

DOCTRINE OF DEMONS

I. Vocabulary.

A. Hebrew vocabulary.

1. שֶׁדַּי (shedh) 2X, only used in plural; derived from the root שִׁדְּדָה (shudh) to have power, to rule or rule over, hence a lord, idol or demon. Deut. 32:17; Ps. 106:37
 - a. The Jews rightly regarded the idols of the heathen as being representations of the demons, which operated behind the scenes.
 - b. The idol itself was nothing, but the demon behind the idol was real. ICor. 10:19-20
2. שָׂעִיר (sa'iyir), m.noun, rough or hairy, satyr, a he-goat, a demon; the goat symbol, the inverted pentagram, represents the horned hunter of the night, which is a satanic symbol of rebellion. Lev. 17:7; IIChron. 11:15
3. אֱלֹהִים (elohiym), m.plural.noun, God, gods; this word (and other forms of it) is mostly used in the plural to refer to the Godhead. Gen. 1:1 It is also used in other contexts to refer to false gods, idols, or the demons behind them. Gen. 31:30,32; Ex. 20:23
4. שָׂר (sar) m.noun, leader, commander, prince. Dan. 10:13; Eph. 2:2
5. רוּחַ (ruach), c.noun, breath, wind, spirit; the term is applied to demons in some contexts. ISam. 16:14,23; Zech. 13:2

B. Greek vocabulary.

1. δαιμονίζομαι (daimonizomai), 13X, verb, to be controlled by an evil spirit or demon. Matt. 4:24, 8:16
 - a. δαίμων (daimon), 4X, in Greek literature this word signified a god or inferior deity. In the New Testament it refers to an evil spirit or demon.
 - b. δαιμόνιον (daimonion), 60X, diminutive of δαίμων, a small god, a spirit being inferior to God but superior to man.
 - c. δαιμονιώδης (daimoniodes), 1X, originating from, proceeding from, or resembling a demon, demonic. James 3:15
2. πνεῦμα (pneuma), spirit, that which is immaterial, used of fallen angels or demons. Generally used with qualifying adjectives such as:
 - a. ἀκάθαρτος (akathartos), unclean, refers to their permanent state of defilement and their desire to conform men to their defiled image. Mk. 1:23ff This designation focuses on the spiritual state of demons.
 - b. πονηρός (poneros), evil, bad, that which is of evil character, the malignant nature of these spirits which is manifested by their pernicious actions. Lk. 8:2 This designation focuses on the malevolent nature of demons.
 - c. πλάνος (planos), seducing, misleading, deceiving into error. ITim. 4:1 This designation focuses on the activity or the goals of demons.
3. ἄγγελος (aggelos), the primary meaning is an angel or messenger, which can be either human or angelic; it is applied to the messengers of Satan. Matt. 25:31; Rev. 12:7,9

- II. Definition and description.
- A. A demon is a fallen angel that chose Satan's viewpoint and sided with him in the angelic rebellion against God.
 - B. Since they are angelic creatures, they are spiritual in nature, and are not visible to mankind under normal circumstances (Job 4:15-16); however, like the other angels, demons can take a physical form as God permits it. Gen. 6:2; Rev. 9:1-3,7-10
 - C. Although they are spirit beings, demons have volition, mentality, self-consciousness, express emotion, language, and an angelic sin nature. Lk. 11:24-26; James 2:19
 - D. Like Satan, all angels were created sinless; those that fell, made a volitional choice to embrace the viewpoint of Satan, as recorded in the book of Isaiah. Isa. 14:12-14
 - E. Exactly one-third of the angels, including Satan, became demons. Rev. 12:4
 - F. All angels are masculine; therefore, by extension, all demons are masculine as well. Gen. 6:2
 - G. Based on their choice to associate themselves with Satan's viewpoint, they will likewise share his final destiny. Matt. 25:41
 - H. Satan is their ruler, and he runs an organized operation with demons of various ranks functioning under his authority. Matt. 12:24; Eph. 6:12
 - I. They are superior to mankind in every way, yet inferior to and subservient to God, albeit unwillingly. II Thess. 2:7
 - J. When they fell, they did not lose their power or relative rank in terms of the entire body of angels; therefore, some of the fallen angels are more powerful than angels that did not fall. Dan. 10:13
- III. The abode of demons.
- A. Like Satan, the majority of the demons are unconfined and free to operate within the sphere of God's permissive will. Job 1:6, 2:1; Eph. 2:2
 - B. Some of the demons are imprisoned in a place known as Tartarus for their participation in the sexual infiltration of the human race. Gen. 6:1-4
 1. The **sons of God** in Genesis must be identified as angelic creatures, since the title is only used 4 times, and is defined for us in the book of Job; specifically, they must be identified as demons. Job 1:6, 2:1
 2. Their crime involved rejection of the divinely ordained state of celibacy, taking a masculine human form, and copulating with unwitting females. Jude 6
 3. The result of the union of the angelic nature with human nature was a race of sterile, wicked, angel-men, known as the Nephilim. Gen. 6:4
 4. The segment of the demons that participated in this infiltration have been imprisoned in Tartarus, which is a designated compartment in the abyss, located in the lowest regions of Hades. II Pet. 2:4
 5. They will remain there, imprisoned under darkness, until Daniel's 70th week, when they will be released to torment mankind for five months. Rev. 9:1ff
 - C. The other demons that operate under Satan still have access to the third Heaven, along with the Devil, until just prior to the middle of Daniel's 70th week. Job 1:6, 2:1; Rev. 12:7-9
 - D. However, they currently operate in the heavenly realms attacking, withstanding and fighting against elect angels. Dan. 10:12-13,20
 - E. The atmosphere around earth, and the earth itself, is the scene of their tireless activity against the plan of God as they seek to enslave mankind with their viewpoint. Eph. 6:12ff; I Tim. 4:1-3

- IV. The activity of demons.
- A. Demons are consistently engaged in soliciting the human race to evil; as such, they employ tactics such as deception, lies, half-truths, and even miracles, in order to deceive and control the human race.
 - B. As we will see, they have their own doctrinal grid, which is promoted among mankind in order to enslave the human race under the demonic viewpoint. I Tim. 4:1
 - C. In that regard, they often seek to accomplish their goals through various forms of false religion and idolatry. I Cor. 10:19-20
 - D. On a national and international level, the demons are actively involved in influencing leaders to implement and perpetuate policies that are consistent with Satan's viewpoint. I Chron. 21:1; Dan. 10:13; Rev. 16:14
 1. Demons are organized into ranks according to their relative power and position in the angelic realm; the κοσμοκράτωρ (kosmokrator—world rulers) demons appear to be the most powerful, with lesser demons organized under their rule. Eph. 6:12
 2. Satan has the more powerful demons in more important places of responsibility, beginning with nations then working downward through capitals, large cities, smaller towns, etc.
 3. While they work in concert with the evil ruler, the ultimate goal is to enslave the world of men under darkness and establish the kingdom of Satan on earth. II Thess. 2:7ff
 4. The example of the earthly ruler of ancient Tyre reveals that some earthly rulers are actually in league with the demons or even Satan. Ezek. 28:1,12
 - E. On a more personal level, it is revealed that demons have the power and the desire to actively possess unbelievers. Matt. 17:18; Mk. 7:26-30; Lk. 8:27
 1. At a minimum, demons are actively involved in the satanic attempt to blind unbelievers to the truth of the gospel. II Cor. 4:3-4
 2. Demon possession is much more than demon influence; it involves a fallen angel entering and controlling the body and the thinking of the unbeliever.
 3. One must recognize that possession does not occur in a vacuum; the individual involved has made volitional choices that have resulted in becoming possessed.
 4. Further, the Word of God distinguishes between demon possession, which is spiritual in nature, and various physical and/or mental illnesses that are physiological in nature. Matt. 10:8; Mk. 6:13
 5. There are two distinct avenues that can result in demon possession; the first involves active attempts to gain access to the spiritual realm, while the second is more passive.
 - a. Actively, the person that manifests a deliberate desire to interact with spirits opens himself up to demonic possession.
 - b. A demon can possess those that choose to become involved in the occult, witchcraft, or sorcery; those that resort to mediums, or those that get involved in occult religions like Santeria, or Voodoo are also candidates.
 - c. God views these types of activities as abominations, and the Old Testament prescribed physical death as the penalty for anyone involved. Lev. 20:6,27; Deut. 18:9-14; I Kings 18:40
 - d. This documents that the person involved is guilty of evil and not merely sick, since God has never prescribed the death penalty for illness.

6. The second method by which people are exposed to demon activity, and may become possessed, is more passive in nature; that is, the person involved may not seek contact with demons, he may simply be exposed to it. Ex. 34:6-7
 - a. It is clear that the demons are not respecters of persons; they have no conscience, and will possess an innocent child as well as a consenting adult. Mk. 9:17
 - b. Living in an environment where demon activity and/or evil is rampant can result in those that are “innocent” becoming demon possessed. Matt. 12:45
 - c. Since God allows the demons to carry out their activities under His permissive will, they have great freedom to oppress and possess their victims. Lk. 11:24-26
 7. The results of demon possession.
 - a. Those that become demon possessed can begin to experience physical and/or psychological maladies, including exhibiting dual or multiple personalities. Matt. 12:22; Mk. 9:17-22
 - b. Those possessed by demons may exhibit supernatural strength, knowledge, or both.
 - 1.) It is clear in the gospels that people did not recognize the deity of Christ, but demons always did. Mk. 1:24, 5:7; Acts 16:16ff.
 - 2.) The demon possessed man in the country of the Geresenes demonstrated supernatural strength. Lk. 8:29
 - c. Since demons desire the destruction of the human race, those that become demon possessed often engage in acts of mutilation or other forms of self destructive behavior. Mk. 5:5; Lk. 8:27
 - d. Therefore, it is not surprising that body piercing, mutilations, tattoos, etc. are associated with divination and demon activity. Lev. 19:26-28
- F. Demons engage in a number of activities toward believers, as they seek to neutralize the positive believer in the angelic conflict.
1. Demons are actively involved in soliciting believers to evil, which is consistent with the actions of their leader. Matt. 4:1ff
 - a. External temptations can originate with the spiritual forces of Satan, who constantly monitor the human race for opportunities. Gen. 3:1ff; IThess. 3:5
 - b. The avenue of temptation is the indwelling sin nature, which already has a propensity for various forms of evil and false doctrine. James 1:14; Rom. 7:21; Acts 5:1-3
 - c. Demons recognize the proper time and place for various temptations so as to maximize their efforts. Lk. 4:13; ICor. 7:5
 2. They seek to influence believers through their perverted thinking, seeking those that may be susceptible to furthering their demonic doctrines. ITim. 4:1ff.
 - a. The views of the demons are consistent with the spiritual darkness in which they reside; they desire to enslave the human race with that spiritual darkness.
 - b. Various apostate individuals, who at one time were sound in the faith, are used to infiltrate the church with these pernicious teachings. IICor. 11:13; ITim. 4:2; Rev. 2:14,20
 - c. Churches that do not have leadership that is sufficiently positive and grounded in the faith will allow these individuals to carry out their nefarious work. ICor. 5:1ff; Rev. 2:20
 - d. If those advocating these heretical teachings are not dealt with quickly and decisively, the result is that the evil begins to dominate that local church. ICor. 5:6

- e. Churches such as these then propagate these doctrines, which, in turn, become dogma, and finally results in an apostate condition. ITim. 4:3; Rev. 2:14-15
 - 3. There is a distinct difference between demon oppression and influence on a believer, and becoming demon possessed.
 - a. Strictly speaking, a believer cannot be possessed by a demon since God the Holy Spirit indwells him. IJn. 4:1-4
 - b. Demon influence is the manipulation of a believer by virtue of the invasion of the thought processes, as evidenced in the **merry widow** syndrome. ITim. 5:15
 - c. Believers can and do succumb to demon influence, and all cases can be traced to faulty associations (failure to separate), or rejection of other doctrinal principles, which opens the believer to attack. ISam. 15; 16:14; Rom. 16:17-18
 - d. The demonic purpose is to neutralize believers in the angelic conflict by influencing their thinking to the point where they simply become pawns of Satan and his desires. IITim. 2:26
 - e. The reversionism process is key to understanding how demons can gain control over a believer. *Doctrine of Reversionism*.
 - G. God can and does use demons to advance His plan, apart from any coercion or solicitation for the demon to do evil.
 - 1. God can and does use demons to discipline believers. ISam. 16:14-15; Matt. 18:34; ICor. 5:5; ITim. 1:20
 - 2. God also uses the forces of darkness to advance His plan and aid in the spiritual growth of believers. Job; Lk. 22:31ff; IICor. 12:8
- V. Avenues by which demons seek to influence believers, or possess unbelievers.
- A. Although believers cannot be possessed by demons, it should be evident that the tactics the demons employ toward unbelievers may work equally upon believers.
 - B. Demons promote idolatry, which is the worship of something other than God; although the idols worshipped are not real, the demons behind the idol are. ICor. 10:14,19-22; Col. 3:5
 - C. Even though false doctrines and deception come as a result of demon activity, it is evident that the demons then use these erroneous systems to propagate their views.
 - 1. Satan has a religious system that includes false apostles (IICor. 11:13), false prophets, and false teachers, some of which are unbelievers and some of which are believers. IIPet. 2:1
 - 2. They promote a system of teaching that may include a false gospel (Gal. 1:7-10), but definitely includes false doctrines (ITim. 6:3, IITim. 4:3), which are designed to delude believers (IITim. 2:17-18; Tit. 1:11) and to bring reproach on the truth. ITim. 6:1
 - 3. Although the demonic forces may counterfeit spiritual gifts (the modern tongues movement), and appear to have a form of righteousness, it is not the righteousness that comes from faith in sound doctrine. Rom. 4:13; IITim. 3:5,7
 - 4. As one might suspect, those that are involved in these types of organizations will oppose those that expose their activities for what they are. IITim. 3:8
 - C. Those engaged in various forms of the occult, which includes witches (white and black), mediums, spiritists, and fortune tellers, are either knowingly or unknowingly agents of the demonic realm.
 - D. Anyone that engages such persons in order to advance himself, to harm others, to gain hidden knowledge, or for any other reason, opens himself to demonic activity.

- E. Other activities, which include such things as tarot cards, ouija boards, role playing games (such as Dungeons and Dragons), or automatic writing provide the opportunity for demon involvement.
- F. Those that use drugs, spells, enchantments, potions, herbs, incantations, or other forms of sorcery are relying on demonic forces to achieve their goals.
- G. Divination, the activity of seeking to obtain information about the future, is demonic and is condemned in the Bible. Deut. 18:10,14
- H. There are multitudes of ways in which people practice divination or augury, which relies on the skill of the one who reads and interprets the signs or omens.
 - 1. Astromancy, reading the stars. Deut. 4:19
 - 2. Hepatoscopy, reading livers. Ezek. 21:21
 - 3. Bellowmancy, shooting arrows. Ezek. 21:21
 - 4. Rhabdomancy, water staff. Hos. 4:12
 - 5. Necromancy, contacting the dead. Deut. 18:11
 - 6. Hydromancy, reading liquids.
- I. Magic (black, white, or natural), such as the type practiced by priests and shamans around the globe, is definitely another avenue to demonic activity. Deut. 18:11-12
 - 1. There is a long history of shamanism in almost all cultures including those in Asia, Europe, Africa, Central and South America, the North American Indians, the Inuit, and Siberia.
 - 2. This may involve, but not be limited to, the use of hallucinogenic, mind-altering substances in order for the shaman to contact the spirit world.
 - 3. The magicians of Egypt performed their miracles via magic and demonic activity. Ex. 7:11ff,22 8:7
 - 4. The teraphim of Laban were good-luck charms that were thought to bring the good life to a house. Gen. 31:19,30
 - 5. Mandrakes were used to promote magical sexual powers. Gen. 30:14ff
 - 6. Pagans under demon influence wore protective jewelry. Jud. 8:21,26
 - 7. This is the type of activity that was characteristic of Simon Magus, who is observed in the Book of Acts. Acts. 8:9-11
 - 8. The modern New-Age Movement with its worship of magic crystals, silver ornaments, pyramids, etc. falls into the same category.
 - 9. Jesus denounced the use of needless repetition in prayer, which is similar to the use of magic incantations. Matt. 6:7
- J. Ultimately, demons have the strong desire to enslave the human race under satanic darkness and use any avenue or method that presents itself in order to accomplish their objective.

VI. Christ and demons.

- A. The demons recognized that Jesus was God's unique Son. Mk. 5:7
- B. They knew and understood the doctrine that Messiah would crush the head of Satan, and ultimately destroy them. Gen. 3:15; Matt. 8:29
- C. In fact, demons not only recognize the existence of God, they are knowledgeable concerning the Divine essence. James. 2:19
- D. By virtue of His unique person, Christ exercises control over the demons, and delegates such power to His followers. Matt. 10:1; Lk. 10:17-19
- E. At the cross the forces of darkness were disarmed and subdued by Christ. Col. 2:15

- F. His strategic victory will ultimately be manifested in a visible fashion, as all demons will be confined to the lake of fire along with Satan, whose doom they share. ICor. 15:27- 28; Matt. 25:41; Rev. 20:10
- G. For the time being, they operate under Satan their leader, but they all act only under the permissive will of Christ. Eph. 1:20-23

VII. Demonism and Daniel's 70th week.

- A. The appearance of the Antichrist and, by extension, other forms of demonic activity is being restrained by God the Holy Spirit during the Church Age. IIThess. 2:7-8
- B. Following the rapture, this restraint is removed, and Satan and the demons are given much more freedom to advance their cause.
- C. At some level, the Divine restraint of demons is commensurate with the amount of positive volition and rejection of evil that exists both personally and in a society.
- D. Since the prophetic word has warned believers that the last days will be filled with many types of evil, it should not be surprising that demonic activity will also increase. IITim. 3:1ff
- E. Toward the end of the Church Age, demonic activity will be focused in and around political Babylon, the United States. Rev. 18:1-2
 - 1. This indicates that the demons have found a place of permanent residence that is compatible with their evil and demonic doctrines.
 - 2. They are referred to in the parallel statement as **unclean birds**, which is a term that is used in Revelation only for carrion birds, which feed on death.
 - 3. As anyone that is familiar with birds knows, these creatures are often filthy, and are willing to defecate on their environment.
 - 4. Lastly, they are described as **hated**, reinforcing the antagonism that exists between the demons and the God that abhors them.
- F. At the time of the destruction of the US, which is related to the sixth seal of Revelation, Satan and his angels will be expelled from Heaven. Rev. 12:7-9; Rev. 6:1ff
- G. At that time, one of the demons ejected with Satan will unlock the prison of Tartarus, and all the demons incarcerated there will be released to torment mankind for a period of five months. Rev. 9:1-5
- H. Although it appears that the torment they inflict is limited to five months, there is no indication that they do not remain free for the duration of Daniel's 70th week.
- I. While the Antichrist will be possessed by Satan, another power demon will possess the False Prophet. Rev. 13:11-12
- J. These two will work in conjunction with one another to produce a deluding influence that deceives mankind through a series of misleading signs, wonders, and miracles.
- K. During the final half of Daniel's 70th week, Satan and his demons will escalate the persecution of Israel, seeking to eliminate the nation from human history. Rev. 12:13
- L. Three demons are sent to gather the armies of the world for Armageddon. Rev. 16:13-14
- M. At the Second Advent, Satan and the demon in the false prophet will evacuate their hosts before the Antichrist and False Prophet are cast into the Lake of Fire. Rev. 19:20
- N. Satan and his demons will be then confined to the abyss for 1000 years. Rev. 20:1-2
- O. They will be released to deceive mankind once again, but will finally be cast into the Lake of Fire, where they will spend eternity in conscious torment. Rev. 20:10

- VIII. The believer's provision for the angelic conflict.
- A. The believer is not to be occupied with the forces of darkness and his victory over them; instead, he is to be occupied with Christ. Lk. 10:20
 - B. The Word of God is not only the agent of Ph₂ sanctification, it is critical to the life of the believer in the angelic conflict.
 - 1. Knowledge of Bible doctrine is indispensable in terms of understanding the enemy and how they operate. IICor. 2:11
 - 2. Jesus demonstrated the proper approach for dealing with the forces of darkness during His encounter with Satan. Matt. 4:1ff
 - 3. Knowledge of such doctrines as the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which produces union with Christ, indicates that we share His destiny.
 - 4. Therefore, His victory over the forces of darkness, and His exaltation forms the basis for our confidence in battle. Eph. 1:18-23
 - C. The full armor of God is provided as an effective defense against demons and their activities. Eph. 6:13-17
 - 1. Paul calls three times for believers to take a firm stand in the angelic conflict when confronting Satan and His demons. Eph. 6:11,13,14
 - 2. The objective realities of the truth are indispensable when dealing with liars, who are advocating various forms of false and demonic doctrines. vs. 14
 - 3. The breastplate of righteousness refers to personal righteousness that protects the heart of the believer from the assaults of unrighteousness. vs. 14 cf. Prov. 4:23
 - 4. The good news of peace refers to the understanding of the gospel, particularly the aspect of our reconciliation with God and eternal security, which provides the believer secure and stable footing in the conflict. vs. 15
 - 5. The shield of faith refers to the practice of faith-resting the pressures and attacks that are brought to bear by the enemy. vs. 16 cf. IPet. 5:8-9
 - 6. The helmet of salvation refers to the confidence of Ph₃ deliverance, the knowledge that the conflict is only temporary and that we are on the side of victory. vs. 17 cf. IThess 5:8
 - 7. The sword of the Spirit is the only active weapon in our arsenal; the Word of God possesses sufficient power to defeat the enemy. vs. 17 cf. Heb. 4:12
 - D. Prayer is an absolute necessity for the believer seeking to fight the good fight. Eph. 6:18; IThess. 5:17; Heb. 4:16
 - E. Believers are to be vigilant in this conflict. Eph. 6:18; IThess. 5:6; IPet. 5:8
 - F. *Esprit de corps*. IPet. 5:9 This involves the recognition that we have a common spirit, sympathy, enthusiasm, devotion, and legitimate regard for the honor of the body as a whole.
 - G. The doctrine of separation is designed to protect the believer from faulty associations, which may expose him, either knowingly or unknowingly, to demonic activity.