

SATAN AND DEMONS

Who is Satan?
What is he?
How powerful is he?
What authority does he have?
How does he try to attack and deceive?
How can I protect myself?



Who are Satan and his Demons?

In the beginning, God made all of creation (material and immaterial) and He said it was all “good.” (Gen. 1:31). Therefore, God did not create evil, however both men and angels possessed a will. This gave them the potential for evil.

Sometime between Gen. 1:31 and Gen. 3:1 (the appearance of Satan) there must have been a rebellion in the angelic world with many angels turning against God and becoming evil. 2 Peter 2:4 says, “*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.*” And Jude 6 says, “*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.”

Demons are simply fallen angels who are opposed to God and His people in the world.

Satan and demons use many different tactics against God’s people. They use lies (John 8:44), deception (Rev. 12:9), murder (Ps. 106:37; John 8:44), and every other kind of destructive activity to attempt to cause people to turn away from God and destroy themselves.

They will try every tactic to blind people to the gospel (2

Cor. 4:4) and keep them in bondage to things that hinder them from coming to God (Gal. 4:8).

They will also try to use temptation, doubt, guilt, fear, confusion, sickness, envy, pride, slander, or any other means possible to hinder a Christian’s witness and usefulness.

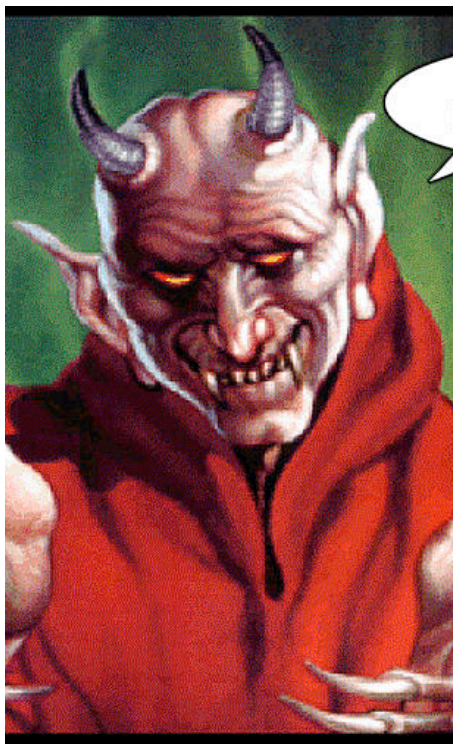
Satan and demons are NOT all-powerful or all-knowing. They cannot be in two places at once, they cannot read people’s thoughts, and they can’t know the future. The only foothold they have in believer’s lives is the ground that believers themselves give up.

Satan the Accuser

The Bible uses many names for Satan. He is called “the devil” (Only in the New Testament: Matt. 4:1; 13:39; Rev. 12:9), “the serpent” (Gen. 3:1, 2 Cor. 11:3), “Be-elzebul” (Mat. 12:24, Luke 11:15), “the ruler of this world” (John 12:31; 16:11), “the prince of the power of the air” (Eph. 2:2), and “the evil one” (Matt. 13:19, 1 John 2:13).

Satan was once a cherub (Angels tasked with protecting the glory and holiness of God). God speaks of the fall of Satan in Isa. 14:12-15 (right), and Ezekiel 28:13-19. Satan sought to glorify himself and take the throne of God. His pride was the sin that caused him to be cast from God’s presence.

Satan is often pictured as a monster in a red suit with horns and a tail. Yet, Satan and demons do not present themselves to people in this way. The New Testament tells us that Satan and his ministers try to present themselves deceitfully and shrewdly. 2 Cor. 11:14-15 says, *“And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.”*



“How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.” - Isaiah 14:12-15

As a former angel who was responsible for defending God’s holiness, Satan has become the ultimate accuser of mankind. In fact, the word *Satanas* means “slanderer.” Satan tempts men to sin and then accuses them before God. He accused Job of loving God’s blessings rather than God (Job. 1:9-10). He accused Joshua the high priest whom God had chosen (Zech. 3:1), and now he accuses the brethren before God day and night (Rev. 12:10).

Through the grace of God given in the gospel of redemption, all sin in

the believer’s life has been atoned and forgiven. Therefore, believers have overcome Satan and his accusations (1 John 2:13). However, this doesn’t stop him from making accusations.

The only power he has to disrupt and destroy the believer’s life is the power we give him by believing the lies he tells. When we doubt God’s word and promises, we give Satan a foothold to whisper lies into our ears. Believing him over God leads to despair, depression, and calamity.



Satan does not have the power to “make” believers do anything!

The Devil Made me Do it

It is very common to hear people say, “The devil is attacking me,” or “The devil is working on me.” In a sense, this may indeed be true. However, I often get a comical picture of Satan sitting on the curb saying, “I didn’t do it!”

The vast majority of the New Testament Epistles emphasizes telling believers not to sin but to live righteously. Very little emphasis is given to opposing demonic activity.

The believer’s own flesh is far more active in attempting to control them.

However, sin in the life of a Christian does open the door to the influence of Satan and demons. Paul says, *“Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: Neither give place to the devil.”* (Eph. 4:26-27)

Therefore, fighting sin is far more important than fighting Satan. Satan doesn’t have nearly as much power over us than our sinful flesh. The only foothold Satan can have in our lives is given to him by our flesh and our sin.

Can Christians be Demon Possessed?

Unfortunately, this is an all too common question which people ask. The Gospels show us several severe cases where demons are extremely active in the lives of people and this often scares believers into thinking that they themselves are subject to “demon possession.”

First of all, the term “demon possession” is an unfortunate term that is not really reflected in the Greek text. The Greek New Testament can speak of people who “have a demon” (Matt. 11:18; Luke 7:33; 8:27; John 7:20; 8:48), or it can speak of people who are suffering from demonic influence (*daimonizomai*), but it never uses language that suggests that a demon actually “possesses” someone.

More often than not, demon activity in a person’s life is simply bringing them into bondage to sinful emotions, actions, or thought processes. Demonic activity in a person’s life tends to be more akin to a “spirit” sitting on your shoulder tempting you and telling you lies. When we submit to these false beliefs, we sin by denying the truth of God’s word.

So, if “demon possessed” means completely under the control of an evil spirit, then the answer is absolutely not...believers cannot come under this kind of demonic influence. Rom. 6:14 makes it clear that sin cannot have dominion in the life of a believer. 1 John also

“Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.” - 1 John 4:4

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

assures us that the one in us is greater than the one in the world.

What we must understand is that Satan and his demons do not possess the power to usurp God’s will. Rom. 8:28 says that all things work together for the believer’s good. That means that nothing comes into the believer’s life that does not pass through God’s hands first.

In the case of the most horrific attack by Satan in the Bible, the case of Job’s trials. Satan had no authority to wreak havoc in Job’s life until God allowed him. He cannot simply begin destroying a believer unless God allows it for a purpose. Forget what you have seen in hollywood movies. He cannot bite you in your sleep, rattle pans in your kitchen, or kill your family pets. He simply sits on your shoulder and whispers lies into your ear, hoping that your faith in God’s word will be shaken and you will believe his deception.

Satan doesn't have the power to force believers to do anything. All he can do is tempt us and lie to us. It is our job to resist him in faith and obedience to God's will.





“Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.” - Luke 10:19-20



Jesus has give us authority

Jesus gives all believer authority to rebuke demons and command them to leave. (Luke 9:1; 10:17, 19; Acts 16:18, 2 Co. 10:3-4, Eph. 6:11-12, James 4:7; 1 Peter 5:8-9).

We have this authority 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). Therefore, when Satan attacks the believer, he is attacking God's own children (Gal. 3:26). We are joint-heirs with Christ and possess the authority of our Father in heaven to rebuke them in the name of Jesus.

We must remember that Satan and his demons have much less power than the Holy Spirit who dwells inside every believer. There is therefore no need to be afraid of them. (1 John 4:4, 2 Ti. 1:7, Phi 1:28, Eph. 6:16, 2 Co. 10:4, 1 John 5:18). Philippians 1:28 says, *“And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God.”*

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. 10:3-4)

The one thing that we cannot do is allow the truth of demonic activity remove our focus from God's power to protect and sustain us. It is common for people to go way off the deep end, thinking they must “deal” with everything as a demonic force. People like this see demonic activity in everything. This would be focusing on the evil rather than the good.

Our job is to grow in holiness, serve God among His people, and make Him known to a world of lost people. “Fighting demons” has distracted many people from the true calling of the believer. They should be viewed like pestering insects. We don't focus on them...we simply swat them and move on with our work.

Study Questions

1. Should you feel fear at the prospect of encountering demonic activity? Why or why not?

2. What are some things the Bible says that specifically address these feelings of fear? (2 Ti. 1:7, 1 John 4:4, Luke 10:19-20)

3. Are there any areas of sin in your own life now that might give a foothold to demonic activity? What are they and what would the Lord have you do with respect to that sin?

4. What are the dangers of becoming too interested in or too deeply involved in the kind of “ministry” that focuses on demons?

5. How can you guard yourself from becoming too focuses on the reality of evil rather than focused on God’s goodness and protection?

6. The greatest weapon we have against God’s enemies is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. How can you use the truth of the gospel to battle the world, the flesh, and the devil?



The Devil has already been defeated...He is simply flailing around until he dies!