

Set the Captives Free

Eric Ross / General

Exorcism; Demon Possession

Notes

Haines, D. (2018). The Spiritual World. In M. Ward, J. Parks, B. Ellis, & T. Hains (Eds.), *Lexham Survey of Theology*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

Emadi, S. (2018). Demons. In M. Ward, J. Parks, B. Ellis, & T. Hains (Eds.), *Lexham Survey of Theology*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

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The Spirit Realm

God created the universe, and everything that is.

He created the material realm that we live in and know through our senses.

He also created in the spiritual realm where he exists, other creatures. The ones we hear most about are angels and demons.

There are two armies of spiritual beings.

- "angels" are understood to be faithful ministers of God.

- "demons" are said to have rejected God and opposed themselves to him.

Angels

It appears that all the angels that have ever existed, and which will ever exist, were created at the same time

It would appear that there are an incredible number of angels, as the Scriptures describe their numbers as “innumerable”

Hebrews 12:22 LEB

²² But you have come to Mount Zion, and to the city of the living God, to the heavenly Jerusalem, and to tens of thousands of angels, to the festal gathering and as “myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands”

Revelation 5:11 LEB

¹¹ And I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and of the living creatures and of the elders, and their number was ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands times thousands,

Mark 5:9, 15

Angels form a clear hierarchy and are and divided into classes.

Ephesians 1:21 LEB

²¹ above all rule and authority and power and lordship and every name named, not only in this age but also in the coming one,

Ephesians 3:10 LEB

¹⁰ in order that the many-sided wisdom of God might be made known now to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly *places* through the church,

1 Peter 3:22 LEB

²² who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, with angels and authorities and powers having been subjected to him.

Demons

Demons were once angels who rebelled against God and followed Satan into disobedience and sin

As with angels, the exact number of demons is unknown, however, says that the total number of angels exceeds the total number of demons since in

Revelation 12:4 LEB

⁴ And his tail swept away a third of the stars from heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, in

order that whenever she gave birth to her child he could devour *it*.

Only a third of the angels followed Satan's rebellion.

Demons are in the World

Demons are fallen angels who have rebelled against God and continue to propagate evil in the world.

Revelation 12:9 LEB

⁹ And the great dragon was thrown down, the ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world. He was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.

Though the demons follow after Satan, they are still ultimately subject to God's sovereign will (see Job 1:6-12, Job 2:1-10, Mark 5:1-20)

Jesus encountered a number of demons but did not forbid them from the earth. They have a certain authority for now.

Matthew 8:29 LEB

²⁹ And behold, they cried out, saying, "What do you have to do with us, Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?"

Even though they have a place on the earth for now, demons are subject to God's authority through Jesus Christ

Matthew 8:16 LEB

¹⁶ Now *when it* was evening, they brought to him many who were demon-possessed, and he expelled the spirits with a word. And he healed all those who were sick,

Now, the primary activities in the world are to take and maintain dominion which they do through warfare with the angels and man.

Daniel 10:13 LEB

¹³ But *the* prince of *the* kingdom of Persia stood before me *for* twenty-one days. And look, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to assist me, and I left *him* there beside *the* king of *the* Persians.

Demons War With Man

We have a battle in the world, against these demonic forces.

Ephesians 6:12 LEB

¹² because our struggle is not against blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.

Demons War With Angels

There was warfare in heaven and the angels prevailed in

Revelation 12:7–8 LEB

⁷ And there was war in heaven; Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back.

⁸ And they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them *any* longer in heaven.

Demons Can Possess Humans

Like the angels, demons are intelligent beings who possess great power. Though demons are evil spirits who are invisible to humans, they sometimes appear as possessing humans and speaking through them

Luke 4:33 LEB

³³ And in the synagogue there was a man who had the spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice,

Demons possess people to do their will.

Mark 5:3 LEB

³ who lived among the tombs. And no one was able to bind him any longer, not even with a chain,

Demons are thinking and intelligent beings so we are warned in

Ephesians 6:11 LEB

¹¹ Put on the full armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the stratagems of the devil,

Demons Deceive the World

Demons intend to deceive people and pull them away from the faith. Their lies blind people to spiritual truth.

1 Timothy 4:1 LEB

¹ Now the Spirit explicitly says that in the last times some will depart from the

faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons,

The End of Demons

At the return of Christ, demons will be thrown into the lake of fire and will endure God's wrath for eternity for their rebellion against him

Revelation 20:10 LEB

¹⁰ And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulphur, where the beast and the false prophet also *are*, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

How Do You Recognize Demon Possession?

Demons Affecting Physical Senses

These kinds of spirits prevent people from communicating. They may be blind, or deaf, or unable to speak or some combination of these.

Blind and Mute

In Matthew 12, the man is described as being blind and mute. In Luke 11, the man is simply said to be mute. The root cause though, was this demon.

Matthew 12:22 LEB

²² Then a demon-possessed man *who was* blind and mute was brought to him. And he healed him so that the *man who was* mute could speak and see.

Luke doesn't describe the symptoms of the man, but the effects of the demon. It prevented the man from speaking.

Luke 11:14 LEB

¹⁴ And he was expelling a mute demon. Now it happened that *when* the demon came out, the man who had been mute spoke, and the crowds were astonished.

Deaf and Unable to Speak

This was an adult man. Without the ability to hear or speak, he had limited ability to work and care for himself.

Mark 7:32 **LEB**

³² And they brought to him a man who was deaf and had difficulty speaking, and they were imploring him that he would place his hand on him.

Unclean Spirits

Unclean spirits affect behavior, they talk back.

Unclean in the Synagogue

The unclean spirit cried out in public in

Mark 1:23–24 **LEB**

²³ And so then there was a man in their synagogue with an unclean spirit, and he cried out,

²⁴ saying, “Leave us alone, Jesus the Nazarene! Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!”

Unclean in Desert Places

This is described as an “unclean spirit” in Mark 5:2. Here are some of the symptoms, the ways he was affected by these demons as described in

Mark 5:2–5 **LEB**

² And *as* he was getting out of the boat, immediately from the tombs a man with an unclean spirit went to meet him,

³ who lived among the tombs. And no one was able to bind him any longer, not even with a chain,

⁴ because he had often been bound with shackles and chains, and the chains had been torn apart by him, and the shackles had been shattered. And no one was strong *enough* to subdue him.

⁵ And during every night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was crying out and cutting himself with stones.

Luke 8:27 **LEB**

²⁷ And *as* he got out on the land, a certain man from the town met *him* who had

demons and for a considerable time had not worn clothes and did not live in a house, but among the tombs.

Luke 8:29 LEB

²⁹ For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. (For it had seized him many times, and he was bound with chains and shackles *and* was guarded, and breaking the bonds he would be driven by the demon into the deserted places.)

Matthews account includes two demon possessed men which has confused some, but we wouldn't think it odd to find several violent gang members together would we?

Matthew 8:28 LEB

²⁸ And *when* he came to the other side, to the region of the Gadarenes, two demon-possessed men coming from among the tombs met him, very violent, so that no one was able to pass by along that road.

Affects on the Man

Here is the summary:

- "he was bound with chains and shackles and was guarded", "no one was strong *enough* to subdue him", he was "breaking the bonds", "very violent, so that no one was able to pass by along that road"
- he "did not live in a house", "he would be driven by the demon into the deserted places", "every night and day (he was) among the tombs and on the mountains"
- "he was crying out"
- he was "cutting himself"
- "for a considerable time had not worn clothes"
- "it (the demons) had seized him many times"

Affects on the Region

Limited Travel

This man hindered travel so that "no one was able to pass by along that road".

Unclean Pigs

We might also miss the grazing herd of 2,000 pigs in this region which was along the road between the sea shore and the town. A herd this size, grazing freely in the open may cover an area the size of thirty football fields. It was not likely inviting as an entrance to the city.

Child Possessed

Jesus responded to parents requests to heal, deliver, their children.

Mother for her Daughter

This woman came to Jesus even though she was not a Jew. Jesus knew the separation between them and first responded to the cultural barrier.

Matthew 15:22 LEB

²² And behold, a Canaanite woman from that district came *and* cried out, saying, "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David! My daughter *is* severely possessed by a demon!"

Mark 7:25 LEB

²⁵ But immediately a woman whose young daughter was possessed by an unclean spirit, *when she* heard about him, came *and* fell down at his feet,

Father for his Son

This man had come to the disciples and they were not able to help him. Now, the father speaks to Jesus in

Mark 9:17 LEB

¹⁷ And one *individual* from the crowd answered him, "Teacher, I brought to you my son who has a spirit that makes him mute.

In this case, the child was mute, but also had severe seizures in

Mark 9:18 LEB

¹⁸ And whenever it seizes him, it throws him down and he foams at the mouth and grinds his teeth and becomes paralyzed. And I told your disciples that they should expel it, and they were not able *to do so*.

A Spirit of Divination

This kind of spirit is manipulative, they seem to be telling you truth, they seem to be doing good for you, but they are only using you for what you can give them.

Acts 16:16 LEB

¹⁶ And it happened that *as* we were going to the place of prayer, a certain female slave who had a spirit of divination met us, who was bringing a large profit to her owners *by* fortune-telling.

As she followed Paul and his people and seemed to be advertising for them.

Acts 16:17 LEB

¹⁷ She followed Paul and us *and* was crying out, saying, "These men are slaves of the Most High God, who are proclaiming to you the way of salvation!"

But there was something wrong. What she was doing didn't bring peace for Paul, instead, it began to annoy him in

Acts 16:18 LEB

¹⁸ And she was doing this for many days. But Paul, becoming greatly annoyed and turning around, said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her!" And it came out immediately.

How Were They Changed?

He Could Speak and See

After the demon was expelled, "the *man who was* mute could speak and see".

Matthew 12:22 LEB

²² Then a demon-possessed man *who was* blind and mute was brought to him. And he healed him so that the *man who was* mute could speak and see.

It was after "the demon came out, the man who had been mute spoke".

Luke 11:14 LEB

¹⁴ And he was expelling a mute demon. Now it happened that *when* the demon came out, the man who had been mute spoke, and the crowds were astonished.

In His Right Mind

These people were not sick and did not have any infirmity and were whole after they were freed from demonic influence.

Clothed and in His Right Mind

There wasn't anything wrong with the man. All of the symptoms were gone. No one needed to guard him any more. The region was safe for travellers.

Mark 5:15 LEB

¹⁵ And they came to Jesus and saw the demon-possessed man sitting *there* clothed and in his right mind—the one who had had the legion—and they were afraid.

The herdsmen reported that their herd of pigs had been killed, had rushed into the sea at Jesus word, and they came to see for themselves. They didn't understand what had happened so they responded asking Jesus to leave in

Mark 5:17 LEB

¹⁷ And they began to urge him to depart from their region.

There was a negative financial impact for the herdsmen, but the impact for everyone else was that the road to the city was open. No more fear for travellers. No more potential contamination from roaming pigs.

Children Were Healed

Jesus responded to parents requests to heal, deliver, their children.

The Mothers Daughter

Her daughter was healed in

Matthew 15:28 LEB

²⁸ Then Jesus answered *and* said to her, "O woman, your faith *is* great! Let it be done for you as you want." And her daughter was healed from that hour.

The Fathers Son

Jesus took the child by the hand and raised him up whole.

Mark 9:27 LEB

²⁷ But Jesus took hold of his hand *and* raised him up, and he stood up.

A Spirit of Divination

She had said Paul was a slave of God, she was the one that had been enslaved. She was owned by these other men and they had used her for their own gain.

Acts 16:19 LEB

¹⁹ But *when* her owners saw that their hope of profit was gone, they seized Paul and Silas *and* dragged *them* into the marketplace before the rulers.

She was free to live life as God intended, to be a woman

How Was the Demon Cast Out?

Demons are cast out by speaking to them with the right authority. They are cast out in the name of Jesus.

Those Affecting Physical Senses

These kinds of demons, in the extreme, also cause convulsions.

Blind and Mute

These accounts give us the symptoms in the man and the change after he was free. But what specifically did Jesus do?

He Healed Him

The account in Matthew only says that “He healed him” in

Matthew 12:22 LEB

²² Then a demon-possessed man *who was* blind and mute was brought to him. And he healed him so that the *man who was* mute could speak and see.

By the Spirit of God

But when challenged by the Pharisees, Jesus responds in

Matthew 12:28 LEB

²⁸ But if I expel demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you!

This work was done by the Spirit of God.

The Demon Came Out

In Luke's account, it says "the demon came out"

Luke 11:14 LEB

¹⁴ And he was expelling a mute demon. Now it happened that *when* the demon came out, the man who had been mute spoke, and the crowds were astonished.

By the Finger of God

In Luke's account, Jesus also responds in

Luke 11:20 LEB

²⁰ But if I expel demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you!

Jesus is saying that expelling a demon only requires the power of the finger of God. And, if there is power to expel a demon then, that must also mean that the Kingdom of God is here!

Deaf and Unable to Speak

In this instance, there was a combination of physical contact and as in every case, a spoken word, "Be opened"

Mark 7:33-35 LEB

³³ And he took him away from the crowd by himself *and* put his fingers into his ears, and *after* spitting, he touched his tongue.

³⁴ And looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, "*Ephphatha!*" (that is, "Be opened!").

³⁵ And his ears were opened and his difficulty in speaking was removed and he began to speak normally.

Unclean Spirits

These demons recognized Jesus and reacted in

Mark 5:6 LEB

⁶ And *when he* saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and knelt down before him.

By Saying Come Out

Jesus began by telling the unclean spirit to come out.

Mark 5:8 LEB

⁸ (For he was saying to him, “Come out of the man, unclean spirit!”)

But these spirits responded in

Mark 5:7 LEB

⁷ And crying out with a loud voice he said, “What have I to do with you, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I implore you by God, do not torment me!”

By Asking What is Your Name

When the demon did not come out, Jesus asked its name. There was no question about what was required, this demon must come out.

Mark 5:9 LEB

⁹ And he was asking him “What is your name?” And he said to him, “My name is Legion, because we are many.”

But Jesus had not told the demon where to go, and the the Legion, seemed to have a right to stay in this region and was in

Mark 5:10 LEB

¹⁰ And he was imploring him many *times* that he would not send them out of the region.

By Giving A Destination

Jesus didn't have this idea to leave the man and enter the pigs, the demons did and in

Mark 5:12 LEB

¹² and they implored him, saying, “Send us to the pigs so that we may enter into them.”

Jesus gave them permission in

Mark 5:13 LEB

¹³ And he permitted them. And the unclean spirits came out *and* entered into the pigs, and the herd—about two thousand—rushed headlong down the steep slope into the sea and were drowned in the sea.

They could have remained embodied in the pigs, but their nature drove them

immediately into the sea. They ended up where Jesus had commanded them to go, they were out of the man and had no corporeal body to inhabit.

Child Possessed

Jesus responded to parents requests to heal, deliver, their children.

Mother for her Daughter

Jesus responds to the mothers faith in

Matthew 15:28 LEB

²⁸ Then Jesus answered *and* said to her, "O woman, your faith *is* great! Let it be done for you as you want." And her daughter was healed from that hour.

Father for his Son

When this child came into Jesus presence, it didn't cry out as the unclean spirits did, it immediately caused convulsions in

Jesus first spoke to the father in

Mark 9:23 LEB

²³ But Jesus said to him, "If you are able! All *things are* possible for the one who believes!"

and the father responded in

Mark 9:24 LEB

²⁴ Immediately the father of the child cried out *and* said, "I believe! Help my unbelief!"

Now, Jesus speaks to the demon in

Mark 9:25 LEB

²⁵ Now *when* Jesus saw that a crowd was running together, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "Mute and deaf spirit, I command you, come out of him, and enter into him no more!"

This spirit tormented the boy all the more but it came out, screaming and causing convulsions in

Mark 9:26 LEB

²⁶ And it came out, screaming and convulsing *him* greatly, and he became as if *he* were dead, so that most of *them* said, "He has died!"

A Spirit of Divination

This spirit came out at Paul's word, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her!" in

Acts 16:18 LEB

¹⁸ And she was doing this for many days. But Paul, becoming greatly annoyed and turning around, said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her!" And it came out immediately.

There was no resistance, no fighting, no need for her to have faith, but she did need to walk away from these men and begin a new life.

Conclusion

Let me be clear, I am not asking you to go and find demons in the people around you. As Christians, our focus is not on demons, it is on Jesus Christ. So what I ask of you is live as Jesus gave us example, love people, teach them gently, and seek peace.

Do You Recognize Demonic Influence?

Before we finish though, I will ask, Do you recognize any of these demonic influences in your life?

Do you have trouble seeing, speaking, hearing?

I command that spirit to come out in Jesus name.

Are you Tormented, Angry, Driven, Cutting

That unclean spirit has no right to you.

I command you to come out and go to dry desert places in Jesus name.

Do You have a Child That is Tormented?

You have authority over their life as their parent. Do you believe?

In the name of Jesus I command that spirit to come out in Jesus name.

Have You Dabbled with Divination?

If you have done any kind of fortune telling, Tarot, Tea Leaves, ... or had these done for you, renounce them right now for what they are, rooted in demonic possession.

For you demonic spirits in the sound of my voice:

I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out!

Connect with Believers

Demons are users, usurpers that will take advantage. They only have the power you allow them to have so once you know and have been delivered, don't have anything to do with them.

Here is the warning from Jesus in

Luke 11:24–26 LEB

²⁴ "Whenever an unclean spirit has gone out of a person, it travels through waterless places searching for rest, and does not find *it*. It says, 'I will return to my house from which I came out.' ²⁵ And *when it* arrives it finds *the house* swept and put in order. ²⁶ Then it goes and brings along seven other spirits more evil than itself, and *they* go in *and* live there. And the last *state* of that person becomes worse than the first!"

Prayer of Salvation

Eric's Public Messages Prayer of Salvation

Pray: If you have been listening and have never accepted Jesus Christ as the Lord of your life, simply say this prayer with me.

"Dear God,
I know I'm a sinner, and I ask for your forgiveness.
I believe Jesus Christ is Your Son. I believe that He died
for my sin and that you raised Him to life.
I want to trust Him as my Savior and follow Him as Lord,
from this day forward. Guide my life and help me to do your will.

I pray this in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen."

If you prayed with me, I want to seal that with a short prayer for you.

"Father,

I thank you for these that have accepted Christ today. Lead them by your Holy Spirit to a local Church where they can learn more about you and your plan for their life, In Jesus name, Amen

Prayer of Commission

For those of us that are Christians, we have a commission to preach the gospel of the kingdom and as we do this, we will set the captives free.

Pray with me.

"Father,

I come to you in the name of Jesus Christ.

Father, I know it is your desire that all would be saved and come to know the truth.

I commit myself to this work of ministry and ask you to order my steps. Give me wisdom and understanding, lead me by your Holy Spirit to those that are ready to hear the love of Jesus Christ. Prepare me as an able minister in every situation in Jesus name, Amen."

For those of you that prayed with me, please go to prayny.org and add a prayer request so we can connect with you.

I would also like to invite you to join our daily devotional at tellone.org.

End Notes

Recommended Resources

- Summa Theologiae (Aquinas), I, q.46 a.3
- On Spiritual Creatures (Aquinas).

- The Belgic Confession, Art. XII.
- Systematic Theology (Berkhof), pt. 1 (The Works of God), ch. IV.
- The Moody Handbook of Theology (Enns), pt. 2, ch. 22.
- Christian Theology (Erickson), pt. 4, ch. 21.
- Systematic Theology (Geisler), Vol. II, ch. 20.
- Systematic Theology (Berkhof), 148–150.
- Concise Theology (Packer), 67–68.
- Systematic Theology (Frame), 775–780.
- New Dictionary of Biblical Theology (Twelftree), 796–802.
- Christian Theology (Erickson), 414–420.
- Systematic Theology (Hodge), Vol. I, 643–648.
- Systematic Theology (Grudem), 412–436.

Related Topics

- Angels
- Satan
- Demons
- The Material World
- The New Heavens and Earth
- The Doctrine of the Triune God
- Creation

See Also

- God creates the heavens and the earth
- Heaven
- Demon

- Spiritual Warfare

Citations

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