

## What Does The Bible Say About Demons?

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Good morning CrossWinds! My name is Kurt. I am one of the pastors. This morning we continue looking at the topics you requested. This morning we have a really hot topic. It is demons. What does the Bible say about demons?

There is a lot of interest in demons and the occult. On television, there have been shows like Buffy the Vampire Slayer. Who can forget the X-files, which was about unsolved paranormal cases?

When it comes to movies there are plenty that dabble in the demonic. We all know about the Exorcist and Poltergeist. Those are a few famous demonic movies.

While television and movies present demons as a fantasy for our entertainment, the reality behind these movies and programs is rock-solid truth. There is an invisible world out there with angels and demons. It is very, very real. As Christians, we are involved in angelic and demonic battles. The apostle Paul said this about demons.

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. Ephesians 6:12 (ESV)

Paul said behind the physical world is a very real struggle taking place in the spiritual world. What do battles in the unseen spiritual world look like? To give you an idea, let me take you to 2 Kings 6. In that chapter, evil King Aram was determined to find and kill Elisha the prophet. God kept revealing to Elisha evil King Aram's plans. Elisha would warn the king of Israel of evil King Aram's plans against him. Evil King Aram's plans were consistently ruined. Even the words

King Aram spoke in his bedroom were not safe. God revealed them to Elisha. One day, King Aram decided Elisha had to go. He sent an army to find and destroy Elisha the prophet. Elisha and his servant were staying in the city of Dothan. The servants woke up early one morning and looked outside to see the entire city surrounded by an army of warriors, horses, and chariots. They were there for one man. They planned to find and crush Elisha. For obvious reasons, Elisha's young servant ran back into the house in a complete panic. They were trapped and outnumbered. Elisha wasn't worried. Instead of fear, he prayed and asked God to open his young servant's eyes to show him why they did not need to be afraid.

Then Elisha prayed and said, "O LORD, please open his eyes that he may see." So the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw, and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. 2 Kings 6:17 (ESV)

God sent an angelic army to protect Elisha. Before that moment, Elisha's servant could only see the battle with his physical eyes. God allowed him to see the protection God sent in the spiritual world. That day, God's army saved both of them.

That is a little window into what battles in the unseen spiritual world look like.

This morning, as we look at the topic of demons, we will break our study up under three major headings. First, we will look at Satan. He is the head of the demons, the ultimate fallen angel. Second, we will look at how demons work in this world. Third, we will look at practical questions about what demons can and

cannot do to us in this world and how we can protect ourselves from their attacks.

## What does the Bible say about Satan?

### When was Satan created?

The Bible does not tell us exactly when Satan was created but we can get close to figuring it out. First, we know Jesus made everything. Look what it says about Jesus and creation. Speaking about Jesus:

For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. Colossians 1:16 (ESV)

Jesus made all things. While God the Father willed creation, it was Jesus who carried out the making of creation. He made the physical universe that we can see, plus, he made the vast angelic universe that we can't see. We also know that when creation was finished, everything Jesus made in the physical and angelic world was good. There was no sin in all of God's creation at the beginning. We see this at the end of the creation week in Genesis.

And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day. Genesis 1:31 (ESV)

Somewhere between the end of the creation week and Genesis 3, when Satan took the form of a serpent and tempted Eve, Satan rebelled against God, and a large number of the angels joined his rebellion. They became fallen angels, also known as demons.

The Bible doesn't say much about Satan's fall but there is a Bible passage that gives us a window into what happened to Satan. It is Ezekiel 28. The first 10 verses of Ezekiel 28 talk about the king of the island city of Tyre. Then in verses

11-29, the prophet Ezekiel spoke about Satan, the evil power behind the evil king of Tyre. Let's read about Satan's fall.

Moreover, the word of the Lord came to me: "Son of man, raise a lamentation over the king of Tyre, and say to him, Thus says the Lord God: "You were the signet of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering, sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, emerald, and carbuncle; and crafted in gold were your settings and your engravings. On the day that you were created they were prepared. You were an anointed guardian cherub. I placed you; you were on the holy mountain of God; in the midst of the stones of fire you walked. You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created, till unrighteousness was found in you. In the abundance of your trade you were filled with violence in your midst, and you sinned; so I cast you as a profane thing from the mountain of God, and I destroyed you, O guardian cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. Your heart was proud because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor..." Ezekiel 28:11-17 (ESV)

Satan started out perfect. He was full of wisdom and beauty. He was in Eden. He was beautiful. He was covered in precious stones. He was a guardian cherub. He was in charge of guarding God's throne. He was not content with the high and powerful place God created for him. He chose unrighteousness. He was not created sinful. He chose to sin. He chose to rebel against the God who created him. As a result, he was cast from the mountain of God. He was proud of his beauty. Satan's mind became corrupted. That tells us a little about the origin of Satan.

### **What was Satan's original sin?**

The section we just read in Ezekiel told us Satan became proud of his beauty. He wanted to take the worship that was to go to God and keep it for himself. Isaiah 14:12-17 also describes Satan's downfall. While Ezekiel focused on what happened when Satan chose to rebel, Isaiah 14 speaks more about the motivation of why Satan chose to sin and rebel. Ezekiel began by talking about

the evil king of Tyre, then switched to talking about Satan, who was the evil force behind him. The passage in Isaiah works the same way. The opening verses of this chapter begin by talking about the evil king of Babylon, then they switch to talk about Satan, the evil power behind him.

“How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low! You said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.’” Isaiah 14:12–14 (ESV)

Notice five times we see the phrase, “I will.” Satan had a high position as the guardian cherub of God’s throne, but he wanted a higher position. “I will ascend to heaven. I want God’s throne. I want to be God. I will set my throne on high. I will set it on the mount of assembly. I will ascend about the clouds. I will make myself like the most high.” Satan’s original sin was pride. He was not content with the extremely high and privileged position God gave him as a beautiful guardian angel. Instead, he wanted to take God’s position in the universe.

The New Testament also confirms that Satan’s original sin was pride when it warns us against putting new Christians in the officer of an elder so they don’t get caught up in pride.

He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. 1 Timothy 3:6 (ESV)

### **What does the Bible tell us about Satan’s personality?**

Here we will look at a few verses that will be a lens for us to see Satan’s temperament in this world.

But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ. 2 Corinthians 11:3 (ESV)

**Satan is very cunning.** He is crafty. He is deceptive. Today we would say he is very good at ripping people off. He gets people to pursue things that are worthless and think they are valuable. He gets people to think things that are valuable are worthless. Satan is especially good at tricking people into ruining their lives. Satan tricks people into believing they are hip and cool. Later they realize they bought Satan's lies and were complete fools. You will always look back with regrets on anything you allow Satan to trick you into believing.

Then the dragon became furious with the woman and went off to make war on the rest of her offspring... Revelation 12:17 (ESV)

**Satan is very angry.** He is not a happy camper. He is furious. In Ezekiel, we learned his plan to be like God backfired. He was cast out of heaven to earth. Just like angry people do terribly destructive things, Satan is the same way. He is angry that his plan to oust God backfired. God cast him to earth so now he is determined to ruin what is most precious in God's eyes, that is you and me. On this planet, we are the only part of the creation that was made in the image of God. To get back at God, he wants to ruin us.

You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies. John 8:44 (ESV)

**Satan is a murderer and a liar.** He cannot even speak the truth. He is a compulsive liar. If you have spent time around compulsive liars, you know how incredibly frustrating that can be. You can't trust a thing they say. That is Satan. He is a compulsive liar. He will lie to you all day long and not think twice about it.

The reason he lies so consistently is that he wants to deceive us to kill us. He is a murderer. Jesus wants to give us life. Satan wants to take our lives.

Remember, he is tricky! He tries to deceive us with his lies.

...Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. Revelation 12:10 (ESV)

**Satan loves to accuse us before God.** That is what he did to Job. He also loves to accuse us to ourselves. He loves to whisper self-hatred in your ear. He wants you to think you would be better off dead. He wants you to think your family and your parents would be better if you were gone. None of that is true. Jesus forgives us of our sin. Satan constantly wants to remind us of our sin.

#### What does Satan do in this world?

...and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be released for a little while. Revelation 20:3 (ESV)

**Satan specializes in deceiving the nations.** When we see propaganda and lies in the media, Satan is ultimately behind those things. He is the one who specializes in deceiving entire nations by keeping people from the truth. When we think about the war in Russia and Ukraine, we hear about the Russian news and how they put out propaganda to get the Russian people to believe lies. Satan is behind all that. That doesn't just happen in Russia. It happens here. We all know about news outlets that do not report the facts. They report the spin. They only report news that fits their narrative and they shape the news to reinforce their position. Where does that come from? Deceiving the nations is one of Satan's specialties.

The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. 2 Thessalonians 2:9–10 (ESV)

**Satan specializes in false religion.** All religions out there that do not believe in the Bible and salvation by Jesus alone are false religions. Where do these religions come from? Satan is ultimately behind all of them. They are distractions. They are smoke screens to confuse people about the truth and keep people from the truth.

In false religions, there are times when signs and wonders take place. Satan is behind these counterfeit signs. For example, if you look at Voodoo in Haiti with witch doctors, you will find their curses can actually get people sick. Satan is the one behind those signs and wonders. If you go to India, you find Hinduism. It is about reincarnation. You will meet people who can tell you an amazing amount of detail about their past lives. Is it true that they were reincarnated? Absolutely not. The Bible is clear that after death comes judgment, not reincarnation. How do these people know detailed information about someone who lived before them that is now dead? Satan is behind transferring this knowledge. He is all about false signs and wonders in religion to get people to believe the lies of false religions.

...for fear that somehow the tempter had tempted you and our labor would be in vain. 1 Thessalonians 3:5 (ESV)

**Satan loves to tempt us to sin.** While Satan loves to tempt all people to sin, he works especially hard tempting Christians to sin. Last week we learned Satan cannot make us sin. As James said, we are led into sin by our own desires. What Satan does is he loves to put bait on the hook. When we are tired,



when we are lonely, when we are discouraged, that is when Satan loves to strike. He will tempt us with anger. He will tempt us with lust. He will tempt us with bitterness. He especially wants to tempt us with busyness to keep us away from our Bibles and the truth we desperately need.

Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation... Revelation 2:10 (ESV)

**Satan is behind much of the persecution of Christians in the world today.** He loves to make Christians suffer. Why is it that so many Christians suffer in prison or are killed in this world? Christians are the best and most productive people in society. Why would anyone want to persecute the most productive and upstanding citizens in society? The reason so many Christians suffer is because Satan hates Jesus and Satan is behind the hatred of the brothers and sisters of Jesus.

### **What does the Bible say about demons?**

#### **How many demons are in the world?**

We often hear that a third of the angelic world joined Satan in his rebellion. There is no verse that directly tells us this information, but in Revelation, there are some verses that help us piece this together.

And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads seven diadems. His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven and cast them to the earth... Revelation 12:3–4 (ESV)

And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. Revelation 12:9 (ESV)

Putting those verses together Christians have traditionally believed the dragon sweeping a third of the stars from heaven followed by verses saying the dragon is Satan and that his angels were thrown out of heaven with him is good backing for the belief that a third of the angels became demons, that is fallen angels, when they joined his rebellion.

### **What are the classifications of demons?**

There are three major categories of demons. There are permanently confined demons, temporarily confined demons, and unconfined demons. Let's turn to the Scriptures, and I will show you what I mean.

**Some demons are permanently confined.** Today, not all the demons that once roamed the earth are roaming the planet. The worst demons are confined and not able to influence the earth at this time. Before you celebrate, there are still plenty of bad demons running around, but at one time things were far worse. There were many more sinister demons that had a far greater destructive influence on God's creation. To show this to you, let's look at the days just before the flood. We read about those days in a strange set of verses found in Genesis 6.

...the sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any they chose. Then the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years." The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of man and they bore children to them. These were the mighty men who were of old, the men of renown. Genesis 6:2-4 (ESV)

I told you these are strange verses. This is a mysterious passage. Theologians have debated these verses for thousands of years. I certainly can not answer all your questions but we can talk about some of the questions that

arise in this passage. The first question we all ask is, “Who are the sons of God?” The answer to that question gets into the topic of God’s divine council. That is a big subject for another day. For now, it is safe for us to observe that the sons of God do not appear to be human beings. They are some kind of spiritual or angelic being. They thought human women were attractive so they took as their wives any they chose. They were having children with human women. If the sons of God were just normal humans, there would be nothing unusual about marrying and having children. That isn’t what we have. These sons of God, which appear to be some kind of angelic beings, are mating with human women and having children that are some kind of angel/human hybrid race. That is pretty freaky. There is a lot of ink spilled on this topic. If you don’t agree with me, just follow me for a few minutes. You can disagree with me later.

Some of you may reject the idea that the sons of God are angelic beings mating with human women to create some kind of angelic/human hybrid because the New Testament in Mark 12:25 says angels do not marry nor are given in marriage. Yes, I know that verse. The Hebrew word for wife in this passage could also mean woman. These spiritual beings were not necessarily marrying these women. They were taking these women and having children through them.

This is obviously a weird passage. The Bible doesn’t tell us much of what was happening. It is dangerous to speculate too much. If this is some kind of particularly weird and sick attempt at powerful angelic beings mating with human beings, we know what God thought about this. Immediately after this in Genesis 6, God put a stop to what they were doing. He sent the flood and wiped everyone

and everything off the plant. He started the human race again with the pure human seed of Noah and his family.

It appears the flood was God's response to this particularly wicked sin by angelic beings. Genesis doesn't tell us what happened to these particularly wicked and powerful demons at the time of the flood but passages in the New Testament give us details about what God did to them in response to what they had done.

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... Jude 6 (ESV)

This is not talking about all fallen angels but the fallen angels who left their proper position of authority and their proper dwelling place. They left the reality of the unseen spiritual world and manifested themselves in the physical world to do things they had no authority or right to do. God bound those particular fallen angels with chains and has kept them in gloomy darkness where they will remain until the day of judgment so they can no longer roam the earth and influence the world. There are other passages that talk about the same things.

For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment... 2 Peter 2:4 (ESV)

This is not talking about all angels, but it is talking about a particular group of fallen angels. God has already cast them into hell where they will remain until the day of judgment. The word hell is not a good translation. It is the Greek word Tartus. That is not the usual word for hell. Tartus in Greek mythology is a dark pit in the underworld where the Titans were confined. Apparently, at the flood, these

particularly wicked angels who pursued intimacy with human women were bound by God and are now kept in a pit where they are confined until the final judgment.

God confining particularly wicked angels to a pit where they await final judgment so they can no longer influence the world is found in other parts of the New Testament.

For example, in Luke 8, we read of the Gerasene demoniac. This was a man strongly influenced by demons. He was literally controlled by thousands of terrible demons. They gave him supernatural strength. Everyone ran from that man in fear. When Jesus approached him, instead of that man terrorizing Jesus, he fell down on his face in fear in front of Jesus. Look what these demons said to Jesus.

And they begged him not to command them to depart into the abyss. Luke 8:31 (ESV)

"Jesus, we remember after the flood where you took our meanest, nastiest, demon buddies and locked them in a pit until the day of judgment. I know we were bad demons. I know we are ruining this man's life but please don't chain us up and throw us into the pit."

So we have demons that no longer roam the earth. They are permanently confined in a pit where they will stay until the day of judgment. The next category of demons is those who are temporarily confined.

**Some demons are temporarily confined in the pit.** In the future, some particularly wicked demons that are kept in the pit will be let out of the pit to cause havoc on earth. We can read about this in Revelation 9.

And the fifth angel blew his trumpet, and I saw a star fallen from heaven to earth, and he was given the key to the shaft of the bottomless pit... Then from the

smoke came locusts on the earth, and they were given power like the power of scorpions of the earth. Revelation 9:1 and 3 (ESV)

The most famous demon who will be temporarily confined in the pit is Satan. Revelation 20 speaks about a period of time in the future called the Millennium. It is the thousand-year reign of Jesus on the planet. For a thousand years Satan will be bound in the pit and his influence will be removed from the world. It will be great. When Jesus is in charge, you will actually be able to afford the gas prices. Let's look at how Satan will be temporarily confined to the pit for a thousand years.

Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain. And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be released for a little while. Revelation 20:1–3 (ESV)

Thankfully, the worst demons to have roamed the planet are permanently confined. This leaves us with the third category of demons called the unconfined demons. In this category, there are different ranks and powers of demons. I will not delve into that this morning. We will cover those details next week. Let's look at how the unconfined demons work in the world today.

### How do demons work today?

Let's start in the Old Testament. In the Old Testament, the word demon is infrequently used. When it is used, it is very insightful as it tells us how demons work. What we find is the nations around Israel that served false God were actually worshipping demons.

They stirred him to jealousy with strange gods; with abominations they provoked him to anger. They sacrificed to demons that were no gods, to gods they had never known... Deuteronomy 32:16–17 (ESV)

**Demons are behind all false religions.** In the Old Testament, we see demons were behind the false religions of Israel's neighbors. When the Canaanites, the Amorites, and the Philistines worshiped their gods, they were worshipping demons. Nothing has changed. Anyone who is not following the Bible and placing his or her faith in Jesus is worshipping a demon. When Muslims worship Allah, Allah is a demon. That may be hard for you to hear but it is what the Bible says is true.

...but they mixed with the nations and learned to do as they did. They served their idols, which became a snare to them. They sacrificed their sons and their daughters to the demons... Psalm 106:35-37 (ESV)

**Demons are behind child sacrifice.** When God's people in the Old Testament began worshipping the gods of their neighbors, one of the things the nations around them did in their worship was sacrifice their children in worship to their demon gods. If you worshiped Molech, you worshipped him by throwing your newborn child alive into the fire. This makes sense. Satan and his demons want to kill and destroy life, especially the most innocent and vulnerable life, our children.

Today, we live in such a strong pro-abortion culture. When Roe vs. Wade was overturned, hundreds of thousands of people took to the streets claiming to have a fundamental right to kill their children. Who is behind this sick thinking? Satan and his demons. They work hard in our culture to take as many lives as possible, especially the lives of unborn children.

And they cried aloud and cut themselves after their custom with swords and lances, until the blood gushed out upon them. 1 Kings 18:28 (ESV)

**Demons are behind cutting and self-mutilation.** We learned demons love death, especially killing children. The Bible also tells us they love to encourage people to cut themselves and destroy their bodies. In 1 Kings we see the regular worship practices of Baal worshippers involved cutting themselves and disfiguring their bodies. If we run across people today who are struggling with cutting, chances are a demon is or was tempting them in that direction.

Then a demon-oppressed man who was blind and mute was brought to him, and he healed him, so that the man spoke and saw. Matthew 12:22 (ESV)

**Demons can also cause physical and mental illness.**

This demon-oppressed man was unable to speak or see. This was not because he had something wrong with him physically. It was the way the demon oppressed him spiritually. Jesus was clear that sometimes people had physical sickness and needed healing. Sometimes people were demonically-oppressed and needed demons cast out of their lives. Not all the time but sometimes demon oppression results in physical sickness or physical limitations. That is still true today. Let me show you another example

And behold, there was a woman who had had a disabling spirit for eighteen years. She was bent over and could not fully straighten herself...“And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?” Luke 13:11 and 16 (ESV)

This lady was disabled for 18 years not from physical sickness but demonic oppression so she could not stand up. Today, we would send her to a chiropractor. In reality, she needed a demon taken away from her so it no longer influenced her life.

As I said earlier, I want to be clear that not all sickness is caused by demons. The Bible is clear that some sickness and physical suffering is caused



by demons. In the book of Job, we find Satan asked permission from God to ruin Job's life. Part of that was severe physical sickness and boils. Satan caused that sickness in Job's life.

But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. James 3:14–15 (ESV)

**Demons love to promote strife and disorder.** Demons love to produce divisions and conflicts between people. When we see the world filled with so much violence, hatred, and rage, Satan and his demons are behind it, stirring the pot. They are constantly encouraging that stuff in the world.

This is also true in the church. Sometimes in a church you find people filled with selfish ambition. They want to be No. 1. They want to be in charge of everything. It is their way or the highway. Where does that kind of attitude come from? It is demonic. The Holy Spirit produces in us an attitude that says in humility consider others better than yourself. Demons produce an attitude of saying I am better than others.

### **How did Jesus change the power of demons?**

It is fascinating to see what happens when we turn to the New Testament and Jesus comes into the picture. In the Old Testament, we don't hear much direct confrontation with demons. Jesus came along and started casting out demons left and right by only speaking a word. In page after page of the New Testament Jesus was kicking demons out of people's lives. That kind of authority over demons was never before seen in world history. What does Jesus tell us made him so different?

But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. Or how can someone enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? Then indeed he may plunder his house. Matthew 12:28–29 (ESV)

Jesus' ability to cast out demons was proof that someone greater than Satan had arrived on the scene. Jesus, the very Son of God, who has complete authority over all demons, has come.

### **What do we need to know about demons today?**

#### **Can a Christian be demon-possessed?**

If by demon possession we mean, "Can a Christian be so dominated by a demon that he or she can no longer choose to do right and obey God?" then the answer to the question is definitely, "No."

If what we mean by demon possession is can demons powerfully attack, tempt, and depress Christians, and try to ruin the lives of Christians, then the answer is definitely, "Yes." If Satan took advantage of Jesus' weakness after not eating for 40 days so he severely tempted him in that time, what makes us think that Satan's demons would not tempt us to sin in our times of weakness and vulnerability in difficult times?

James told Christians to resist the devil. This implies there are times when we need to resist the devil because he is tempting us or discouraging us.

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. James 4:7 (ESV)

#### **Can Satan and demons know my thoughts?**

Demons do not know the future. They cannot read our thoughts. The Bible clearly says God is the only one who knows the future and controls the future.

...I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose,'... Isaiah 46:9–10 (ESV)

Jesus also knew people's thoughts, which is another way of saying he is God because only God knows our thoughts. We know he is God.

If only God knows people's thoughts and knows the future, how do witch-doctors, fortune tellers, and Ouija boards predict details about the future? While demons don't know the future, they can observe the past and the present. A demon knows what I ate for breakfast because it saw me eat breakfast. A demon can know what I said on a private phone call because it heard the phone call. A demon can know private information. While a demon cannot know the future, it can make an accurate prediction about what will happen in the future because it knows more details about people than we have access to with our limited knowledge. Demons can make good guesses about the future. Only God knows the future.

### **How should we respond to demonic influence?**

Jesus had tremendous authority over demons. Jesus also gave that authority to his apostles (Luke 9:1). The apostle Paul also had authority to cast out demons (Acts 16:18).

Paul spoke extensively about spiritual warfare in Ephesians 6 because he expected we will experience a demonic attack in our lives. In Ephesians 6, he told us the incredible power of the ordinary weapons we use when we fend off the temptations and attacks of Satan and his demons. They are things like prayer, the Word of God, righteous living, and the Holy Spirit. I love the way Paul

described the power of the ordinary weapons we use in our battles with Satan and his demons.

For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. 2 Corinthians 10:3–4 (ESV)

The power to fend off attacks of Satan in our lives is not found in ourselves. It is found in Jesus. Jesus is the one who has power over demons. He is the one who has authority over demons. The reason James 4:7 tells us to resist the devil and he will flee from us is because we are adopted brothers and sisters of Jesus. While Jesus demonstrated complete power over Satan while he walked the earth, Jesus' greatest defeat of Satan happened at the cross. There Jesus didn't just scare Satan and his demons away. He rendered them impotent and completely destroyed.

Look what the writer of Hebrews told us happened when Jesus died on the cross for our sin.

Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil... Hebrews 2:14 (ESV)

On the cross, Jesus didn't just destroy Satan. He also conquered the rest of the demonic powers in the unseen spiritual world.

He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him. Colossians 2:15 (ESV)

It is because of Satan's great victory on the cross and that Jesus has died for us that when Satan and his demons come tempting and discouraging us, we do not fear. As we read earlier in James 4:7, when we resist the devil with the Word of God, prayer, righteous living, and our faith, he will flee.

Remember that Satan wants us to fear him. He wants us to run from him. We do not need to fear. As 1 John 4:4 reminds us, greater is he who is in us than he who is in the world. The power of the Holy Spirit in our hearts is far greater than any demonic temptations we may experience. We must remember that, as Christians, we do not need to fear demons.

What does this look like in practice? Let me give you a simple practical example to which all of us with children can relate. When my children were younger, and even into their teen years, there were times when they woke up in the middle of the night terrified. Was it just a bad dream or was it a demonic attack? I don't know. What I do know is how they were to respond. They were not to fear. Jesus inside of them is far greater than any demon outside of them. As Christians, they had nothing to fear. Jesus rendered Satan and his demons powerless on the cross. When they felt attacked, they were to use their spiritual weapons. They were to begin praying out loud. They were to read their Bible out loud. They were to resist the devil and tell him to leave out loud. Remember that demons cannot read your thoughts. Then after going back to Jesus, the Word of God, and prayer they could back to bed and sleep soundly the rest of the night.

Are Satans and his demons powerful? Yes; they are a terrible influence ruining lives and stirring up evil in this world. As sons and daughters of Jesus, we have nothing to fear. Satan and his demons were completely defeated by Jesus on the cross.



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