God, speaking through the prophets, described Him as 'My spirit' (see Joel 3:1-2)<sup>17</sup>.

The unambiguous term for this particular Spirit who has the power both to create (cf. Gen 1:2) and to inspire (cf. Joel 3:1-2) is the term 'Holy Spirit' or 'Holy Spirit of God'.

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<sup>16</sup> See the footnote to 1Sam 16:14 in *Biblia Tysiąclecia*<sup>4</sup>, i.e., *Pismo Święte Starego i Nowego Testamentu w przekładzie z języków oryginalnych. Opracował zespół biblistów polskich z inicjatywy benedyktynów tynieckich [The Holy Bible of the Old and New Testaments in the Translation from the Original Languages. Worked out a team of Polish Biblical Scholars on the Initiative of the Benedictines of Tyniec]*, 4th edition, Poznań 1996. Cf. also 1Sam 16:16.23 and Tob 6:8.

<sup>17</sup> Here are the expressions containing the word 'spirit' referring to God: 'the spirit of Yahweh,' 'the spirit of God,' 'My spirit,' 'His spirit.' There are 136 of these expressions in total. There are 140 analogous expressions, concerning man. Cf. J. HOMERSKI, *Duch w Pismach natchnionych Starego Testamentu [Spirit in the Inspired Scriptures of the Old Testament]*, in: *Duch, który jednoczy. Zarys pneumatologii [The Spirit who Unites. An Outline of the Pneumatology]*. Collective work edited by M. MARCZEWSKI, Lublin 1998, p. 28, 31.

The last expression occurs three times in the Book of Daniel<sup>18</sup>:

4:8: πνεῦμα θεοῦ ἅγιον ἐν ἑαυτῷ ἔχει

4:9.18: πνεῦμα θεοῦ ἅγιον ἐν σοί

The specificity of the description of the evil spirit and the Holy Spirit as ‘**the spirit of God**’ or ‘**the spirit of the Lord**’ becomes understandable when compared to the descriptions of God: God of gods, Lord of lords, God of all spirit and body, God of every power, Ruler of spirits: Ex 15:11; Deut 10:17; Num 16:22; 2Macc 3:24; Psa 50:1; 84:8; 136:2; Jer 32:27; Dan 3:90. 93; 4:33. 34. 37; 11:36; 14:7; Dan (TH) 3:90.

When the reader realizes that in all nations some other ‘gods’ (‘their gods’) were worshiped (see Isa 36:20), then it becomes understandable that Israel preaches that only Yahweh is God and there is no other besides Him (see 1Kings 8:60).

In conclusion, one should state that:

- God is above all spirits; all the world of spirits and bodies depends on Him,
- The term ‘**spirit of God**’ is not always the proper name of the only one Spirit of God, that is, the Third Person of the Holy Trinity. It **can be a common name**, the designate of which may be both the Holy Spirit of God, the evil spirit of God, and every spirit – for God is the God of every spirit and body.

There is no term ‘evil spirit of God’ in the New Testament. For the designation of the ‘evil spirit,’ St. Paul uses the term τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ κόσμου – the spirit of this world (1Cor 2:12).

St. Paul uses some compounds analogical to πνεῦμα θεοῦ ἅγιον:

- Eph 4:30: τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον τοῦ θεοῦ (the Spirit, the Holy, of God)
- 1Thes 4:8: τὸ πνεῦμα αὐτοῦ τὸ ἅγιον (His Spirit, the Holy)

Thus the apostle has an identical way of thinking about ‘**the spirit of God**’ as the books of the Old Covenant: the very expression ‘the spirit of God’ does not necessarily mean to him ‘**the Holy Spirit**,’ therefore he can add to it the term τὸ ἅγιον. Paul indicates in this way that he is speaking here about the Holy Spirit, not about some other spirit of God.

The Apostle does not write only to enrich the style. One should note yet that St. Paul always adapts his terminology to the mentality of the addressees (cf. 1Cor 8:5: “there are many gods and many lords”). The addressees in their pagan past were associating the term ‘spirit of God’ with the spirits of different gods – the inspired priests were passing on to them the will of these gods in the sanctuaries of these gods.

To the already mentioned texts, one should add a passage from the Revelation, which clearly shows **the sending of spirits by demonic powers**, spirits making deceptive signs, and thus being a factor of false inspiration for the pagan prophets.

Rev 16:13-14: “<sup>13</sup>I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come from the mouth of the dragon, from the mouth of the beast, and from the mouth of the false prophet. <sup>14</sup>These were **spirits of demons** (πνεύματα δαιμονίων) who performed signs. They went out to the kings of the whole world to assemble them for the battle on the great day of God the almighty.”

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<sup>18</sup> Cf. BibleWorks 6.0. – One searched for BGM according to the key: 'πνευμα θεος αγιος. The found texts belong to the second of two parallel versions of the Book of Daniel, marked as Daniel(TH). Both versions are also included in: A. RAHFLS, *Septuaginta id est Vetus Testamentum Graece iuxta LXX interprete*, Stuttgart 1954<sup>3</sup>, p. 896. The verses numbering used here is rendered accurately in BibleWorks 6.0 and slightly shifted in Polish translations. Besides, Polish translations do not include all versions of the text of the Book. The phrase πνεῦμα θεοῦ ἅγιον in them is ‘the spirit of the holy gods,’ so it has a different, non-monotheistic sense.



The Demonic Three from Rev 16:13, the opposite of the Triune God<sup>19</sup>, desiring to take His place in the world, uses false prophets in the fight against Him, sending them a factor of inspiration – his spirits, πνεύματα δαιμονίων, which should be understood as the spirits of the gods of the pagans.

This understanding is visible in the juxtaposition of the following three texts:

- In Deut 32:17, the synonymous parallelism “demons – gods” is important; the text identifies pagan’s gods with demons:

ἔθυσαν δαίμον ἵς καὶ οὐ θεῶν,  
θεοῖς οἷς οὐκ ᾔδεισαν

They offer sacrifices **to demons**, and not **to God**;  
**to gods** whom they had not known before

- The same is clearly stated by Psa 96:5:

πάντες οἱ θεοὶ τῶν ἐθνῶν δαιμόνια

For all the gods of the Gentiles are demons

- Referring to Deut 32:17, St. Paul states in 1Cor 10:20a:

“what pagans sacrifice, they offer to demons (δαίμον ἵς), not to God”

– although the pagans believed their sacrifices were for the gods.

Finally, one should note that the expression ‘the Spirit of God,’ good or bad one, can also be understood as ‘the spirit originating from God in being,’ not ‘in God’s acts,’ i.e., not in doing God’s will. Such an understanding is consistent with the analogous use of the genitive ‘of God’ in the expression ‘**the son of God**’ to indicate **angels** (cf. Psa 29:1; 89:7; Job 1:6) or somebody of **Israelites**, especially every **king**, including first of all King David<sup>20</sup>. Israel expected that **Messiah**, a descendant of David, would be the Chosen of God and the Son of God in this broad sense.

Jesus Christ, the Messiah and the Son of God, turned out to be ‘**the Only Begotten Son of God**’ (ὁ μονογενῆς υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ – Jn 3:18), ‘**His Only Begotten Son**’ (ὁ υἱὸς αὐτοῦ ὁ μονογενῆς – 1Jn 4:9), in contrast to His believers, named ‘the sons of God’ (υἱοὶ θεοῦ – Mt 5:9; Rom 8:14; cf. Lk 20:36a; Rom 8:19) or ‘the sons of the living God’ (υἱοὶ θεοῦ ζῶντος – Rom 9:26)<sup>21</sup>.

The following statement of the Son of God served for the analogous distinction between the fatherhood of God as His Father and the fatherhood of God as the Father of all people: “I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God” (Jn 20:17)<sup>22</sup>.

Summary: The expression πνεῦμα θεοῦ may point out not only to the Holy Spirit but also – according to the biblical terms – to any spirit sent by God, including the evil one. Therefore, the Bible sometimes applies this expression supplemented by the third word to make it more precise: either πνεῦμα θεοῦ ἁγίου (Dan 4: 8.9.18) or πνεῦμα θεοῦ πονηρὸν (1Sam 19:9)<sup>23</sup>.

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<sup>19</sup> Cf. A. JANKOWSKI, *Jam jest Alfa i Omega (Ap 22,13). Dopowiedzeń chrystologii biblijnej wydanie drugie, rozszerzone [I am Alfa and Omega (Rev 22:13). Second, Extended Edition of Additions to the Biblical Christology]*, Kraków 2000, p. 116.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. H. RENARD, P. GRELOT, *Syn Boży [Son of God]*, in: X. Lóon-Dufour (ed.), *Słownik teologii biblijnej* <sup>3</sup> [*Dictionary of Biblical Theology*], translated by K. ROMANIUK, Poznań 1990, p. 917-918.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. also: H. SCHUNEL, *Syn Boży [Son of God]*, in: A. GRABNER-HAIDER (ed.), *Praktyczny słownik biblijny [Practical biblical dictionary]*. Translated by T. MIESZKOWSKI, P. PACHCIAREK, Warszawa 1994, c. 1251; A. OHLER, G. HIERZENBERGER, *Synostwo Boże [God’s sonship]* in: Ibidem, c. 1256-1258.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. P. TERNANT, *Ojcowie – Ojciec [Fathers – Father]*, in: *Słownik teologii biblijnej*, op.cit., p. 626-672.

<sup>23</sup> It is worth noting also: The Hebrew text 1Sam 16:14-15 contains the expression הַעֲרֵף אֱלֹהִים רָע (the evil spirit **of God**) in verse 15, translated by the Septuagint as πνεῦμα κυρ ὄν πονηρον (the evil spirit **of the Lord**). In turn, it contains the expression הַעֲרֵף אֱלֹהִים רָע (and the evil spirit **of the Lord**), which the Septuagint translates

## 6. A key observation about the pagans' understanding of πνεῦμα θεοῦ as a factor of an inspiration.

A key point in the analysis of Paul's sentence 1Cor 12:3 is the following observation: both Israelites and Gentiles understood the act of prophesying as a transmission of words from God to man, a transmission made possible by the fact that the prophet was influenced by some mysterious but real 'spirit of God', coming from God. This understanding was applied both in the Bible and in the works of pagan philosophers. Many biblical commentators notice that St. Paul referred to philosophical concepts, including Plato and Philo of Alexandria<sup>24</sup>. Despite this, their studies do not take into account the fact that the Corinthians, the former pagans, had to understand πνεῦμα θεοῦ as a divine factor of inspiration. However, this is not right.

Characteristic for philosophy in the period from the first century before Christ to the sixth century after Christ was an intense search for a solution to the problems emerging in connection with **the religious life** of the people of that time<sup>25</sup>. Some of the philosophers were at the same time priests<sup>26</sup>, which not only favored the development of sublime reflection on religious life but contributed to the spread of philosophy among the ordinary people using the service of priests as intermediaries inspired by Greek "gods" to communicate the oracle to people.

One must know that **Philo of Alexandria**, the most eminent philosopher of the turn of centuries<sup>27</sup>, has an exceptional contribution to building the philosophy of inspiration. Many thinkers of that time were devoted to proclaiming philosophical ideas to a broad audience within the so-called popular philosophy<sup>28</sup>, so they did not neglect the philosophy of Philo, which describes inspiration as the influence of πνεῦμα θεοῦ on the prophet. After all, especially Stoics next to Cynics carried out the most intensive education of people<sup>29</sup>. In the Stoics, the term πνεῦμα was a supernatural element, immanent towards the world<sup>30</sup>. Stoics contributed to the popularization of this term. They must have known the philosophy of inspiration of Philo since he was the most famous philosopher of that time, and probably

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as πνεῦμα κυρ ὄν (the evil spirit **of the Lord**) and רִיחַתְרָעָה מְאֵת יְהוָה (the evil spirit **from the Lord**), which the Septuagint translates as πνεῦμα πονηρὸν παρὰ κυρ ὄν (the evil spirit **from the Lord**). One can see from this list that here, in verse 15, the Septuagint could give πνεῦμα θεοῦ πονηρὸν (the evil spirit **of God**), as it did in 1Sam 19:9.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. H. Langkammer, *Pierwszy i Drugi List do Koryntian*, op. cit., p. 73: the author in the commentary to 1Cor 13:12 recalls Plato's philosophy and Philo's cosmogony as probably known to the addressees of the Letter; p. 75-76: the author speaks about the philosophy of inspiration in Plato (*Jon* 543b) and in Philo (*Her*, 265) as the knowledge to which St. Paul could refer in the doctrine of charisms in 1Cor 12-14. See also J. MURPHY-O'CONNOR, *Pierwszy List do Koryntian*, op.cit., p. 1327: the commentary to 1Cor 2:14 refers to the philosophical principle laid out in *Quod det.*, 86; it indicates in the comment to 1Cor 2:15 that the Corinthians were applying the philosophical principle contained in *Leg. alleg.* 1,94.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. W. TATARKIEWICZ, *Historia filozofii [History of Philosophy]*, vol. I: *Filozofia starożytna i średniowieczna [Ancient and Medieval Philosophy]*, Warszawa 1948, p. 208.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. S. ŚWIEŻAWSKI, *Dzieje europejskiej filozofii klasycznej [History of European Classical Philosophy]*, Warszawa – Wrocław 2000, p. 219: Plutarch of Chaeronea (45 – 125 AD) was both a priest of Apollo in Delphi and an administrator of Achaia and a philosopher (he presented mystical problems on the Platonic and Pythagorean basis).

<sup>27</sup> Cf. W. TATARKIEWICZ, *Historia filozofii*, vol. I., op.cit., p. 216: "On, przedstawiciel Wschodu, wdarł się do rozwoju filozofii greckiej i oddziela myśl starogrecką od ostatnich jej tworów, mianowicie od neoplatonizmu" [He, the representative of the East, broke into the development of Greek philosophy and separated the old Greek thought from its last works, namely Neoplatonism].

<sup>28</sup> Cf. H. MOHRDIEK, *Filozofia popularna [Popular Philosophy]*, in: A. GRABNER-HAIDER (ed.), *Praktyczny słownik biblijny*, op. cit., c. 357.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. H. MOHRDIEK, *Filozofia popularna*, op.cit., c. 357.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. A. JANKOWSKI, *Duch Święty w Nowym Testamencie [Holy Spirit in the New Testament]* Kraków 1998, p. 14.

won the Stoics by the fact that he not only profusely drew from their thoughts<sup>31</sup>, but in the description of inspiration he used their concept of a soul<sup>32</sup>.

The expression πνεῦμα θεοῦ or πνεῦμα θεῖον (the spirit of God / the Divine Spirit) occurs among Greek philosophers<sup>33</sup>, and in the New Testament with the Jewish philosopher writing in Greek, Philo of Alexandria<sup>34</sup>. In his work “On the Giants,” Philo presented the fundamental role of the Spirit of God in leading man to mystical knowledge and union with God. Commenting on the Pentateuch, the author points out that only ‘a spiritual’ man (in contrast to ‘a bodily’ – ‘giant’) can enjoy the constant presence of the Divine Spirit.

In verses 22-23, Philo gave two definitions of this mysterious spirit:

- Referring to Gen 1:2: the spirit of God – it is “air flowing out of the earth, the third element floating above the surface of the water.” This definition seems to correspond to the widespread religious experience of pagans: their prophets were performing an act of prophesying under the influence of fumes (the word ‘fume’ in Greek is πνεῦμα – spirit<sup>35</sup>) coming out of ‘divine’ sources<sup>36</sup>,
- Referring to Ex 31:2-3: the Spirit of God – it is “pure knowledge in which every wise man participates.” This definition is close both to Jews and Greeks.

In this work, Philo interchangeably uses two almost equivalent Greek expressions for God’s Spirit: πνεῦμα θεοῦ (the spirit of God), πνεῦμα θεῖον (the divine spirit, the divine pneuma). The first term was closer to the Jews, the second to the pagans<sup>37</sup>. The pagans did not meet God in the same way as Israel did, so they had vague ideas about Him. The term ‘divine pneuma’ corresponds to their uncertainty; they understood the spirit as an emanation of the deity<sup>38</sup>.

One should note that neither the authors of the Old Testament nor the ancient philosophers knew what ontological reality lay under the concept they were using. They did not know that the spirit of God is the God, a person<sup>39</sup>. They only knew that it is something essential for the contact of God with the world, and especially with the people to whom God communicates His will. Pagans understood the term ‘God’ as referring to their ‘gods’; only the Israelites knew the true God.

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<sup>31</sup> Cf. S. ŚWIEŻAWSKI, *Dzieje europejskiej filozofii klasycznej*, op.cit., p. 214; H. MOHRDIEK, *Filon z Aleksandrii* [Philo of Alexandria], in: *Praktyczny słownik biblijny*, op.cit., c. 356.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. R. ARNALDEZ, J. POUILLOUX, C. MONDESERT, A. MOSES (commentary), *Les oeuvres de Philon d’Alexandrie*, vol. 7-8, op.cit., p. 104; footnote 2 to Philo’s work OTI ATPEITON TO ΘΕΙΟΝ [On the unchangeableness of God], 84.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Z. ABRAMOWICZÓWNA (ed.), *Słownik grecko-polski*, vol. III, op.cit., p. 563: πνεῦμα 9; cf. also Plato, *Axiochus* 370c (p. 73), in: Pseudo-Platon, *Zimorodek i inne dialogi* [Kingfisher and other dialogues]; translated, introduced, commented and indexed by L. REGNER (series: Biblioteka Klasyków Filozofii), Warszawa 1985, p. 63-76: “unless the divine spirit dwells in the soul” – “εἰ μή τι θεῖον ὄντως ἐνῆν πνεῦμα τῆ ψυχῆ”.

<sup>34</sup> It is worth analyzing the original text of two of Philo’s works: ΠΕΡΙ ΓΙΓΑΝΤΩΝ (*On Giants*) and OTI ATPEITON TO ΘΕΙΟΝ (*On the Unchangeableness of God*), in: R. ARNALDEZ, J. POUILLOUX, C. MONDESERT, A. MOSES (commentary), *Les oeuvres de Philon d’Alexandrie*, vol. 7-8, Paris 7e, 1963. See also the translation into Polish with comments: S. KALINKOWSKI, *Filon Aleksandryjski. Pisma* [Philo of Alexandria. Writings], vol. 2, Kraków 1994.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Z. ABRAMOWICZÓWNA (ed.), *Słownik grecko-polski*, vol. III, op.cit., p. 563: πνεῦμα.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. O. JUREWICZ, L. WINNICZUK, *Starożytni Grecy i Rzymianie w życiu prywatnym i państwowym* [Ancient Greeks and Romans in private and public life], Warszawa 1968, p. 230-231: about the prophetess Pythia in Delphi.

<sup>37</sup> In this work of Philo, who writes in Greek for pagans, there are seven terms concerning the spirit of god. In this the term πνεῦμα occurs twice (verse 23 and 28), the expression ὁ θεῖον πνεῦμα occurs three times (verse 29, 53, and 55); the other two terms are πνεῦμα θεοῦ (verse 22) and τοῦ θεοῦ πνεῦμα (verse 19). Cf. Pseudo-Platon (cited above), writing about πνεῦμα θεῖον as an inspiration factor.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. H. LANGKAMMER, *Pneumatologia biblijna* [Biblical Pneumatology], Opole 1998, pp. 35-36.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. IBIDEM, p. 43; cf. J. HOMERSKI, *Duch w Pismach natchnionych Starego Testamentu*, op. cit., p. 25, 33, 39.

## 7. The grammatical structure of 1Cor 12:3.

The goal of the present item of analyses is to show that 1Cor 12:3 has an identical grammatical structure as 1Cor 8:4.

The two sentences of Paul, 1Cor 8:4 and 1Cor 12:3, have:

- a An introduction
- b1 The first of two parallel negations
- b2 The second of two parallel negations
- c εἰ μὴ
- d An exception to what one negated before εἰ μὴ

1Cor 8:4:

- a An introduction: So about the eating of meat sacrificed to idols, we know
- b1 ὅτι οὐδὲν εἶδωλον ἐν κόσμῳ  
there is no idol in the world,
- b2 καὶ ὅτι οὐδεὶς θεὸς  
and that there is no God
- c εἰ μὴ – unless
- d εἷς – One

1Cor 12:3:

- a Introduction: Therefore I make known to you
- b1 οὐδεὶς ἐν πνεύματι θεοῦ λαλῶν λέγει· Ἀνάθεμα Ἰησοῦς  
no one speaking in the spirit of God will say ‘Anathema Jesus’
- b2 καὶ οὐδεὶς δύναται εἰπεῖν· Κύριος Ἰησοῦς  
and no one can say ‘Lord Jesus’
- c εἰ μὴ – unless
- d ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ – in the Holy Spirit

Comparing the parallel negations b1 and b2 in both sentences one can see that the second of the negations adds καὶ to ὅτι οὐδεὶς or οὐδεὶς respectively (in 8:4 οὐδὲν is a form of οὐδεὶς for a noun of the neuter kind εἶδωλον).

In 1Cor 8:4, the Apostle states that there are no idols or gods in the world **except the Only One God**. Analogically in 1Cor 12:3 he proclaims that no one can say **in the spirit of any god** that Jesus is the Anathema or that Jesus is the Lord unless he speaks in the Holy Spirit of God, that is, **in the Spirit of the Only One God**.

To confirm the comparison of 1Cor 8:4 with 12:3 one should add that where there is a structure with εἰ μὴ (or analogous with ἀλλά), often the segment after εἰ μὴ very clearly indicates what concretely is negated before εἰ μὴ. Namely, it does it clearly through the use of the same word or the same syntax (in 1Cor 12:3: ἐν πνεύματι – in spirit).

For example, in Mt 12:4 the segment after εἰ μὴ is in the dative case because the negated words are also in the dative case: in b1 αὐτῷ (to him: he was not allowed to eat), in b2 τοῖς (to them: they were not allowed to eat):

- a ... τοὺς ἄρτους τῆς προθέσεως ἔφαγον – he ate the showbreads,
- b1 ὃ οὐκ ἐξὸν ἦν αὐτῷ φαγεῖν – which it is not lawful **to him** to eat
- b1 οὐδὲ τοῖς μετ’ αὐτοῦ – nor **to those** with him

- c εἰ μὴ – unless / but only
- d τοῖς ἱερεῦσιν μόνοις – **to the priests** alone

It is similarly in 1Cor 5:8, where ἀλλά occurs, the particle analogous to εἰ μὴ<sup>40</sup>. The segment after ἀλλά has ἐν + the word in the dative case because ἐν + the word in the dative case appears in the negated segments b1 and b2: ἐν ζύμῃ (with the leaven):

- a so that we may keep the feast,
- b1 μὴ ἐν ζύμῃ παλαιᾷ – not with old leaven,
- b2 μηδὲ ἐν ζύμῃ κακῆς... – nor with the leaven of evil and wickedness
- c ἀλλά – but
- d ἐν ἀζύμοις εἰλικρινεῖς... – with unleavened food of sincerity and truth

From the presented examples one can see that if in 1Cor 12:3 after εἰ μὴ is ἐν πνεύματι (in spirit), and the segment b2 does not contain ἐν πνεύματι, and at the same time the segment b1 contains ἐν πνεύματι, it means that it is the segment b1 that is undoubtedly the negated one. The negation of the segment b2 implies from the fact that it is a supplement to the negated segment b1 (b1 and b2 are the parallel segments according to the Hebrew rhetoric technique of synonymical parallelism).

The indicated relationship between b1 and the segment after εἰ μὴ is even more evident when considering the analysis made in point 5: the biblical πνεῦμα θεοῦ stands for πνεῦμα θεοῦ ἅγιον or πνεῦμα θεοῦ πονηρὸν. Because the expression πνεῦμα θεοῦ ἅγιον in the Bible usually occurs as shortened to πνεῦμα ἅγιον, and since the expression ἐν πνεύματι ἅγῳ is after εἰ μὴ, it means there is the expression ἐν πνεύματι θεοῦ ἅγῳ after εἰ μὴ. This indicates that ἐν πνεύματι θεοῦ is the negated expression – it is the one which also occurs entirely in the segment b1. Therefore one can see that 1Cor 12:3 announces that no one speaking in the spirit of God, good or bad, can say “Anathema Jesus” / “Lord Jesus” unless he speaks in the Spirit of God the Holy One.

One can suppose the segment b2 contains the expression ἐν πνεύματι θεοῦ because b2, being the complement of b1, is in the parallelism relation with b1. Their parallelism is visible in the fact that the construction of the acclamation “Anathema Jesus” in b1 (Ἀνάθεμα Ἰησοῦς) and “Lord Jesus” in b2 (Κύριος Ἰησοῦς) are the same. Namely, both acclamations are composed of two nouns in the nominative case, none of which has an article, and each second is a proper name (the name Ἰησοῦς). Additionally, one must note that it follows from the rules of the Greek syntax that the noun Ἰησοῦς is the subject of acclamation, and the noun without the article is a predicative nominal<sup>41</sup>. The two acclamations express the mystery of Jesus: ‘Jesus is the Anathema,’ ‘Jesus is the Lord.’

It is worth noting that the translation of the first acclamation as “Let Jesus be cursed!” has no basis in the grammar of the Greek language, which is moreover apparent in the commonly accepted translation of the second acclamation: “Jesus is Lord” and not “Let Jesus be Lord!”. The syntax of the imperative requires the word ἦτω (cf. 1Cor 16:22) or ἔστω (cf. Gal 1:8.9), the words translated as ‘let it be.’ 1Cor 12:3 does not contain any of these words.

<sup>40</sup> In the parallel segments before ἀλλά there are μὴ and μηδὲ, analogous to οὐδεὶς and καὶ οὐδεὶς from 1Cor 12:3.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. B. POŁOK, *Język grecki. Gramatyka [Greek Language. Grammar]*, Opole 1996, p. 75.

## 8. Characteristics of the cognitive abilities of demons and prophets inspired by demons.

To fully understand the revelation contained in 1Cor 12:3, one must ask whether the inability 'to speak in the spirit of God' is merely an inability to articulate the words of acclamation, or rather an inability to something else.

One should remind in the beginning that evil spirits in their meetings with the Lord Jesus were revealing that they knew who He is:

- Mk 1:34: Jesus did not allow demons to speak because they knew who He is
- Mk 4:41: demons knew that Jesus is the Son of God and Messiah
- Mk 8:28: a man possessed by demons knew that Jesus is the Son of the Highest God (τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ὑψίστου)

The Ephesus event (see Acts 19) reveals the cognitive abilities of the evil spirits. Especially educational is the passage: "Then some itinerant Jewish exorcists tried to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those with evil spirits, saying, 'I adjure you by the Jesus whom Paul preaches.' [...] The evil spirit said to them in reply, 'Jesus I recognize, Paul I know, but who are you?' The person with the evil spirit then sprang at them and subdued them all" (Acts 19:13.15-16)<sup>42</sup>.

The possibilities of the pagan prophets manifest themselves in the event of Paul's second missionary journey, shortly before his arrival in Corinth: "a certain maid, having a spirit of Python, did meet us [...] She began to follow Paul and us, shouting, 'These people are slaves of the Highest God, who proclaim to you a way of salvation'" (Acts 16:16-17).

The text of Luke shows that the prophet **inspired by the demon** proclaimed the truth!

It is worth noting that to describe the prophetic, St. Luke used the expression ἔχουσα πνεῦμα πύθωνα – **having a spirit of Python**. Python is a mythical snake or dragon, proclaiming oracles. The term 'the spirit of prophecy' derives probably from Python<sup>43</sup>. It testifies to the deep penetration of mythical thinking into the pagan mentality<sup>44</sup>.

Therefore one must conclude that the Apostle explains in 1Cor 12:3: by the power of the spirit sent by the pagans' god (that is, demon) it is impossible to know the full mystery of Jesus-Anathema. Understanding this powerlessness as an inability to say the phrase 'Anathema Jesus' would be a narrowing of Paul's teaching.

Although the evil spirits of God (demons) were able to say, 'Jesus is the Son of God, Messiah, the Holy One of God,' they were not able to know the mystery of Jesus as the One who through death on the cross will gain eternal redemption and take full control over them (cf. 1Cor 2:7-8).

### Summary.

St. Paul was editing the First Letter to the Corinthians in the atmosphere of struggle against the religious thinking of pagans. The lexical-grammatical analyses carried out allow us to state that because the Apostle understood the difficulties of Corinthians on their way to a full Christian mentality, he not only referred to their pagan practices but above all adjusted the nomenclature and the way of argumentation to their religious habits. **Speaking in the language of the addressees**, Paul conveyed the content they did not fully know<sup>45</sup> –

<sup>42</sup> Cf. also Mt 12:27.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. R. POPOWSKI, *Wielki słownik grecko-polski Nowego Testamentu*, op.cit., p. 540: πύθων; R. PINDEL, *Pawłowy egzorcyzm w Filipi (Dz 16,16-21) [Paul's exorcism at Philippi (Acts 16:16-21)]*, in: T. JELONEK (ed.), *Z badań nad Biblią [From research on the Bible]* (4), Kraków 2002, p. 168-169.

<sup>44</sup> Myths, magic, being possessed by evil powers – this is the everyday life of people far from true God. More prominent citizens often honored mages in their homes – cf. Acts 13:6-12.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. E. SZYMANEK, *Wykład Pisma Świętego Nowego Testamentu*, op.cit., p. 299.

the novelty of Christian Revelation, the fullness of truth about God the Only One, the Giver of the Holy Spirit of God as the only spirit of God, who fully knows and reveals the mystery of the Only Begotten Son of God.

At the beginning of that Letter, the Apostle noted that only the Spirit of the true God (2:10), the Holy Spirit, could give the wisdom needed to know the glory of Jesus Crucified. No other spirit alone knows this mystery, and in particular ‘the spirit of this world’ does not (2:12; cf. 2Cor 4:4), that is, demons, under whose inspiration prophesize pagan prophets, and to whom offer they their sacrifices (cf. 1Cor 10:20) in order to gain their favorable oracles, and with whom vainly attempt they to unite through sacred feasts (cf. 8:7-8).

Only the Spirit of the true God can bring the union with God: He who leads the sons of God (cf. Rom 8:14; Gal 5:18), He who gives knowledge of the full mystery of Jesus (cf. 1Cor 12:3). In contrast, demons – the spirits of mute idols – lead in bondage (cf. 12:2) to the blindness of the mind: “And even though our gospel is veiled, it is veiled for those who are perishing, in whose case **the god of this age** has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, so that they may not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God” (2Cor 4:3-4).

One should understand the full meaning of the statement of St. Paul in 1Cor 12:3 as follows:

Just as “there is no idol in the world, and there is no God but one” (1Cor 8:4), so also the spirit of no god will reveal the fullness of the mystery of neither Jesus-Anathema nor Jesus-Lord, but only the Spirit which is the spirit of the only God – the Holy Spirit.

Thanks only to the Holy Spirit, a believer can say with understanding “Jesus is Anathema,” “Jesus is the Lord”!