

DEMON POSSESSION

• Rationale--to separate men from God

1. Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?" The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'" "You will not certainly die," the serpent said to the woman. "For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." (Ge 3:1-5)
2. The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him. (Re 12:9)
3. "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." (Jn 10:10)
4. They went across the lake to the region of the Gerasenes. When Jesus got out of the boat, a man with an impure spirit came from the tombs to meet him. This man lived in the tombs, and no one could bind him anymore, 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? In God's name don't torture me!" For Jesus had said to him, "Come out of this man, you impure spirit!" Then Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" "My name is Legion," he replied, "for we are many." And he begged Jesus again and again not to send them out of the area. A large herd of pigs was feeding on the nearby hillside. The demons begged Jesus, "Send us among the pigs; allow us to go into them." He gave them permission, and the impure spirits came out and went into the pigs. The herd, about two thousand in number, rushed down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned. Those tending the pigs ran off and reported this in the town and countryside, and the people went out to see what had happened. When they came to Jesus, they saw the man who had been possessed by the legion of demons, sitting there, dressed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. Those who had seen it told the people what had happened to the demon-possessed man—and told about the pigs as well. Then the people began to plead with Jesus to leave their region. As Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed begged to go with him. Jesus did not let him, but said, "Go home to your own people and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you." So the man went away and began to tell in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him. And all the people were amazed. (Mk 5:1-20)

• Stages?

1. Oppression—deceiving to disobey
2. Obsession—bringing under control
3. Possession—taking bodily control

• Types

1. Dumb or mute
While they were going out, a man who was demon-possessed and could not talk was brought to Jesus. And when the demon was driven out, the man who had been mute spoke. The crowd was amazed and said, "Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel." (Mt 9:32-33)
2. Blind
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. (Mt 12:22)
3. Convulsions or seizures
A man in the crowd called out, "Teacher, I beg you to look at my son, for he is my only child. A spirit seizes him and he suddenly screams; it throws him into convulsions so that he foams at the mouth. It scarcely ever leaves him and is destroying him. I begged your disciples to drive it out, but they could not." "You unbelieving and perverse generation," Jesus replied, "how long shall I stay with you and put up with you? Bring your son here." Even while the boy was coming, the demon threw him to the ground in a convulsion. But Jesus rebuked the impure spirit, healed the boy and gave him back to his father. And they were all amazed at the greatness of God. (Lk 9:38-43)

4. Crippling

On a Sabbath Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues, and a woman was there who had been crippled by a spirit for eighteen years. She was bent over and could not straighten up at all. When Jesus saw her, he called her forward and said to her, "Woman, you are set free from your infirmity." Then he put his hands on her, and immediately she straightened up and praised God. (Lk 13:10-13)

5. Deceiving

- Micaiah continued, "Therefore hear the word of the Lord: I saw the Lord sitting on his throne with all the multitudes of heaven standing around him on his right and on his left. And the Lord said, 'Who will entice Ahab into attacking Ramoth Gilead and going to his death there?' "One suggested this, and another that. Finally, a spirit came forward, stood before the Lord and said, 'I will entice him.' " "By what means?" the Lord asked. "I will go out and be a deceiving spirit in the mouths of all his prophets," he said. "You will succeed in enticing him," said the Lord. "Go and do it." "So now the Lord has put a deceiving spirit in the mouths of all these prophets of yours. The Lord has decreed disaster for you." (1 Ki 22:19-23)

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

6. Jealousy/murder

The next day an evil spirit from God came forcefully on Saul. He was prophesying in his house, while David was playing the lyre, as he usually did. Saul had a spear in his hand and he hurled it, saying to himself, "I'll pin David to the wall." But David eluded him twice. (1 Sa 18:10-11)

7. Tormenting

Now the Spirit of the LORD had departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD tormented him. (1 Sa 16:14)

• Exorcism

1. Casting out in name of Jesus

- Jesus called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out impure spirits and to heal every disease and sickness. (Mt 10:1)

- She kept this up for many days. Finally Paul became so annoyed that he turned around and said to the spirit, "In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!" At that moment the spirit left her. (Ac 16:18)

- 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." (Mk 9:29)

2. Believe in Jesus & follow Him (see Mk 5:1-20 above)

"When an impure spirit comes out of a person, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it. Then it says, 'I will return to the house I left.' When it arrives, it finds the house unoccupied, swept clean and put in order. Then it goes and takes with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that person is worse than the first. That is how it will be with this wicked generation." (Mt 12:43-45)

SATAN'S EXISTENCE

• Philosophical view

1. If God is good, why so much evil?
2. Would God work against Himself and cause evil?
3. Some other force at work

• Biblical evidence from

1. Jesus (Mt 4:1-11; Jn 8:44; 12:31; 14:30)
2. Paul (Ep 2:2)
3. Peter (1 Pe 5:8)
4. John (1 Jn 5:14)
5. James (Ja 4:7)
6. Others (Ge 3; 1 Ch 21:1; Jb 1, 2; Zc 3:1-2; He 2:14; Ju 9; Re 12:9; 20:7-10)

A&E's *The Unexplained: Exorcists* (first 22 min.) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cdVbxsES3g4&t=1321s>