

ECCLESIA CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST
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Bible Study Series



THE SPIRITUAL FORCES OF EVIL: DEMONS

KEY VERSE: Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. (I Timothy 4:1)

INTRODUCTION

In a previous lesson, you learned about Satan. In this lesson you will study about the "troops," known as demons, which are under Satan's command. Some people ignore the subject of demons completely. However, as believers in Jesus Christ, you should not minimize the power of demon spirits in the world today, yet you must not become so preoccupied with them that you see a demon in everything that happens and in everyone around you. You should take a simple, literal, Biblical approach to the subject of demons. Do not study secular books about such powers of evil. Your only sources of study in these areas should be the Word of God or good Christian literature. This lesson explains the origin, attributes, sphere of activity, classification, and organization of angels and demons.

THE ORIGIN OF DEMONS

God originally created all of the angels, some of which later became demons:

All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made. (John 1:3)

For by Him were all things created, that are in Heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by Him and for Him. (Colossians 1:16)

THEIR ORIGINAL POSITION AND FALL

Demons were originally like the other angels of God with the same attributes and positions as the good angels described in last week's lesson. When Satan rebelled against God, a portion of the angels participated in his rebellion. God cast them out of Heaven, along with Satan. They were no longer good spiritual beings (angels). They became evil spiritual beings (demons):

And there was war in Heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon (Satan); and the dragon fought and his angels.

And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in Heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. (Revelation 12:7-9)

If demons are not "fallen" angels, then we have no other Biblical explanation for their existence. Satan cannot create his own forces because all things were created by God.

There are two groups of these fallen angels. One group is actively opposing God and His people on earth. Another is confined in chains:

For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to Hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness to be reserved unto judgment... (II Peter 2:4)

And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. (Jude 6)

There are confined demons and active demons. The leader of both groups is Satan, who is called the "prince" of devils (Matthew 12:24). Hell is prepared for the Devil and his angels. It will be their final destiny:

Then shall He (Jesus) say also unto them on the left hand, depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. (Matthew 25:41)

When Jesus confronted two men possessed by demons, their response was:

...What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time? (Matthew 8:29)

The demons in the possessed men knew their final destiny was a place of eternal torment. Since Hell is a place of torment and was prepared for Satan and his angels, then demons must be the fallen angels.

THEIR SPHERE OF ACTIVITY

Throughout the Bible, demons are shown as active on earth. Since Satan is not omnipresent (present everywhere), he uses demons to do his will and accomplish his purposes throughout the world. They constitute the "powers of the air" (Ephesians 2:2) and the "powers of darkness" (Colossians 1:13) and are all under the control of Satan.

THE ATTRIBUTES OF DEMONS

In their original sinless condition, demons had the same attributes as the good angels previously studied. In their present evil state these demons:

Are spirits:	Matthew 8:16; Luke 10:17, 20
Can appear visibly:	Genesis 3:1; Zechariah 3:1; Matthew 4:9-10
Can speak:	Mark 5:9, 12; Luke 8:28; Matthew 8:31
Believe:	James 2:19
Exercise their wills:	Luke 11:24; 8:32 77
Demonstrate intelligence:	Mark 1:24
Have emotions:	Luke 8:28; James 2:19
Have recognition:	Acts 19:15
Have supernatural strength:	Acts 19:16; Mark 5:3
Have supernatural presence:	Daniel 9:21-23

Are eternal:	Matthew 25:41
Have their own doctrine:	I Timothy 4:1-3
Are evil:	Matthew 10:1; Mark 1:27; 3:11

THE NAMES OF DEMONS

Demons are called evil spirits six times and unclean spirits 23 times in the New Testament. They are also called devils (Mark 1:32) and the devil's angels (Matthew 25:41)

THE ORGANIZATION OF DEMON FORCES

Let us review how God organized His angelic host...

For by Him were all things created, that are in Heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: All things were created by Him, and for Him. (Colossians 1:16)

Satan is an imitator, not an originator. He has organized his demons in a structure similar to that of God's forces:

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. (Ephesians 6:12)

Satan has organized his forces like this:

Kingdoms: Jurisdictions of evil with specific purpose/intent. Within specific kingdoms exist the following:

Principalities: Chief of order, time, place, or rank of a prince (the demonic brains behind evil strategies). Satan has placed a prince over each principality. The prince of the power of Persia is mentioned in Daniel 10. This is how Satan works on a national level influencing governments and nations.

Powers and rulers of darkness of this world:

Powers are those demons who exert the authority or right delegated. High-ranking, evil supernatural powers, as well as the power of sin and evil in operation in the world.

Minions/Assignments – Lower ranking demons assigned to specific tasks.

These two categories of demons are at work in the social, political, and cultural systems of the world.

Spiritual wickedness in high places: High places in the Old Testament were where worship was carried on. This is how Satan works in the religious structures of the world. Paul is referring to the spiritual dimension of our existence on Earth, not actual Heaven, as in where God, the angels and saints are; but in the aerial heavens, where the power or posse of devils reside, and where they are above us, over our heads, overlooking us, and watching every advantage against us. None of this evil is in Heaven. It is all on Earth, in the spiritual realm, cast out of Heaven during the fall with Lucifer. Essentially, Paul is wrapping all of this (Satan, other fallen angels, demons, witchcraft powers, etc.) in its various forms into one category – spiritual evil that influences life on Earth. All that which opposes the Holy Spirit's work.

These organized groups vary in size. For example, Mary Magdalene had seven demons in her prior to her deliverance. Luke 8:30 mentions a "legion" of demons. A legion in the Roman army which ruled at the time of Jesus referred to 6,100-foot soldiers and 726 horsemen!

These organized forces of demons...

Are United:

In the case of the demon possessed man recorded in Luke 8:30 the demons were united in their purpose, which in this example was possession of the man. The same is true in Matthew 12:45 and in the case of Mary Magdalene who had seven demons (Luke 16:9). Jesus spoke of the unity of demon powers when He said:

And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand? (Matthew 12:26)

Have Different Degrees of Wickedness:

This is illustrated by the demon who said he would return with other evil spirits:

When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none.

Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished.

Then goeth he and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself and they enter in and dwell there: And the last state of that man is worse than the first... (Matthew 12:43-45)

Can Change Their Functions:

The demon in I Kings 22:21-23 declared he would be a lying spirit. This indicates he was not one previously for he said, "I will be..." .

Are of Different Kinds:

The Bible teaches that man has a body, soul, and spirit. There are three major kinds of demons that attack the body, soul, and spirit of man:

1. **Evil or unclean spirits:** They are responsible for immoral acts, unclean thoughts, oppression, possession, depression, and other strategies of Satan. They afflict the mind and the soulish nature of man. (Matthew 10:1; 12:43; Mark 1:23-26)

2. **Spirits of infirmity:** These spirits afflict the physical body. (Luke 13:11)

3. **Seducing spirits:** Seducing spirits afflict the mind, soul, and spirit of man, influencing him to believe false doctrines as indicated in I Timothy 4:1. These spirits seduce people to believe a lie and be damned to eternal punishment. They are spirits of false doctrine, cults, false Christs, and false teachers.

THE ACTIVITIES OF DEMONS

Demons follow orders given by their prince, Satan. We can summarize the activities of demons by noting that they are always directed against God, His plan, and His people.

Demons are used by Satan to attack the Word of God, your worship of God, your walk with God, and your work for God. Satan uses his demons to accomplish this strategy throughout the world. Demons extend Satan's power by promoting deception and wickedness. They affect individuals, governments, nations, and the world system. They promote rebellion and slander both God and men. They promote idolatry, false doctrines, and blind men and women to the truth of the Gospel.

These demons attack unbelievers driving them to commit terrible evil acts, to murder, injure, commit suicide, etc. They affect the mind with emotional problems and the body with physical infirmities. Demons attack believers by temptation, deception, depression, and oppression. They try to keep you in bondage to habits and fear. They accuse and slander you and create division among the people of God. They target your spiritual walk with God and fight against the Word of God, the worship of God, and your work for God. They also attack your physical body.

Unbelievers are defenseless against the attacks of demonic powers, but ***believers have powerful spiritual weapons and strategies for dealing with this mighty spiritual force of evil.***

The Old Testament Record of Demonic Powers

- Satan in the form of a serpent is mentioned seven times in Genesis 3:1-24 and Isaiah 27:1.
- Satan is also mentioned in I Chronicles 21:1; II Samuel 24:1; Psalm 109:6; Zechariah 3:1-2; and 14 times in the book of Job.
- Evil spirits are mentioned eight times in the record of King Saul: I Samuel 16:14-23; 18:10; 19:9.
- Lying spirits are mentioned six times in I Kings 22:21-23.
- Familiar spirits are mentioned six times in Leviticus 20:27 and I Samuel 28.

- Religious spirits and spirits of physical harlotry are identified in the book of Hosea.
- Demons are identified with the gods of pagan nations four times: Leviticus 17:7; Deuteronomy 32:17; II Chronicles 11:15; Psalms 106:19-39.
- Evil princes who rule nations are identified in the Psalms, the prophets, and specifically in Daniel 10:10-21.
- Unclean perverse spirits are mentioned twice: Isaiah 19:14 3.

Think about this: While demonic forces are God's enemies, at the same time they are subject to His will and used by Him to defeat themselves: See I Samuel 16:14; 18:10; 19:9; I Kings 22:20-22; and Isaiah 19:14.