Elenctic Theology: Demonology & the Occult

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*Satanology & Demonology*

*There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about the devils.
One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe, and to feel an excessive
and unhealthy interest in them.*

- C. S. Lewis, *The Screwtape Letters*

## Introduction

#### ***Christian Guidelines for the Study of Satanology, Demonology & the Occult***

##### A Christian must remain Christ-centered (Christocentric), not demon-centered (demonocentric).

##### Scripture, not experience, is the final and ultimate guide as it is the best source for knowledge of the invisible world.

##### Faith and freedom in Christ are the desired results of this type of study.

##### Christian service, not sensationalism, is the primary goal.

#### ***Introduction to the Study of Satanology, Demonology & the Occult***

##### Satan exists and is a powerful, personal, evil, spiritual being who seeks humanity’s destruction and can influence the physical realm in varying degrees.

##### Demons are fallen angels. The angelic followers of Satan and have similar attributes.

###### The Devil and his angels (Matt. 25:41; Rev. 12:9)

###### See below for additional details.

##### Alternative theories of the origin of demons

###### Demons are the spirits of the Nephilim that were killed in the Flood (Gen. 11).

###### Demons are the fallen spirits from a Pre-Adamic race.

###### Demons are fallen spirits that are distinct from fallen angels.

###### Others?

## Satanology & Demonology

### Satan is Prominently Featured in the Bible.

#### Satan is mentioned in seven Books of the Old Testament (Gen., 1 Chron., Job, Psalms, Isa., Ezek., and Zech.).

#### Every New Testament author mentions Satan.

#### Christ speaks of Satan *circa* twenty-five times in the Gospels.

### The Nature & Identity of Satan

#### The name “Satan” is derived from the Hebrew word that means “adversary.”

#### The Serpent in the Garden of Eden is identified as Satan (II Cor. 11:3, cf. Rev. 12:9).

#### Satan is described as a type of “king” (Matt. 12:24-26)

### The Nature of Satan & Demons

#### Satan is a created, non-elect angel. (Is. 14:12-20; Ezek 28:11-19)

#### Demons are also non-elect (i.e., fallen) angels that chose to follow Satan in his fall from original righteousness. (Matt. 25:41; Jn. 8:44; 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6; Rev. 12)

#### The English word “Demon” is based on the Greek word *daimon* or *daimonion* and means a lesser god or goddess or evil spirit. See <https://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons/greek/nas/daimonion.html>

#### See the nature of angels in the Angelology syllabus

#### ***Argument that Satan and Demons are Fallen Angels***

##### **Satan is the Ruler or Leader of “his angels.”**

###### Revelation 12:7-9: “And there was war in heaven, *Michael and his angels* waging war with the *dragon*. The *dragon and his angels* waged war, and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven. *And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old 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.*

###### Matthew 25:41: “Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for *the devil and his angels’”*

###### Summary

The “Dragon,” who is also designated as “the Serpent of Old,” “the Devil,” and “Satan” has “his angels” just as Michael has “his angels.”

Michael the Archangel is an elect angel who leads other elect angels (cf., Jude 1:9).

Satan has fallen angels who choose to follow him and his lead. He is the leader or ruler of the fallen angels (cf., Matt. 25:41).

##### **Satan is the Ruler or Leader of Demons.**

###### Luke 11:18: “If Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? Because you say I cast out demons by Beelzebub.

###### Matthew 12:24-26: Matthew notes in the parallel account that the Jews called “*Beelzebul the ruler of the demons*” (Matt. 12:24). Jesus does not refute this, but affirms it by simply noting that Beelzebul casting out demons would be an act of “*Satan casting out Satan*” (Matt. 12:26).

###### Matthew 12:43-45: Jesus also calls demons “*unclean spirits*.” (See Matt. 12:43-45, *et al*.)

###### Revelation 16:13-14: John says, “And I saw coming *out of the mouth of the dragon* and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet, *three unclean spirits like frogs; for they are spirits of demons*, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them together for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty.

###### Summary

Satan is the ruler of demons.

Demons are also known as “unclean spirits.

##### **Satan is the ruler of spirits designated both as “fallen angels” and “demons.”**

###### The best conclusion here is that the fallen angels are also known as demons or unclean spirits. They are the same type of being. Otherwise, one would need to explain where and when these other types of rational, morally responsible spirit beings were created.

###### The Bible gives an account of the creation of two types of moral beings: Angels in Psalm 148:2-5 and Humans in Genesis 2.

###### There is no creation account of a separate species of being. This does not preclude a third or fourth type of being that has been created, but the burden of proof would be on the one asserting these beings are distinct from angels.

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### The Names of Satan & Fallen Angels

#### Satan (Job 1 & Matt. 4:10)

#### Devil & Deceiver (Rev. 20:10)

#### Adversary (1 Pet. 5:8)

#### Tempter (Matt. 4:3)

#### Accuser (Rev. 12:10)

#### Prince of this World (Jn. 12:31)

#### Prince of Darkness (Eph. 6:12)

#### Prince of the Power of the Air (Eph. 2:2)

#### god of this world (2 Cor. 4:4)

#### Murderer and Liar (Jn. 8:44)

#### Abaddon (Rev. 9:11)

#### Ruler of the Demons (Mt 9:34)

#### Beelzebul (Matt. 10:25)

#### Demon (Matt. 10:8)

#### Unclean Spirit (Matt. 10:1)

#### Deceiving Spirits (I Tim. 4:1)

#### Angels who sinned (2 Peter 2:4)

#### Angels that did not keep their first estate (Jude 1:6)

#### Evil Spirit (Luke 7:21)

#### Unclean Spirit or Unclean Demon (Luke 4:33)

#### Deceitful Spirit (1 Tim. 4:1)

### The Nature of Satan & Demons as Fallen Angels (Review)

#### They are immaterial or non-physical persons (Matt. 8:16; 12:43-45; Lk. 7:21; 8:2; Acts 19:12; Eph. 6:12).

#### They are created, finite, mutable persons (Ps. 148:2-5).

#### They have an illocal & definitive presence (Mark 5:1-20).

#### Their hearts are turned away from God.

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### The General Works of Satan & Demons

#### Generally, they are against Christ & His Church (Matt. 16:18).

#### They are against all humanity. (1 Pet. 5:8)

#### They attempt to thwart the Gospel (Luke 8:12).

#### They lie and teach false doctrine (John 8:44; 1 Tim 4:1).

### Demonic Activities Related to Truth Claims

#### They can appear as counterfeit beings. (2 Cor. 11:14)

#### They can offer counterfeit “divine” knowledge (Is. 8:19-20)

#### They can offer counterfeit “divine” power. (Is. 47:8-15)

#### They tempt mankind to sin. (Gen. 3:6; Matt. 4:3)

#### They accuse humans before God. (Zech. 3:1, 2)

#### They practice deception (See above also).

##### Satan: 2 Cor. 11:3

##### Deceiving Spirits: 1 Tim. 4:1

### Truth is the Remedy for Demonic Deception

#### John 17:17

#### Phil. 4:8

#### John 8:32

#### Rom. 12:1-2

#### 2 Cor. 10:3-5

### Selected Demonic Effects on Humans

#### *Control the Bodies of Humans and Animals*— (Matt. 8:28–9:1; Mark 5:1-20; Luke 8:26–39)

#### *Skin Disease*—“Satan…smote Job with sore boils” (Job 2:7).

#### *Destructive and Irrational Acts*—The Gerasene & Gadarene Demoniacs lived in tombs and were exceedingly violent. (Matt 8:28; Luke 8:27).

#### *Deafness and Inability to Speak*—(Mark 9:25; Luke 11:14)

#### *Epileptic-like Seizures*—The possessed person is described as a “lunatic,” “very ill” who “often falls into the fire, and into the water.” (Matt 17:15; Mark 9:18; Luke 9:39).

#### *Blindness*—(Matt 12:22)

#### *Tormenting Pain*—(Rev 9:1-11)

#### *Insanity*—After Jesus cast out the demons, the man was “clothed and in his right mind.” (Luke 8:26-35).

#### *Severe Physical Illness*—Jesus healed a woman “who for eighteen years had a sickness caused by a spirit; and she was bent double, and could not straighten up at all” (Luke 13:11-17).

#### *Give Supernatural Strength*—The demoniac “was bound with chains and shackles…and yet he would burst his fetters” (Luke 8:29).

#### *Possibly Assume a Physical Form*—In the Sodom & Gomorrah account, elect angels assumed a physical form. Since demons are reprobate angels, some possibly possess this ability as well (Gen 19:1-2, 12).

## Demon POssession

### Introductory Comments

### Biblical Passages Related to Demon Possession

#### **The Prevalence of Demon Possession (Matt. 8:28–9:1; Mark 5:1-20; Luke 8:26–39)**

#### **Biblical Passages Explicitly Mentioning Demon Possession**

##### Matthew 8:28-34

##### Matthew 9:32-33

##### Matthew 12:22

##### Matthew 17:18

##### Mark 5:1-20

##### Mark 7:26-30

##### Luke 4:33-36

##### Luke 8:26-39

##### Luke 22:3

##### Acts 16:16-18

#### **Demonic Influence Less Than Full Possession**

##### *Troubled*: I Sam. 16:14-15; 18:10-11; 19:9-10 – King Saul is “troubled” by an evil spirit.

##### *Moved:* I Chron. 21:1 – Satan “moved” David to number Israel.

##### *Blinded the Mind*: 2 Cor. 4:3-4 – Satan “blinds” the minds of unbelievers.

##### *Filled:* Acts 5:3 – Satan “filled” the heart of Ananias.

##### Others?

#### **The “Re-Possession” of a Delivered Person – Luke 11:24-26**

#### **Sin Associated with Satan and Demons**

##### John 8:44 – Lies

##### 1 John 3:8 – Habitual Sin

### Demon Possession & the Christian

#### *Introductory Comments*

#### *Evidence that Christians cannot be demon-possessed.*

##### The Presence of the Holy Spirit

###### Christians are indwelt by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19–20).

###### The Spirit is greater in power than demonic spirits (Matt. 12:28; 1 John 4:4).

##### Christians Only “Appear” to be Possessed

###### Some Christians can appear to be so influenced by demons influenced that they appear to be demon-possessed and may even display some of the symptoms of demon possession.

###### Demon influence may be a temporary and external demonic operation while demon–possession is a more permanent and internal demonic operation.

###### However, it seems that even demon influence affects the inner life of Christians (i.e., the spirit-soul-heart-mind-conscience, etc.) (cf. 2 Cor. 10:3–5).

###### Part of the problem here is thinking of the physical and spatial relations of a demon (a spirit being) to a human’s physical being. So, is the demonic spirit operating without or within the believer’s body, The *flesh* can strongly influence believers in spite of the indwelling presence of the Spirit (Gal. 5:16–18; 1 Cor. 3:1–3; cf. John 14:16–17; Eph. 4:30).

###### Likewise, *demons* can strongly influence Christians in spite of the indwelling presence of the Spirit (Acts 5:1–11; 1 Cor. 10:19–21; 2 Cor. 2:11; 10:3–4; Eph. 6:10–12; 1 Pet. 5:8).

###### Believers not sufficiently yielded to the superior power and control of the Spirit (cf. Rom. 6:13; 12:1; Eph. 5:18; 1 John 4:4) leave themselves open to the influence of the flesh, Satan, and demons (cf. Eph. 4:27, “do not give the devil an opportunity [i.e., a place]”).

###### Believers yielded to the Spirit can experience victory over the flesh, the devil, and demons (Gal. 5:16–18; Eph. 4:27; 5:18; 1 John 4:4).

#### There is no clear case of a demon-possessed (i.e., “demonized”) Christian appears in the NT.

#### Alleged biblical cases of demon-possessed believers have alternative interpretations that are better substantiated.

##### **Matthew 16:22–23: Peter**

###### Why is it unlikely that Peter was Satan-possessed or demon-possessed? Because Christ arguably would have delivered Peter delivered Peter from such possession at the time.

###### What then does this passage mean?

Satan used Peter as his mouth-piece to express man’s viewpoint instead of God’s viewpoint about Christ’s work on the cross and His subsequent resurrection (v. 21).

Thus, Satan can influence believers to think and do certain things

In this case, well-intentioned things that align with Satan’s will rather than God’s will.

##### **Acts 5:3: Ananias**

###### Why is it unlikely that Ananias was Satan-possessed or demon-possessed?

The language here indicates that Satan filled Ananias’s heart, not with Satan himself, but with the intent “to lie to the Holy Spirit, and to keep back some of the price of the land” (v. 3)

Filling is not possession.

For example, the “filling” of the Holy Spirit is not possession.

###### What lesson does this passage teach?

Satan can influence believers to think, speak, or do things that outwardly appear as sacrificial living and giving but actually involve deception and evil motives initiated by Satan rather than by God.

There is such a thing as satanically inspired giving? How about Positive Confession? Seed Faith?

##### **The Possessed Person is Not a Genuine Christian, but an Unbeliever**

###### In some alleged cases of demon-possessed believers may actually involve unbelievers.

Most contemporaries of Judas and Simon the magician (Acts 8:9–24) probably thought these two were true believers.

But Scripture strongly indicates otherwise concerning Judas (Matt. 10:4; Luke 6:16; 22:3; John 6:70–71; 13:10–11, 18, 21–30; 17:12; Acts 1:16–25) and Simon the magician (Acts 8:17–24).

###### Even profession of Christ as Lord and performance of prophecy, exorcisms, and miraculous works allegedly in the name of Christ are not necessarily conclusive proof of salvation (Matt. 7:21–23).