

DEMONISM & RELATED MATTERS

Text: Mark 5:1-13; Acts 19:13-20

INTRO: Demon possession is an interesting but much misunderstood subject. Many & varied claims are made by men & women re this subject. All we can really know about this subject is what is revealed in the Bible. There are some questions the Bible does not clearly answer, but there is no other source to which we can go for authoritative teaching on the subject.

I. THE REALITY OF DEMONS. NOTE: The word should always have been translated demons, not devils. MK 5:1-13.

II. OTHER NAMES OR DESIGNATIONS.

- A. Evil spirit, Luke 8:2
- B. Unclean spirit, MK 5:12-13
- C. Foul spirit (KJV), MK 9:25 (NKJ: unclean spirit)
- D. Spirit of divination, Acts 16:16
- E. Familiar spirit, Lev. 20:6
- F. (Possibly) Devil's angels, angels who sinned, MT 25:41

III. CHARACTERISTICS OF DEMONS.

- A. They were in league with Satan.
- B. They were known to possess men, women, boys, & girls.
MK 5; LK 8:2; MK 9:17-27; MK 7:25
- C. They were able to possess persons against & contrary to the will of the person possessed. Demon possession had nothing to do with being a great sinner.
- D. Demons apparently could come & go at will.
Luke 9:39; 11:24
- E. They were able to speak out thru the mouth of the person possessed, MK 5:9
- F. They had super-human strength, some stronger than others.
MK 5:4; Acts 19:16; MK 9:28-29

G. They possessed knowledge not available to men, MK 5:7
This proves demon possession was not the same
as insanity. Acts 16, spirit of divination, etc.

IV. THEY WERE ASSOCIATED WITH PAGAN RELIGIONS AND FALSE DOCTRINES.

They shall no more offer their sacrifices to demons, after
whom they have played the harlot... (Lev. 17:7)

They sacrificed to demons, not to God, to gods they did not
know, to new gods, new arrivals. (Deut 32:17)

[Jeroboam] appointed for himself priests for the high places,
for the demons & the calf idols which he had made
(2 Chron. 11:15)

They even sacrificed their sons & their daughters to demons.
(Psalm 106:37)

1 Cor. 10:20-21; 1 Tim. 4:1

V. THE EFFECTS DEMONS HAD ON THOSE WHO WERE POSSESSED.

- A. Caused some to be deaf & mute, MK 9:25
- B. Caused some to be blind, MT 12:22
- C. Caused some to be insane, raving, wild, MK 5:5
- D. Caused some to have super-human strength, MK 5:4
- E. Caused some to have convulsions, foam at the mouth, etc.
MK 9:17-18

VI. SOME FALSE IDEAS ABOUT DEMONS.

- A. That they could perform real miracles, 2 Thess 2:9 pseudo
NOTE: Would defeat the purpose for real miracles.
- B. That all sickness was a result of demon possession.
READ MARK 1:32-34
- C. That demon possession was simply an old fashioned way of
describing mental illness, MK 1:34; 5:7
- D. That demons could possess a house, furniture, etc.
“Obsession.” Not a hint of this in Scripture.

E. That demon possession is to be identified with sinfulness & moral weakness. "Demon rum," etc. Word not used this way in the Bible. Demon possession is always treated as a sickness, never as sinfulness. The possessed person is never scolded nor rebuked for allowing himself to be possessed. LK 8:2.

F. Josephus & others have contended that demons were the souls of the unrighteous dead. LK 16:27-31 would seem to dispel such a thought.

VII. THE BIBLE SUPPORTS THE CONCLUSION THAT GOD PERMITTED THE DEMONS TO EXERCISE THEIR POWER OVER MEN IN ORDER THAT CHRIST & HIS APOSTLES COULD OVERPOWER THEM & SHOW THAT THE POWER OF GOD IS FAR GREATER THAN THAT OF SATAN.

A. There is no one verse that will prove this contention, but I believe its truth is implied when the Bible accounts are taken together as a whole. READ LK 11:15-22

B. The principle is illustrated in the case of the man born blind, John 9:1-4.

C. Christ & His apostles cast out demons, healed the sick & raised the dead to show God's approval of what they taught, MK 16:20; Heb. 2:3-4.

D. We do not need such power today to prove our message is from God. IF our message is from God, we can cite book, chapter & verse, 2 Tim. 3:16-17.

VIII. TODAY SATAN HAS BEEN BOUND, HIS ANGELS ARE IN CHAINS OF DARKNESS AWAITING THE FINAL JUDGMENT.

A. While Christ was casting out demons, He was in the process of binding Satan, LK 11:15-22.

B. Satan's power to possess the bodies of unwilling servants became a thing of the past when God's revelation to man was complete.

1. The demons knew in Jesus' day their time was limited, MT 8:29; LK 8:31

2. The Bible tells us when unclean spirits would cease to trouble God's people.

"It shall be in that day," says the Lord of hosts, that I will cut off the names of the idols from the land, & they shall no longer be remembered. I will also cause the prophets & the unclean spirit to depart from the land" (Zech 13:2).

1 Cor. 13:8-10

3. By the time the NT revelation had become complete, God had not spared "the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell & delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment (2 Pet 2:4).

4. Tho all this is true, we need to realize that Satan still has the power of influence. And tho he is not capable of possessing unwilling servants as he once did, he will use every device, every form of deceit, to make us willingly submit to his wishes, 1 Pet 5:8; 1 Cor 10:13; James 4:7.

Springhill, LA, May 26, 1974

La Porte, TX, February 8, 1976

Exton, PA, November 9, 1986

Lancaster County, PA, December 21, 1986

Exton, PA, August 19, 1990

Shiloh, Mexia, TX, December 29, 1991

Susquehanna, Marietta, PA, February 11, 2001

Susquehanna, Marietta, PA, February 1, 2004