**Bible Lesson: Are We Surrounded By Demons?**

 The Bible tells us that, long before humans came on the scene, Lucifer opposed God and was tossed out of heaven to the earth, along with one third of the angels who likewise committed mutiny against God (ISA 14:12–19; EZE 11:14–18; REV 12:3–4,7–9). Evil entities are referred to as devils, demons, familiar spirits, and unclean or foul spirits. The ones landing on earth are still among us by the way. Demons are innumerable, millions or better; in other words, they are everywhere. St. John had a vision of thousands of angels singing, even ten thousand squared (REV 5:11–12). If there are a million-plus angels, the devils that fell would represent up to half of that number (i.e., 1/3 of all the angelic beings initially created by God).

 On one occasion, Jesus encountered an individual possessed by thousands of demons. Recall the account of Legion (MAR 5:1–11; LUK 8:26–36) in which a man was possessed by a legion of demons (a Roman legion was about 6000 soldiers). Nobody could control or subdue this man, for he was dangerous and the people greatly feared him. The demons had exclusive control over this poor soul. But Jesus had mercy on the man and cast the hoard of demons into a herd of swine, which made them so crazy they ran off a cliff and drowned in the sea below. There are many occasions where Jesus evacuated demons, including His close companion Mary Magdalene from whom Jesus cast out seven (LUK 8:2). Clearly demons and the Holy Spirit cannot coexist, and demons are immensely afraid of Christ.

* LUK 4:33–36 ~ In the synagogue was a man possessed by the spirit of an unclean devil. When he saw Jesus, he cried out with a loud voice saying, “Leave us alone; what have you to do with us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God.” Jesus rebuked the demon saying, “Keep quiet and come out of him.” The devils threw him to the ground in front of everyone and immediately came out of the man, who was unhurt. All the people were amazed saying amongst themselves, “What a Word is this! For with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits and they obey.”
* 1 CO 10:21 ~ You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of devils; you cannot partake at the Lord’s table and the table of devils.
* JAM 2:19 ~ It is well for you to believe that there is one God; the devils also believe, and tremble.
* JAM 4:7 ~ Submit yourselves to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.
* 1 PE 5:8–9 ~ Be sober and vigilant; because your adversary the devil, like a roaring lion walks about seeking whom he may devour.

 Being possessed by a single demon has got to be extremely annoying. Imagine being possessed by thousands, or Satan himself! This concept is horrifying to say the least. But anyone bearing the name of Christ will have the Holy Spirit and therefore, power over Satan and his army of demons.

* LEV 19:31 ~ Stay away from those with familiar spirits and do not seek sorcerers to be defiled by them, for I am the Lord your God.
* 1 CO 3:16; 1 CO 6:19 ~ Do you not know that you are the temple of God, and the Holy Spirit dwells within you? This is God’s gift, for you belong to Him.
* 2 CO 11:14 ~ Do not marvel when Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.
* EPH 6:11–12 ~ Put on the whole armor of God so you are able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle, not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against rulers of darkness in this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

 Those possessed by demons are spiritually empty, which is a welcome mat for evil spirits. That is to say, without the indwelling of the Holy Spirit you become a target. A person cannot be possessed by an evil spirit if he or she possesses the free gift of God’s Holy Spirit. Thus, to answer two age-old questions: Christians (e.g., doers of the Word and not just hearers) can neither be possessed by demons nor claimed by Satan.

* MAT 12:43–45; LUK 8:27–33 ~ When an unclean spirit departs from a person, he walks through dry places, seeking rest and finding none. Then he says, “I will return to the house I left.” When he returns, he finds the house empty, swept, and tidy. Then he goes and finds seven other spirits more wicked than he and enters the person and lives there, leaving the person worse off than before. This shall be the case in the wicked generation to come.
* GAL 5:16–17 ~ I tell you this: walk in the Spirit and you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh fights against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh as these two are contrary, such that you cannot do the things you should.
* 1 JO 4:1–4 ~ Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test them to see if they are from God; because many false prophets have entered the world. This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ came in the flesh is of God; every spirit that does not confess Christ is not of God. This is the spirit of antichrist who you have heard is coming and already is in the world. You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world.

 How does one become spiritually empty? Well, either invite the Holy Spirit to dwell within you or try to fill the emptiness with worldly things. The problem is, those seeking to fulfill the flesh will never be satisfied, for they will be hungry, thirsty, sleepy, horny and unfulfilled over and over. You cannot satisfy the flesh, but the Holy Spirit satisfies completely. If you seek spiritual blessings, you will receive them as well as everything you need to sustain your body and life (MAT 6:25–34). Hence, without God you will be spiritually empty and susceptible to the evils in this world, every temptation of the flesh, and foul spirits. In short, with God you can do anything, without Him—well good luck with that (MAT 19:25–26; LUK 1:37; JOH 15:5).

 Take, for example, addiction, where the more you indulge yourself, the less gratified you get. A person can become addicted to any substance or behavior; because while all things are available for our use, they all can be harmful when abused. Once the abuse becomes a habit the person loses control, whereas the addiction proceeds without conscious intervention or awareness and is very resistant to change. The condition is not unlike demon possession, insofar as any worldly strategy for filling a spiritual emptiness is destined to fail and opens the person to evil spirits. Interestingly, the famous Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung pointed out almost a century ago that alcohol was like an evil spirit which represented the opposite end of a continuum from the Holy Spirit. Alcoholics Anonymous and the twelve-step process advanced by Bill Wilson was largely based on the philosophy of, and in collaboration with, Dr. Jung.

 The impetus of twelve-step programs is to enable your higher power to take control, implying that the person has lost control. Christians recognize God’s Holy Spirit as the highest power, from whom all knowledge of right and wrong proceeds. Even an agnostic will admit that their conscience doesn’t lie to them about moral choices and therefore represents a higher power within them; many are unaware that such knowledge was conveyed upon them (and all other human beings) via God’s Spirit. The healing that takes place and the self-control that is realized are among God’s gifts. Truth is ingrained in your own spirit or higher power, not the least of which is knowledge of forgiveness and salvation. Not surprisingly, twelve step programs conducted in conjunction with therapy and support have been scientifically proven to be the most effective treatment for addiction. As Jung proposed, the path to recovery involves education, edification, and grace. God supplies the grace component, often by way of the proverbial wakeup call. Who do you suppose is trying to get the addict’s attention but God Himself? When they turn control over to the highest power, they can defeat the demons of addiction not to mention Satan. Ever wonder where we get cliches such as “the demon of addiction” or “chasing the dragon” or “the devil made me do it”? Well now you know.

* 1 CO 10:23 ~ All things are lawful for me but not all things are expedient, and not all things can edify.

 Unfortunately, there are many people, especially in their youth, who deliberately conger familiar spirits. They engage in seances, channeling, demonism, even devil worship, some proclaiming themselves Satanists. Maybe people do this for entertainment, exploitation, kicks, or to explore the spirit world. Little do they know they are dabbling with the occult and asking demons to participate. Beware of occultism and demonology as such things are an abomination to the Lord and an invitation to Satan and his minions. One must be very ignorant or very dark inside to enjoy such things. Evil can be compelling to those thinking it will be fun, empowering, or educational. Anyone looking for demons eventually will find them; and once found it is very hard to get rid of them. The more lost and dark people are on the inside, the more likely they will believe there is no way out. Of course, the Holy Spirit is the only way out; but there are countless ways into the pit.

* LEV 20:6 ~ The Lord says to the soul who follows those who have a familiar spirit or seeks out wizards, lusting after them: I will set my face against that soul and cut them off from their people.
* 1 SA 15:23 ~ Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, He has rejected you (Saul) as king.
* ISA 8:19 ~ When they suggest that you seek those with familiar spirits or wizards who whisper and mutter, reply to them, “Shouldn’t we ask God; why seek the dead, on behalf of the living?
* EZE 12:24 ~ There shall nevermore be vain visions or flattering divinations within the house of Israel.
* MAT 6:22–23 ~ The light of the body is the eye; if your eye is pure, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is evil your whole body will be full of darkness, and how great is that darkness.
* EPH 5:11 ~ Do not fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness but rather reprove them.

 Demons are out there and you would be advised to steer clear of them and anyone who converses with them. Are we surrounded by demons? Yes, but for the fact they are outnumbered by the angels of God, with God Himself abiding everywhere and in control of everything. Actually, the demons are the ones who are surrounded. Besides, all true Christians possess the Spirit of God (ROM 8:9) and the mind of Christ (1 CO 2:16), rendering demons powerless against members of the body of Christ. Remember this: the proliferation of evil in the last days will be enhanced, to include people succumbing to foul spirits and demonic influences. Beware and be careful, and hold fast to the Holy Spirit lest they influence you.

* DEU 18:10–12 ~ God says there should never be among you those who pass their son or daughter through the fire, or use divinations, or observe times [e.g., astrologers]; or an enchanter, witch, charmer, or anyone who seeks counsel from familiar spirits, wizards or necromancers. Those who do these things are an abomination to the Lord; and because of their abominations, the Lord your God will drive them out before you.
* 1 TI 4:1–2 ~ The Spirit expressly states that in the latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils; hypocrites speaking lies, having their conscience seared with a hot iron.
* REV 18:1–2 ~ I (John) saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was illuminated with his glory. And he cried mightily with a loud voice saying, “Babylon the great has fallen, fallen, and become the habitation of devils, the stronghold of every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hateful bird [i.e., spirit].”

 If you call upon the Holy Spirit in the name of Jesus Christ, you can command any demon to clear out. When they try to invade your mind or imbed impure thoughts, do this and see what happens. Continue to tap into God’s power and you will become stronger, and the influences of evil coming against you will become weaker. In fact, the demons will begin to fear you because they see Christ in your heart and the Holy Spirit in your eyes. And they will run from you like pigs jumping off a cliff.

 In conclusion, ask yourself this question: Is there anything from this world that you want so bad you would sell your soul to obtain it? Jesus said you could win the entire world and it would not cover the cost of forfeiting your soul (MAT 16:26). He also said that those who patiently await His return will keep their souls (LUK 21:19). Have you noticed people in politics, entertainment, and government who are sell-outs in the USA and abroad? They would do anything to control wealth, power, and others to the degree they would sacrifice truth, morality, justice, and faith. They would betray their loved ones, country, and God to enjoy pleasures of this world for a finite period of time, in exchange for an eternity in hell: separated from the glorious love of God forevermore.

Do not fear or envy the sell-outs for they are to be pitied. Jesus warned the Jewish leaders during His ministry that they could not escape the fiery furnace (MAT 23:13–33); neither will self-righteous lying traitors who sell-out their countries, friends, and ultimately their souls to Satan. And what will Satan do with all those lost souls? Nothing, because he will burn along with them; he’s just looking for company. Woe unto the one who lets the devil inside, that son of perdition referred to as antichrist, and everyone else who thinks they will rule in hell with Satan. They’ll be destroyed with the fallen, be they human or demon. (For more on the son of perdition read the April 2022 Bible Lesson.)

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