

DEMONS

1. Definition.

- a. Demons are fallen angels, unclean spirits, who oppose God and his people.
 - (1) **Mt 8:16** 16 That evening they brought to [Jesus] many who were oppressed by demons, and he cast out the spirits with a word and healed all who were sick.
 - (2) **Mt 10:1** 1 And [Jesus] called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out...
- b. Demons are not:
 - (1) The souls of wicked unbelievers, like ghosts.
 - (2) The souls of a pre-Adamic human race.

2. Attributes.

- a. Demons are personal spirit beings.
 - (1) **Lk 8:26-39** 27 When Jesus had stepped out on land, there met him a man from the city who had *demons*. For a long time he had worn no clothes, and he had not lived in a house but among the tombs. 28 When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down before him and said with a loud voice, What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, do not torment me. 29 For he had commanded the *unclean spirit* to come out of the man. (For many a time it had seized him. He was kept under guard and bound with chains and shackles, but he would break the bonds and be driven by the demon into the desert.) 30 Jesus then asked him, What is your name? And he said, Legion, for many *demons* had entered him.
- b. They possess:
 - (1) Intellect and language.
 - (a) **Mk 1:32-34** 32 That evening at sundown they brought to him all who were sick or oppressed by *demons*. 33 And the whole city was gathered together at the door. 34 And he healed many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many *demons*. And he would not permit the *demons* to speak, because they knew him.
 - (b) **Ac 16:16-18** 16 As we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a *spirit* of divination and brought her owners much gain by fortune-telling. 17 She followed Paul and us crying out, These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation. 18 And this she kept doing for many days. Paul, having become greatly annoyed, turned and said to the *spirit*, I command you in the name of Jesus Messiah to come out of her. And it came out that very hour.
 - (c) **Ac 19:13-15** 13 Then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists undertook to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had *evil spirits* saying, I adjure you by the Jesus whom Paul proclaims. 14 Seven sons of a Jewish high priest named Sceva were doing this. 15 But the *evil spirit* answered them, Jesus I know, and Paul I recognize, but who are you?
 - (d) **1 Ti 4:1** 1 Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful *spirits* and teachings of *demons*...

(2) Emotion.

- (a) **Mt 8:28-29** 28 When [Jesus] came to the other side, to the country of the Gadarenes, two demon-possessed men met him, coming out of the tombs, so fierce that no one could pass that way. 29 And behold, they cried out, What have you to do with us, Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?
- (b) **Jas 2:19** 19 You believe that God is one. You do well. Even the *demons* believe—and shudder!

(3) Will.

- (a) **Mt 8:31-32** 31 And the demons begged him saying, If you cast us out, send us away into the herd of pigs. 32 And he said to them, Go. So they came out and went into the pigs, and behold, the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea and drowned in the waters.
- (b) **Jud 6** 6 And the *angels* who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling....

3. Reality.

- a. Jesus believed in the reality of demons.
- b. The apostles believed in the reality of demons.
- c. All the writers of the New Testament, except for the author of Hebrews, mention demons. There are more than 100 references in the New Testament. They are mentioned in the first (James) and last (Revelation) books of the New Testament written.
- d. I believe I have had my own interactions with demons through rock music and drugs.
- e. Interestingly, the 20th and 21st centuries have witnessed an almost complete turnaround in attitudes toward the reality of demons.¹
- f. Consider the film *Alien Intrusion* (2018), <https://alienintrusion.com>.

4. Character.

- a. Demons are evil.
 - (1) Lk 7:21
 - (2) **Ac 19:11-16** 11 And God was doing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul, 12 so that even handkerchiefs or aprons that had touched his skin were carried away to the sick, and their diseases left them and the evil spirits came out of them. 13 Then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists undertook to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits saying, I adjure you by the Jesus whom Paul proclaims. 14 Seven sons of a Jewish high priest named Sceva were doing this. 15 But the evil spirit answered them, Jesus I know, and Paul I recognize, but who are you? 16 And the man in whom was the evil spirit leaped on them, mastered all of them and overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.
 - (3) **Eph 6:12** 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

¹ Charles C. Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 179.

- (4) Unlike fallen men, fallen angels have no opportunity to repent.
- b. Demons are unclean.
- (1) **Mt 10:1** 1 And [Jesus] called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out...
- (2) **Mt 12:43-45** 43 When the unclean spirit has gone out of a person, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, but finds none. 44 Then it says, I will return to my house from which I came. And when it comes, it finds the house empty, swept, and put in order. 45 Then it goes and brings with it seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they enter and dwell there, and the last state of that person is worse than the first. So also will it be with this evil generation.
- (3) Lk 4.33
- c. Demons are strong.
- (1) **Lk 8:29** 29 For [Jesus] had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. (For many a time it had seized him. He was kept under guard and bound with chains and shackles, but he would break the bonds and be driven by the demon into the desert.)
- (2) **Ac 19:15-16** 15 But the evil spirit answered them, Jesus I know, and Paul I recognize, but who are you? 16 And the man in whom was the evil spirit leaped on them, mastered all of them and overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.
- d. Demons are intelligent.
- (1) "Every demon, of course, has existed throughout all the span of human history. Though each one has not observed everything that has transpired throughout history, their longevity gives an added dimension to their native intelligence. They have observed human beings in almost every conceivable situation; therefore, they can accurately predict what individuals will do in most circumstances."²
- e. Demons are deceitful.
- (1) **1 Ti 4:1-3** 1 Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful *spirits* and teachings of *demons*....

5. Organisation.

- a. One-third of angels followed Satan and became demons (Mt 25:41; Re 12:3-4).
- b. Demons are organized hierarchically (Eph 1:21, 6:11-18).
- c. Satan rules over the demons (Mt 12:22-29; Mk 3:22-26; Lk 11:14-19; Re 12:7-9).
- (1) "[I]t may seem that Satan enjoys omniscience and omnipresence, though in actuality he does not. It is just that the demons extend Satan's activities so much that one might think Satan himself is doing it all (Eph. 6:11-12)."³
- d. Demons of distinction.
- (1) The Prince of Persia fought against Michael (Da 10:20).
- (2) The Prince of Greece replaced the Prince of Persia in relation to Israel (Da 10:20).
- (3) Beelzebub is the ruler of demons (Mt 12:24; Mk 3:22; Lk 11:15)
- e. See John Milton, *Paradise Lost*.

² Charles C. Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 185.

³ Charles C. Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 187.

6. Demons and God.

- a. Demons sided with Satan, rebelled against God, and continue to oppose God at every turn.
(1) Da 10:10-14, Re 16:13-16
- b. God sometimes uses demons to carry out his purposes.
(1) Jdg 9:23; 1 Sa 16:14; 1 Ki 22:22; 2 Co 12:17

7. Demons and Jesus.

- a. Jesus is sovereign over demons
(1) **Mt 4:24** 24 So [Jesus] fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, those oppressed by *demons*, those having seizures, and paralytics, and he healed them.
- b. Mt 8:16; 12:22-29; 17:14-18; Mk 1:25-26; 34; 39; 3:22-26; Lk 4:41; Lk 7:21; 11:14-19.
- c. Demons recognised who Jesus was before men did (Mt 8:16; 28-34; Mk 1:24; 34; 5:1-13; 19:17-29; Lk 4:34; 41; Lk 7:21; 8:27-35; 9:38-42).
- d. Demons address Jesus as “the Son of God” (Mt 8:28-34; Mk 5:1-13; Lk 8:27-35).
- e. Demons expect Jesus to punish them (Mt 8:28-34; Mk 5:1-13; Lk 8:27-35).
- f. Jesus will punish them (Mt 8:28-34; Mk 5:1-13; Lk 8:27-35).

8. Demons and Men.

- a. Demons prefer to be embodied in people or animals.
(1) **Mt 8:31-32** 31 And the demons begged him saying, If you cast us out, send us away into the herd of pigs. 32 And he said to them, Go. So they came out and went into the pigs, and behold, the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea and drowned in the waters.
(2) **Mt 12:43-45** 43 When the unclean spirit has gone out of a person, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, but finds none. 44 Then it says, I will return to my house from which I came. And when it comes, it finds the house empty, swept, and put in order. 45 Then it goes and brings with it seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they enter and dwell there, and the last state of that person is worse than the first.
- b. Demons tried to end the Messianic line by cohabiting with women (Ge 6:1-4).
- c. Demons promote idolatry.
(1) Le 17:7; Dt 32:17; Ps 106:36-38; 1 Co 10:20; Re 9:20
- d. Men often worship demons (Le 17:7; Dt 32:17; Ps 106:36-39; 1 Co 10:20).
- e. Demons may influence men (1 Sa 16:14; Re 9:1-11).
- f. Demons may possess men (Mt 4:24; 8:28; 12:22; Mk 1:25-26; Jn 10:21; Ac 5:16; 8:7; 16:16-18; 19:12).
- g. Demons may possess children (Mt 17:14-18; Mk 9:17-29; Lk 9:38-42).
(1) “All people, believers and unbelievers, are influenced and affected by demon activity, but not all are possessed. To draw an analogy, demon influence is to demon possession as general providence is to special miracles. Possessed

individuals are not capable of severing themselves from the control of the demon(s)."⁴

- h. Demon possession may cause physical illness (Mt 8:16; 9:32-33; 12:22-29; 17:14-18; Mk 1:34; 3:22-26; 9:17-29; Lk 4:33-35; 41; 7:21; 9:38-42; 11:14-19).
- i. Demon possession may cause mental illness (Mt 8:28-34; Mk 5:1-13; 9:22; Lk 8:27-35; 9:42).
 - (1) Of course, not all physical and mental illness is caused by demons.
 - (a) Mt 4:24; Mk 1:32, 34, Lk 7:21, 9:1; Ac 5:16
- j. Demons may cause death.
 - (1) Re 9:14-19.
- k. Demon possession may cause incredible strength (Mt 8:28-34; Mk 5:1-13; Lk 8:27-35).
- l. In the Tribulation, demons will:
 - (1) Torment men (Re 9:1-11).
 - (2) Kill one-third of mankind (Re 9:15-19).

9. Demons and Nations.

- a. Da 10:13
- b. Re 16:13-16
- c. Demons are likely involved in the working out of international politics.
- d. Demons may influence nations (Da 10:1-11:1).
 - (1) Le 18:6-30; Dt 19:9-14

10. Demons and Believers.

- a. Demons spread false doctrine (1 Ti 4:1-3).
 - (1) 1 Jn 4:1-4; 1 Ti 3:16-4:3; Re 2:20-24; 1 Co 12:10
 - (2) Demons especially attack the orthodox doctrine of Christ.
 - (3) Demons promote both antinomianism and legalism.
- b. Demons promote legalism (1 Ti 4:1-4).
- c. Believers must resist demons (Ja 4:7).
- d. Probably, believers cannot be demon possessed.
 - (1) 1 Sa 16:14; Lk 13:11-16; Ac 5:3; 1 Co 5:5; 2 Co 11:4; 12:7
 - (2) Neither Satan nor demons can permanently indwell a believer or ultimately have victory over him, even though they may dominate or control a believer's life for some time. A believer may be delivered to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, but the spirit will be saved in the Day of the Lord Jesus (1 Cor. 5:5). Whatever Satan or demons can do to a believer, and whether from without or within as their base of operation, their control cannot be permanent and eternal. Ryrie, Charles C.. *Basic Theology: A Popular, Systematic Guide to Understanding Biblical Truth* (pp. 191-192). Moody Publishers. Kindle Edition.
- e. God may allow demons to discipline believers (1 Ki 22:20-23).
- f. God may allow demons to harm believers (2 Co 12:7).
- g. God may allow believers to exercise authority over demons (Mt 10:1; Mk 6:7; Lk 9:1; 10:17-20; Ac 16:16-18; 19:11-16).

⁴ Charles C. Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 189.

- (1) Exorcism may be called for in extreme circumstances.
 - (2) “The Christian should treat demon molestation as he would resist temptation or fight against the activities of his flesh. He should examine himself to see if there are any areas of rebellion against the law or will of God, confess any and all known sin, rely on the power of the indwelling Spirit who is greater than Satan (1 John 4:4), and use all the armor of God (Eph. 6:13–18).”⁵
 - (3) “Not all problems are initiated by demons, not all physical illnesses, not all emotional problems, not all sins. Some arise from natural causes, some from the flesh. Casting out demons would do no good in such instances, but fighting the good fight of faith will benefit in all things.”⁶
- h. Believers will judge demons (1 Co 6:3).

11. Destiny.

- a. Some demons are already confined.
 - (1) Temporary confinement.
 - (a) **Luke 8:26-39** 26 Then they sailed to the country of the Gerasenes, which is opposite Galilee. 27 When Jesus had stepped out on land, there met him a man from the city who had demons. For a long time he had worn no clothes, and he had not lived in a house but among the tombs. 28 When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down before him and said with a loud voice, What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, do not torment me. 29 For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. (For many a time it had seized him. He was kept under guard and bound with chains and shackles, but he would break the bonds and be driven by the demon into the desert.) 30 Jesus then asked him, What is your name? And he said, Legion, for many demons had entered him. 31 And they begged him not to command them to depart into the abyss.
 - (b) Re 9.1-3, 11, 14, 16.14
 - (2) Permanent confinement.
 - (a) Ge 6.2-4
 - (b) 2 Pe 2.4
 - (c) **Jude 6** 6 And the *angels* who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day....
 - (d) “Confinement in Tartarus for some of the fallen angels must be punishment for some sin other than the original one, and a unique sin at that.”⁷
 - b. Demons will be cast out of heaven.
 - c. Demons will be thrown into the lake of fire (Mt 25:41).
 - d. Demons will be tormented (Mt 8:29; Lk 8:31).

⁵ Charles C. Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 192.

⁶ Charles C. Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 192.

⁷ Charles C. Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 183.