

FIRST WEDNESDAY || New Hope Church

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT DEMONS?

How Demons Came to Be

- ▶ Demons are angels that chose to rebel against God.
- ▶ Demons are also known as fallen angels, evil spirits, and unclean spirits.
- ▶ When Lucifer rebelled against God he fell from his place of prominence and took with him a host of lower-ranking angels.
- ▶ Lucifer, now called Satan, is the “ruler of demons” (Matt. 12:24). Matthew 25:41 also refers to “the devil and his angels,” which would refer to demons; similarly, Rev 12:7 mentions “the dragon and his angels.”

What We Know About Demons

- ▶ Demons are spirit beings without fleshly bodies (Matt. 8:16; Luke 10:17, 20).
- ▶ Two groups of fallen angels.
 - Some demons who are free and active in the world.
 - Other fallen angels are bound in imprisonment.
 - Some are confined to *tartarus*, “netherworld”, (translated “hell” in 2 Pet. 2:4); confined because of some egregious sin.
 - Jude 6 may refer to the same confinement.
 - Other fallen angels are kept confined in the pit or Abyss (Luke 8:31; Rev. 9:2, 11). They were apparently too depraved and harmful to be allowed to roam upon the earth.
- ▶ Demons are limited in their location, not omnipresent (present everywhere).
 - Can be in only one place at one time. The demons indwelt the two men of the Gadarenes, and when they were expelled they indwelt the swine (Matt. 8:28-34; cf. Acts 16:16).
- ▶ Demons are intelligent but not omniscient (all knowing).
 - Demons were aware of the identity of Jesus (Mark 1:24); they were also aware of their ultimate destiny (Matt. 8:29).
 - Paul refers to “doctrines of demons” (1 Tim. 4:1), indicating that they spread their false teaching through those they deceive.
- ▶ Demons are powerful but not omnipotent (all powerful).
 - Because of the indwelling demons, the man of the Gerasenes could break shackles and chains because of his unusual strength (Mark 5:3-4).
 - The demon in the boy attempted to have the boy commit suicide by throwing him into fire and water (Mark 9:22).
 - Demon possession impaired a man’s speech (Matt. 9:32) and kept a girl in cruel slavery (Matt. 15:22), yet demons are limited in their power; they cannot do the work of God (John 10:21).

What Demons Can Do

- ▶ Demons can inflict disease.
 - Luke 13:11 testifies a woman had a crippling sickness “caused by a spirit”; Luke 13:16 further declares that “Satan has bound for eighteen long years” this woman in her suffering.
 - It’s not always possible to identify the distinction (Job 1:12; 2:6; cf. 2 Cor. 12:7-10).

- ▶ Demons can influence the mind.
 - Satan initially deceived Eve into sinning by perverting the truth and changing Eve's thinking about God (Gen. 3:1-5).
 - Satan and his demons influence the thinking of people through blinding their minds (2 Cor. 4:4). This passage indicates Satan inhibits the ability to think or reason.
 - Satan can also influence the thinking of believers (2 Cor. 11:3-4). He can lead believers away from a single-minded devotion to Christ.
 - James 3:15 indicates earthly wisdom is demonic and leads to jealousy and strife.
 - The solution to demonic influence of the mind is to bring the thought process into submission to Christ (2 Cor. 10:5).
 - We should not think that demons can know the future or read our minds. God alone knows the future. (Isa 46:9-10, Mar 13:32; Mat 9:4, 12:25; Gen 6:5; Psa 139:2, 4, 23; Dan 2:27-28)
- ▶ Demons can deceive people.
 - Paul was fearful for the Thessalonian church, that Satan may have enticed them to sin amid their suffering and persecution (1 Thess. 3:5).
 - Although the Thessalonians had received the gospel with joy, their hope could be sidetracked through the deception of Satan.
 - Satan also works in unbelievers; Paul refers to the prince of the power of the air “working in the sons of disobedience” (Eph. 2:2). Satan deceives unbelievers into living according to the lusts of the flesh and desires of the flesh and mind.
 - Matthew 13:19 indicates Satan's deception in snatching the Word away when unbelievers hear it, voiding their understanding.
- ▶ Demons can deceive nations.
 - Demons will eventually gather the nations of the world together in rebellion against Christ. Demons deceive the nations through performing signs in order to incite them in warfare against the returning Messiah (Rev. 16:14).

What About Demon Possession?

- ▶ Nature of “demon possession” or being demonized.
 - A change in moral character and spiritual disposition.
 - Frequently a different voice, a different educational level, or even a foreign language will reflect a difference in the affected person's personality.
 - Demons speaking through the man immediately recognized who Christ was (Mark 1:23-24), which meant he had supernatural knowledge and intellectual power.
 - Supernatural physical strength and ability to break shackles and chains of the man in the country of the Gerasenes with his (Mark 5:3-4).

The Final Destination for Demons

- ▶ Through the cross the power of demons has been conquered.
 - Christ conquered Satan and his demons at the cross and made a public display of them—as a victor displaying the spoils of war (Col. 2:15).
- ▶ At the return of Christ the demons will be cast into the lake of fire.
 - Demons are included in the judgment against Satan (Matt. 25:41; Rev. 12:9), and therefore will be cast into the lake of fire with Satan (Rev. 19:19-21).

A Christian's Authority over Demons

- ▶ Because of Christ's death on the cross, our sins are completely forgiven, and Satan has no rightful authority over us. (Heb 2:14, Col 2:15, Rev 12:11)
- ▶ When Satan attacks us, he is attacking God's own children. (Gal 3:26)
- ▶ Satan and demons have much less power than the power of the Holy Spirit; we do not need to be afraid. (1 Jo 4:4, 2 Ti 1:7, Phi 1:28, Eph 6:16, 2 Co 10:4, 1 Jo 5:18)
- ▶ For unusually strong sinful emotions, it is appropriate to say something like, "Spirit of fear, in Jesus' name, I command you, go away from here and don't return!" (Eph 6:12, 2 Co 10:3)
- ▶ Times of intercessory prayer may include an element of verbal rebuke to demonic forces that may be a component in situations for which we are praying.
- ▶ It's important not to frighten people by talking nonchalantly about an area familiar to us but frightening to others. (1 Co 14:3)
- ▶ If given permission, a brief command should be spoken aloud, telling the spirits to leave. (This does not have to be highly dramatic or emotionally charged.) (Mat 8:16, Luk 8:30, Mat 12:28)
- ▶ The focus should not be on the demon but on the person being ministered to and the truths of the Bible that need to be affirmed and believed. (Eph 6:14, 17)
- ▶ It's important that believers not become overly focused on demonic conflict. (1 Co 14:20, Luke 10:20)
- ▶ For non-believers being ministered to, it's important they be urged to come to Christ as Savior immediately after demon is cast out. (Mat 12:43-45)
- ▶ Effectiveness in difficult cases of demonic influence related to our own spiritual condition. (Mat 17:18-20, Mar 9:29)
- ▶ We should not rejoice or become proud of our power over demons but rejoice in our salvation. (Luk 10:20)

Take Home Questions

1. Is there an area of sin in your life where you might be "giving the devil a foothold"?
2. What would the Lord have you do with respect to that sin?