
The Doctrine of Angels

Demons

Various Passages

Satan often succeeds in his purposes because people either do not believe in his existence or believe him to be more powerful than he really is. Hollywood has contributed to both approaches by some of their films, either by portraying him as a comic figure or as a being who has equal power to God.

Folklore has done the same with demons, Satan's followers. Folktales have taken truths of scripture and turned them into fodder for fanciful tales. Even those who should be grounded in scripture have strange ideas about demons. Consider the following Yiddish folktale.

“Neither Eat Nor Drink What A Demon Offers

*It once happened that a number of Hasidim driving in a carriage came to a town and asked the local **moyel**, the ritual circumciser, to accompany them to a village for a few hours. The unsuspecting **moyel** went with them. They drove on and on, on and on. The trip seemed endless. At last they drove into a dense and very dark forest. In its midst stood a fine house into which they led the **moyel**. As he was examining the child to be circumcised, the newly delivered mother said, in a whisper: “Whatever you do, don't eat or drink anything here or you'll be lost. These people are demons, and everything you see here is meant to deceive you. Long ago I was traveling when they handed me a drink of water, and from that time on they had such power over me I could not escape.”*

*Well, he circumcised the child, after which he was led into a grand hall royally furnished and decorated, with a table full of good things to eat. But when the **moyel** refused to eat or drink anything, the house suddenly disappeared. It was weeks until, footsore and weary, he found his way back to his home town.”¹*

As I have been noting, this series is a pause between biblical studies. In these breaks we review some of the basic doctrines of the church. In this three-part series we have been looking at the doctrine of angels.

Today's lesson is the third of three parts. This morning we will look at Demons. These studies are more in the nature of surveys or introductions to the subjects as opposed to in-depth examinations.

My primary source continues to be Through the Bible in One Year.² Other books you might want to refer to include Harold Lindsell's The World, The Flesh, & The Devil, and Donald Grey Barnhouse's, The Invisible War.

¹ Weinreich, Beatrice Silverman, ed., Yiddish Folktales, “Neither Eat Nor Drink What A Demon Offers,” Pantheon Books, New York, NY, 1988, p. 356.

² Stringfellow, Alan B., ed., Through the Bible in One Year, Vol. 3, Great Truths of the Bible, Copyright © 1981 by Virgil W. Hensley, Inc., Publisher, Tulsa, OK, p. 73-91.

I Introduction: Biblically there are two classes of angels. Stringfellow calls them “holy” angels and fallen angels. The “leader” of the fallen angels is Satan. We have looked at the first group and at Satan. Now we will consider the fallen angels. We have already seen much regarding their creation, as well as their limitations (see the study on Satan) in the previous two studies. Because Satan is limited in areas of omnipotence; omniscience; and omnipresence, his work is carried out by the fallen angels, better known as demons.

Just as angels are involved in our lives as God’s ministers, demons can be involved in our lives as Satan’s ministers of destruction. In his introduction to this study Stringfellow notes:

“ This lesson shall deal with all of us—where we are, what we have felt in the past, what we face each day because Satan is always trying to entrap us. The person who knows Christ has sufficient strength to overcome Satan because “greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world” (1 John 4:4). This does not eliminate the temptation which is ever present, appealing to the carnal nature.

The person who does not know Christ as Lord and Savior is constantly seeking the things of this world. “All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world” (1 John 2:16). They are open to the power of Satan and his emissaries.”³

II The Fall of Angels: Interestingly enough there are two groups of fallen angels identified in scripture. These are the fallen and the chained angels.

A The Chained: This group was not only cast out of heaven, but they were cast into “Tartarus,” that is the pit of darkness. We read of this group in 2 Peter 2:4.

“ For if 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” (KJV).

“ And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own home — these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day” (Jude 1:6).

“ Tartarus is only the temporary prison; their final end will be the “lake of fire” (Matt 25:41), the eternal abode of Satan, demons, and unsaved human beings.”⁴

“ Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels’” (Matthew 25:41).

We do not know what these angels did that was so uniquely vile that God chained them after they fell. Some speculate these were the “Sons of God” in Genesis 6:4 and that they slept with the “daughters of men.” This position, while popular among some, is simply wild speculation with no scriptural foundation for it. There is no explanation as to why these angels have been locked away. Dr. McGee states:

“ Apparently, the fallen angels are divided into two groups. The group whose rebellion was so great is evidently locked up, incarcerated, and has no freedom of movement any longer.”⁵

³ Ibid., p. 87.

⁴ Douglas, J. D. and Merrill C. Tenney, editors, NIV Bible Dictionary, Zondervan Interactive Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI, 1989.

⁵ McGee, J. Vernon, Thru the Bible with J. Vernon McGee, Vol. 5, “1 Corinthians - Revelation,” Thomas Nelson Inc., Nashville, TN 1982, p.855.

Referring back to Genesis 6, Stringfellow presents what I believe is the most reasonable understanding of the passage.

*“ The reference in Genesis 6:2-6 has to do with the breakdown of the separation of the godly line of Seth by intermarriage with the godless line of Cain.”*⁶

Stringfellow points out something I hadn't noticed before. In scripture the only time we see an angel taking on human form is when it is a “holy” angel sent by God.⁷ While this doesn't preclude demons taking on human form, there is no biblical support for this occurring.

B The Free: This second group of fallen angels are defined as free in contrast to the chained. These are the beings we call demons. They are Satan's minions and carry out the work of the Satanic kingdom.

Keep in mind then, when we talk about Satan doing this and Satan doing that, we are frequently talking about his kingdom and therefore demons. It is simply easier to use his name for all things done by his realm.

III The Power of Fallen Angels: Here I will turn to the NIV dictionary for a definition of demons. Then we will look at them in detail.

*“ As purely spiritual beings or personalities, demons operate above the laws of the natural realm and are invisible and incorporeal. ... As spirit personalities, demons have an intellectual nature through which they possess superhuman knowledge. Scripture features the shrewdness of demons. ... In their moral nature all demons (as fallen angels) are evil and depraved, in distinction to the good spirits (the unfallen angels), who are sinless.”*⁸

A Their Names Describe Their Job Functions: The word demon itself means “knowing” or “to know” and refers to their “wisdom.” In this context Stringfellow points out that the word is erroneously translated devils by the KJV. Devil is always simply another name of Satan. Following are some of the name given to demons.

1. Familiar Spirits:

“ Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them: I am the LORD your God.” ... And the soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits, and after wizards, to go a whoring after them, I will even set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people” (Leviticus 19:31; 20:6 KJV).

2. Unclean Spirits:

“ And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him. And they

⁶ Stringfellow, p. 88.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Douglas.

were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him” (Mark 1:23-27).

3. Evil Spirits:

“At that very time Jesus cured many who had diseases, sicknesses and evil spirits, and gave sight to many who were blind” (Luke 7:21).

4. Deceiving Spirits:

“The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons” (1 Timothy 4:1).

5. Foul Spirits:

“When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him” (Mark 9:25 KJV).

B Their Activities Describe Their Powers: If their names are illustrations of their jobs/work, then these in turn are illustrations of their powers. Keep in mind that their activities are done in conjunction with Satan.

1. Satan and demons work against the church.

“... you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient” (Ephesians 2:2).

2. Satan and demons work to control principalities, powers; and they are the rulers of darkness.⁹

“For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms” (Ephesians 6:12).

3. Demons can possess the bodies of unbelievers.

“They went across the lake to the region of the Gerasenes. When Jesus got out of the boat, a man with an evil spirit came from the tombs to meet him. This man lived in the tombs, and no one could bind him any more, not even with a chain. For he had often been chained hand and foot, but he tore the chains apart and broke the irons on his feet. No one was strong enough to subdue him. Night and day among the tombs and in the hills he would cry out and cut himself with stones. When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and fell on his knees in front of him. He shouted at the top of his voice, “What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? Swear to God that you won’t torture me!” For Jesus had said to him, “Come out of

⁹ Stringfellow, p. 89.

this man, you evil spirit!” Then Jesus asked him, “What is your name?” “My name is Legion,” he replied, “for we are many.”” (Mark 5:1-9).

4. Demons possessing humans can cause them to suffer physical ailments.

“ While they were going out, a man who was demon-possessed and could not talk was brought to Jesus.” ... “Then they brought him a demon-possessed man who was blind and mute, and Jesus healed him, so that he could both talk and see” (Matthew 9:32; 12:22).

“ When Jesus saw that a crowd was running to the scene, he rebuked the evil spirit. “You deaf and mute spirit,” he said, “I command you, come out of him and never enter him again.” The spirit shrieked, convulsed him violently and came out. The boy looked so much like a corpse that many said, “He’s dead.” But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him to his feet, and he stood up. After Jesus had gone indoors, his disciples asked him privately, “Why couldn’t we drive it out?” He replied, “This kind can come out only by prayer.”” (Mark 9:25-29).

5. Demons can encourage people to move further into the sinful ways they have chosen.

“ You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father’s desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies” (John 8:44).

6. Demons can speak through the humans they possess.

“ Then Jesus asked him, “What is your name?” “My name is Legion,” he replied, “for we are many.”” (Mark 5:9).

7. Demons are often the power behind idols.

“ Once when we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit by which she predicted the future. She earned a great deal of money for her owners by fortune-telling” (Acts 16:16).

Demons are behind many of the so-called powers we are seeing even in our society. The following are some of those practices and their related references:

Sorcery, (Acts 8:9-11); Witchcraft, (Galatians 5:20); Necromancy, (Isaiah 8:19, Deuteronomy 18:10-12); Astrologers, (Daniel 1:20; 2:2; 4:7); Divination, (Ezekiel 13:6-7; Acts 16:16); Magician, (Daniel 1:20, Exodus 7:11, 22).

IV The Fall of Fallen Angels: There is much more here than I can take the time to discuss. This includes the subject of Satan’s kingdom against Christ’s. Another large area is that of the believer and spiritual warfare. We did go into this a while back. The manuscript of that study is available at www.cfdevotionals.org. From there follow the Bible study link.

As believers we don't have to be fearful of the dark kingdom because God has already had victory over him. As we already noted, he has no power over us but that which God allows. And God allows only to the extent we can benefit spiritually. We do not need to fear because:

1. The fallen angels will be judged.
 - a. They will be judged on the "great day"

"And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own home—these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day" (Jude 1:6).

- b. They will be judged by believers and Christ.

"Do you not know that we will judge angels?" (1 Corinthians 6:3).

2. Satan will be judged.
 - a. He will be cast into darkness.

"And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever" (Revelation 20:10).

- b. Satan and his fallen angels, free and chained, will at last be judged for all time.

"For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them into gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment" (1 Peter 2:4).

V Conclusion: The message of these studies is one of warning and of hope, warning to the unbeliever and hope for us. Let me conclude with the words of Lindsell.

*"The Church's message is not simply one of unrestrained pessimism. Along with the eschatological note of a doomed world is the optimistic and bright hope that men do not need to perish with the world. The Church's message is therefore twofold: it warns men that the world is doomed; and it enjoins men to be prepared for the final judgment. This message of the final judgment offers hope to the hopeless, light to those in darkness. The hope comes through the preaching of the Gospel of redemption, which makes it possible for men to be saved from the doom and the wrath to come. The earth shall not escape, but men can. The Church has its marching orders from the Captain of its salvation, who proclaimed:"*¹⁰

"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (Matthew 28:18-20).

¹⁰ Lindsell, Harold, The World, The Flesh, & The Devil, published by World Wide Publications, Minneapolis, MN, 1973, p. 189.

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Various Passages

I Introduction:

(1 John 4:4; 2:16)

II The Fall of Angels:

A The _____:

(2 Peter 2:4; Jude 1:6; Matthew 25:41; Genesis 6:4)

B The _____:

III The Power of Fallen Angels:

A Their _____ Describe Their _____:

1. _____ Spirits:
(Leviticus 19:31; 20:6)

2. _____ Spirits:
(Mark 1:23-27)

3. _____ Spirits:
(Luke 7:21)

4. _____ Spirits:
(1 Timothy 4:1)

5. _____ Spirits:
(Mark 9:25)

B Their _____ Describe Their _____:

1. Satan and demons work against the _____.
(*Ephesians 2:2*)

2. Satan and demons work to _____, _____; and they are the _____ of _____.¹
(*Ephesians 6:12*)

3. Demons can _____ the _____ of _____.
(*Mark 5:1-9*)

4. In _____ demons can cause _____.
(*Matthew 9:32; 12:22; Mark 9:25-29*)

5. Demons can _____ people to move further into the _____ they have _____.
(*John 8:44*)

6. While _____ demons can _____ through their _____.
(*Mark 5:9*)

7. Demons are often the _____ behind _____.
(*Acts 16:16*)

Sorcery, (Acts 8:9-11); Witchcraft, (Galatians 5:20); Necromancy, (Isaiah 8:19, Deuteronomy 18:10-12); Astrologers, (Daniel 1:20; 2:2; 4:7); Divination, (Ezekiel 13:6-7; Acts 16:16); Magician, (Daniel 1:20, Exodus 7:11, 22).

IV The Fall of Fallen Angels:

1. The fallen angels will be _____.
 - a. They will be _____ on the “_____”
(*Jude 1:6*)

 - b. They will be judged by believers and Christ.
(*1 Corinthians 6:3*)

¹ Stringfellow, p. 89.

2. Satan will be _____.
a. He will be _____ into _____.
(*Revelation 20:10*)

b. Satan and his fallen angels, free and chained, will at last be _____ for all

(*1 Peter 2:4*)

V Conclusion:
(*Matthew 28:18-20*)