

Biblical Demonology:

A Scriptural Survey of Demons and Spirits

by Richie Cooley

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Before getting started, let's review a few notes ...

**This work mostly uses British spelling, except for the quoted material, which mainly employs U.S. spelling.*

**The terms LORD, GOD, and Hashem are all ways to describe the personal name of God, also rendered as Yahweh or Jehovah (YHWH).*

**The ALT3 distinguishes between singular and plural second-person pronouns by means of an asterisk (*).*

**Divine pronouns are normally not capitalized, unless they appear that way in Bible versions or other quotes.*

**Words that appear in brackets within quotes are not found in the original texts, and were added by the translators or are my personal comments, etc.*

In this updated edition, a section from my discarded booklet "Fairies" has been included, as well as a deleted selection from my book, *Is the Bible Divinely Inspired?

I. Introduction

Demonism appears to be on the rise. There is an absolute plethora of interest in the topic, and it seems to be mushrooming. The books, films, and television programs that give coverage to such phenomena are being churned out thick and fast. What's more, articles and reports abound of every sort of exorcism and demonic manifestation imaginable. Added to this is the fascination with modern paganism, witchcraft, and neo-demonism (which is another way to more accurately describe the gargantuan subject of UFOs).

I wanted to write this booklet for the simple purpose of offering my efforts at uncovering what the Bible has to say about the world of demons and evil spirits. Countless people are suffering with demonic oppression, and there is a never-ending stream of supposed experts. Yet how can we know that they're experts? How can any academic official or church clergyman or unassuming layperson really be sure that they

know all the nuts and bolts of the spirit world? They can't. There's no logical way.

But they'll pretend to! Oh, they'll pretend to! My oh my; the strange ideas they'll try to shove down your throat about all sorts of metaphysical nonsense that they've dreamed up—or read in some dusty book that the author dreamed up—knows no limits. The simple fact is that there is absolutely no way of discerning what is going on in the spirit world apart from divine revelation. Demonism has nothing to do with empiricism, for any information that you may ascertain about evils spirits apart from the Bible is bound ultimately to come from the demons themselves. This is like buying an extended warranty from Harry Wormwood.

Discerning the demonic world is not the result of being born with “special” gifts. Nor is it a subject that may be studied, learned, and mastered via erudition and tutelage. Anybody who claims to be an expert in this field inevitably has swallowed whole the vapid dreams or visions of some purported seer, psychic, or medium. No thanks. I want to know what God has to say. His Word may be proven through the objective study of its prophecies, and so is worthy of our trust.

A vital watchword of the fundamental Christian faith is thus: God has given us all things for life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3). This is the truth behind *Sola Scriptura* (cf. 1 Peter 2:1-5). The Word of Jehovah is the only supernatural information we need; therefore, if we are suffering from a spiritual enemy, we know to whom we may turn...

Good and upright is the LORD; therefore He instructs sinners in the way. He leads the humble [Or *afflicted*] in justice, and He teaches the humble [Or *afflicted*] His way. All the paths of the LORD are lovingkindness and truth to those who keep His covenant and His testimonies. -- Psalm 25:8-10

These three verses should give great comfort to those oppressed by demons. First of all it states that God is good. He doesn't want anyone to be suffering, and so we may count on his help. It then states that he is willing to instruct sinners. We are all sinners. The problem with many people is that they think that God will only help them if they are a perfect person. Not so. There is no perfect person. God is willing to

help anyone, no matter what they've done. Many of the people who have become demonically besieged have brought it upon themselves via the occult or mind-altering drugs. He is still willing to help. Lastly, the goodness that Jehovah has to offer comes by the applied knowledge of his covenant (the Gospel) and his testimonies (the Bible).

Obviously it would be hypocritical for me to tell you not to listen to people but to read my booklet. I'm not trying to be so foolish. Rather, I wanted to study the Bible for myself on this topic and thought I'd jot down my notes for others to read. I care a great deal about those who are suffering as such, and I desire to do what I can to help. I hope these notes are somewhat useful as a primer; but if you are suffering, I ultimately hope that you'll study the Word for yourself.

Before delving into what the Bible says about demons, let me give a quick word of caution. Many people are suffering from demons, many are suffering from mental illness, and some are suffering from both. If you think that you are having severe problems, please don't hesitate to promptly contact a medical authority. There is nothing shameful or sinful about psychology or psychiatry. If I were having severe problems I would choose the world of medicine and would also be prayerfully studying the Bible. Don't be irresponsible when it comes to your mental health. It's not one way or the other—doctors or God. That obviously wouldn't be true for something like cancer; thus, neither is it true with problems of the mind.

We shall keep to a very simple format in this primer on demons. First we shall go through the Old and New Testaments and define the various Hebrew and Greek terms that signify evil spirits in the Biblical text. Then we shall take a cumulative look at what the Scriptures say about these beings. And remember our watchword: *God has given us all things for life and godliness*. The Bible doesn't tell us everything there is to know about the spirit world. There is a lot that no one has known—or will know. Nevertheless, Jehovah has revealed to us everything that we *need* to understand.

Let's try to find out what those things are...

II. Word Studies

A. New Testament References

When it comes to the English word “demon,” it lines up very well linguistically to the Greek words *daimon* or *daimonion*. The foundational root behind these Greek words also has several different variations in the New Testament, including a verbal and an adjectival form.

Just for a bit of statistical context, the (quasi) verbal form occurs just over a dozen times in the New Testament and is most often rendered by the broadly-respected NASB translators as someone who is “demon-possessed.” The adjectival usage only occurs once. James 3:15 refers to the wisdom of the world as being “demonic.”

The before-mentioned *daimonion* is by far the most common. It occurs around 60 times and is almost always translated by the NASB as “demon(s).” The only time it is rendered otherwise is interesting, and we’ll discuss that in a minute. The last term in this group, *daimon*, is just another form of *daimonion*. It is much more rare, occurring only around five times (*or less, depending on who’s doing the computing; the NASB only cites it once; this has to do with textual criticism*), and is also rendered as “demon.”

I wrote all that to highlight that this group is the real foundation from where we get our idea of “demon” from. We can surely know what a demon *is* by knowing what the noun “daimonion” *was*.

As I mentioned in passing, there is one time where the NASB translates this term very differently...

Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was being provoked within him as he was observing the city full of idols. So he was reasoning in the synagogue with the Jews and the God-fearing [Gentiles,] and in the market place every day with those who happened to be present. And also some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers were conversing with him. Some were saying, “What would this idle babbler wish to say?” Others, “He seems to be a proclaimer of strange **deities**,”—because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection. -- Acts 17:16-18

The reason why the NASB translated the word as “deities” here is because that outside of the New Testament literature “demons” were often viewed in a different light. This information is very helpful in ascertaining what demons are.

The most important, accessible Biblical Greek dictionary these days is *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature* (BDAG). Its selection on *daimonion* (pg. 210) tells us everything we need to know. Here’s a summary...

...[*It*] refers in general to powerful entities that transcend ordinary experience. After Homer’s time, the [adjective]...means anything ‘sent from heaven’ or ‘that which is divine’ and the [substantive; i.e., noun]...comes to mean ‘divine manifestation’ or ‘heaven’...In our [literature] the [substantive] [generally] denotes a malevolent force.

That selection is from the general, broad definition in BDAG. The lexicon then breaks down those two contrasting ideas into subcategories. There is a lot of detail, but the same ground is covered. The non-Christian Greeks saw these as powers similar to divinity, whereas Christians saw them as baneful powers. BDAG repeats something for both subcategories that is helpful. I’ll relate the broad definition for each to show you what it is...

1. transcendent incorporeal being [with] status between humans and deities, *daemon...semi-divine being, a divinity, spirit, (higher) power*, without [negative] connotation...
2. a hostile transcendent being [with] status between humans and deities, *spirit, power, hostile divinity, evil spirit*, the [negative] component may be either specific or contextual, and [with] the sense commonly associated [with] the loanword ‘demon’...

What I wanted to point out is that both subcategories stress the fact that these beings are “between” God/gods and humans. Now what other type of beings are between God and humankind? Angels, right? Now let’s think of Satan. He is a fallen angel (see Ezekiel 28, Isaiah 14, and Job 1-2). In the book of Revelation he is said to have his own underling angels who are fighting against God’s...

And war occurred in heaven: Michael and his angels waged war with the dragon, and the dragon and his angels waged war. And he was not strong [enough], nor was a place found for him [any] longer in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down—the ancient serpent [see Gen 3:1], the one being called Devil [“Slanderer”] and Satan [“Adversary”], the one leading astray [fig., deceiving] the whole inhabited earth—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. -- 12:7-9

This passage (along with the others that were referenced above) makes it clear that he is an angelic being. He is in the midst of other angels, fighting with angels. Now, what does all this have to do with demons? Well, what do demons do? They can possess people, right? Satan also can possess people, as he did with Judas Iscariot (John 13:27). Thus if Satan is an angel, then angels can possess people. Therefore, this proves that demons are fallen angels. After all, angels are called “spirits” in Hebrews 1:14.

When a group of angels fell a long time ago, some were immediately confined in a prison of sorts (see Jude 1:6). Yet Jude can’t be referring to all angels, for there has been a malevolent ruling class of these beings throughout world history (see Daniel 10; Ephesians 3:10, 6:12). There are still many malicious angels lurking about, and they are the ones who are terrorizing mankind.

B. Old Testament References

There actually isn’t any neat tie-in linguistically between *daimonion* in the New Testament with anything we find in the Old Testament. Having consulted many translations, there are four verses that are often rendered to include “demons”: Leviticus 17:7, Deuteronomy 32:17, Psalm 106:37, and 2 Chronicles 11:15.

Leviticus 17:7 and 2 Chronicles 11:15 *could* be referencing something like hairy satyrs (the Hebrew word merely means “hairy”). That is to say, there is the possibility that mythological creatures are being invoked, as indeed demons sometimes parade under such guises (see below).

The Hebrew term behind the popular “demon” rendering of Deuteronomy 32:17 and Psalm 106:37 is more interesting. Although its derivation is up for debate, it may be from a Babylonian word that specifically meant a demon. *The Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* explains...

Undoubtedly Hebrew [*shed*] is to be connected with the Babylonian word [*shedu*], a demon either good or evil. In pagan religions the line between gods and demons is not a constant one. There are demons who are beneficent and gods who are malicious. Generally speaking though, a demon was conceived as being less powerful than a god. In Mesopotamian thought the [*shedu*] was a supernatural protective power for whose presence the gods were invoked. Specifically, the function of [*shedu*] may have been to represent the vitality of the individual, his sexual potency...

However, in all four occurrences, the Biblical authors are merely describing pagan worship. They are not reporting any accounts of actual demonic activity.

This doesn't mean that demons are unknown in the Old Testament, but merely that there isn't a simple nomenclature. The indication as to the presence of demons comes through the common Hebrew word for “spirit.” The most prominent example of this can be seen with Saul. It is reported on multiple occasions that an “evil spirit” was terrorizing him (cf. 1 Samuel 16:14-23, 18:10, 19:9). It's worth especially noting at this point that the spirit was said to be sent at the behest of God. For example...

Now the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD terrorized him. -- 1 Samuel 16:14

We'll discuss Saul more at length in the next section.

The first mention of such an evil spirit actually occurs back in Judges 9:23. God is said to be involved here as well, sending discord between the two sinful parties that were responsible for sedition and murder...

Then God sent an evil spirit between Abimelech and the men of Shechem; and the men of Shechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech...

Not every mention of “spirit” in the Bible must represent a supernatural entity (cf. Numbers 5:14, 14:24; Hosea 4:12, 5:4; Isaiah 61:3), so this allusion may not be a reference to demons. I believe it is however. Another example of a spirit acting sinfully occurs in 1 Kings 22:19-23. This spirit tells God that it will cause prophets to lie, and he is given divine permission...

The LORD said, “Who will entice Ahab to go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead?” And one said this while another said that. Then a spirit came forward and stood before the LORD and said, “I will entice him.” The LORD said to him, “How?” And he said, “I will go out and be a deceiving spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.” Then He said, “You are to entice [him] and also prevail. Go and do so.” -- 1 Kings 22:20-22

Note that every example given is linked to heaven and to God. Thus, the idea that demons belong in the realm of the angelic is greatly enhanced.

On a side note, the New Testament also uses “spirit” to speak of demons. There are two prominent examples, and we’ll discuss them in the next section.

Wrapping up the Old Testament, there is a last category that probably should be mentioned when discussing demons. The Bible condemns spiritism of every sort. It’s popular for people to try to make a distinction between “good” witchcraft and “bad” witchcraft, and between evil soothsaying versus a “God-given” gift to communicate with the dead. This is all completely bogus. All spiritism is from the Devil.

The Bible’s position is made plain in Deuteronomy 18:10-12; and given that this is a part of the moral law, such actions are forever deemed sinful.

When you enter the land which the LORD your God gives you, you shall not learn to imitate the detestable things of those nations. There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, one who uses divination, one who practices witchcraft, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who casts a spell, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up

the dead. For whoever does these things is detestable to the LORD; and because of these detestable things the LORD your God will drive them out before you. -- Deuteronomy 18:9-12

Many people who practice such things are simply charlatans. However, there is the possibility of supernatural power being manifested through psychics and soothsayers, etc. We see pagan magicians in the Bible doing wonderful things. If the power is not from God, then who is it from? Demons must logically be involved.

In the book of Acts there was a famous wizard. As is common, people thought that such was from God (8:10). However, it was not. He became interested in Christianity when he saw the true supremacy of the Holy Spirit, yet his heart was in the thralldom of sin. Peter's condemnation of him is telling...

For I perceive you [as] being in the gall of bitterness and bond of unrighteousness. -- Acts 8:23

Peter didn't say, "Wow Simon, you already had the power of God before we came along. We're different spiritual brothers from the same mother!" No, he called him a sinner. His power had not been from the Lord.

Modern psychics and spiritists (etc.) often publish accounts of valiant heroism, as their love for humanity has caused them to place their pristine souls in harm's way, wrestling the snarling dragons to the ground. This is a stupendous gloss. None of us are valiant heroes with pristine souls. We're all simple, humble, run-of-the-mill sinners. Combine that with tampering into the supernatural—contrary to the dictates of God—and the actual picture will never be an extremely pretty one.

So in summation, the New Testament gives us a neat, cut-and-dry family of words which mean "demon" in a straightforward manner. The Old Testament doesn't have such terminology, although demons can be clearly seen via evil spirits of a heavenly origin. Finally, through the process of the occult and other similar schools of thought, people have historically tinkered with demonic powers, even when believing and claiming that they are from God.

III. Homiletic Instructions

A. Saul

Having mapped out a rough sketch of references in the Bible, let's go back and extract what we can find out about these evil entities through the texts. We'll just seek to focus on personal encounters that are reminiscent of demonic possession.

Saul is the first Biblical figure to have been the recipient of oppression or possession by demons. We've already reviewed the verse that initially stated what happened. Giving a bit more of the backstory, God had anointed him to be the first king of Israel. However, due to Saul's sinful failings, his anointing of power was replaced with a terrorizing spirit. It's worth highlighting again that the very first mention of such an attack makes it clear that God was in control of it.

One of the greatest traps in the world of demonology and spiritualism is this belief that humankind has the power and ability to solve the problems within another dimension. This leaves people enslaved to self-proclaimed clairvoyants, mediums, exorcists of every stripe and variety, and various other "ghost busters." A rank, limp agnosticism permeates the genre of the supernatural. It's as if God is powerless or sloppy when dealing with the spirit realm.

For example, there is this constant insinuation that God has somehow let many "ghosts" of human beings wander about in limbo. This is ridiculous, being found nowhere in the Bible. The only reason people believe this is because of the testimony of the spirits themselves. How could you trust them? Remember what was stated at the beginning: empiricism has nothing to do with demonology, for there is no way to verify independently what is objectively happening apart from resorting to the testimony of the demons themselves.

This selection from 1 Samuel makes it clear that if there is an evil spiritual presence, God is to be sought, as all such things are under his control. Had Saul sought the Lord and his righteousness, the implication is that God would have ceased to send this spiritual oppression. I'm not trying to oversimplify the massive subject of demonic oppression; yet I

am trying to expound what the Bible plainly depicts. At the end of the day, bad things never happen to good people, for there are no good people. It's true that we can't point a finger at the recipient of every tragedy (cf. Job), yet the answer to every spiritual malady is reverence to God and nearness to him (cf. Job again).

Continuing on with Saul, this demonic oppression had two disturbing characteristics. First of all it brought on a tremendous darkness upon Saul. The text we quoted above said it "terrorized" him. Later in the passage, when it depicts the relief Saul would receive, it is stated...

...And Saul would be refreshed and be well, and the evil spirit would depart from him. -- 16:23

Between these two poles we can learn of the characteristics of this spiritual oppression. First of all, it apparently happened on a continual basis, coming and going. Thus, not everyone who is struggling with the demonic has a resident evil perpetually. This is important, for I can't stress enough that the demonic is not a secret. You don't have to guess if someone is possessed, or if you yourself are having problems. When Saul was being terrorized the demon was there; when he found relief, it was away.

This idea that demons are something subtle and difficult to detect is ridiculous, but has also led to horrific abuses. I read a news article very recently where a baby was beaten to death with a Bible (among other things) because there was the fear that the child needed an exorcism. This case is terribly tragic, but such crimes are on the rise. Demons have large bells and whistles. You don't have to play the detective. This damaging, false dogma needs swiftly eradicated from the church before more people are needlessly harmed. Besides, hocus pocus rituals to rid a victim of demons are found nowhere in the Bible.

There will always be an "I can't understand this" factor in life, and many will cram harmful notions into that slot. Some choose to explain common depression via a notion that something is happening to them (or has happened to them) that they aren't completely aware of. This is where repressed memories, supposed alien abductions (that were only understood through hypnosis), and the belief in subtle demons come from. The cure for the common life should never be to lie to yourself—

or to lie about others. If a child or teen doesn't act how we think they should, it is not owing to a demon; it is owing to flesh and blood—theirs and ours.

The Hebrew word for “terrorize” is fairly rare. According to William Holladay, one meaning is to “be overtaken by sudden terror” (pg. 45). In another verbal stem it means to “terrify” or “startle” someone. He cites 1 Samuel 16 here. Another citation he offers in this category is Job 7:14...

Then You frighten me with dreams and **terrify** me by visions...

There is nothing specific we can say for sure, but whatever was happening to Saul was frightening the daylights out of him. He could have been seeing horrible hallucinations or bobbing in and out of reality altogether.

So the first bad thing that happened to Saul was that he himself suffered at the hands of this spirit. The other baneful consequence was that he became a potential harm to others. In chapters 18 and 19 of 1 Samuel there are two other accounts of Saul's demonic oppression. 1 Samuel 18:10 begins with the fact that the evil spirit was causing him to “rave.”

The word translated “rave” by the NASB is actually the common verb for “prophecy.” He was prophesying wildly through this demon. I liked the NASB rendering of “raved,” yet it must be understood that it is possible he was also relaying quasi-supernatural information of some sort at the time. We'll see this again in the New Testament.

Anyway, shortly thereafter he tried to kill David with a spear (1 Samuel 18:11). This attempted murder was repeated in 1 Samuel 19:9-10.

So cumulatively, this demon caused Saul to be terrified on many occasions, caused him to prophesy/rave, and caused him to try and commit murder on multiple occasions. Thus his own perception was affected, as was his speech and deeds. He became wild and violent. This is prototypical of what we'll find in the New Testament.

While turning there, let's begin by continuing on with our discussion of “spirits.” Then we'll conclude by surveying *daimon/daimonion* throughout the text.

B. Other Evil Spirits

A famous encounter with an evil spirit occurs in the book of Acts...

But some of the traveling about [or, itinerant] Jewish exorcists attempted to be naming the name of the Lord Jesus over the ones having evil spirits, saying, “We adjure you* by Jesus, whom Paul preaches.” Now [there] were some sons of Sceva, a Jewish high priest, seven [who were] doing this thing. But answering, the evil spirit said, “Jesus I know, and Paul I am acquainted with—but you*, who are you*?” And the man in whom was the evil spirit, leaping on them and having overpowered them, prevailed against them, with the result that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. -- 19:13-16

Looking at all the various accounts involving demons, we can glean bits of information about them. Here we learn of their knowledge of current affairs. They knew of Paul and his ministering. We also see of the great strength that they can exert. Here a single evil spirit overcomes seven grown men, and was even able to rip off their clothes.

This event was said to be reported far and wide in Ephesus, with the result that many people turned to the Lord Jesus Christ. Having been privy to this exhibition of God’s conquering, absolute authority, many forsook their interest in the occult...

And many of the ones having believed were coming, confessing and disclosing their [sinful] actions. Then a considerable [number] of the ones having practiced the magical arts, having collected their scrolls, began burning [them] before all. And they added up the prices of them and found [it totaled] five ten-thousands [i.e., 50,000] pieces of silver. -- Acts 19:18-19

This proliferation of pagan spiritism among the gentiles is also where we find our other prominent reference to a paranormal “spirit.” This also occurs in the book of Acts...

Then it happened as we [were] going to prayer, a certain slave-girl having a spirit of Python [i.e., in Greek mythology, a giant snake which guarded the oracle at Delphi; fig., having a fortune-telling spirit] met us, who brought much profit to her masters by fortune-

telling. This [girl], having closely followed Paul and us, kept crying out, saying, “These men are slaves of the Most High God, who declare to us [the] way of salvation!” Now she was doing this for many days. But Paul having been greatly annoyed and having turned, said to the spirit, “I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out from her!” And it came out that very hour [or, moment]! -- 16:16-18

Technically speaking, had it not been for the testimony that it “came out,” then we couldn’t be sure that a demon was being referenced. As BDAG points out, this could have referred to the ancient practice of the ventriloquist (pgs. 896-897).

Here we see their ability to relay unknown information to a limited extent. As we saw in Acts 19, they are aware of current events. Thus, there doesn’t have to have been any real ability to fortune-tell here. If you have the hidden ability to be aware of happenings near and far then there will be the perception of clairvoyance. I knew of a man who was impressed because a fortune teller was able correctly to announce that a relative of his had recently died her hair. If a demon has the ability to travel and/or to communicate with other spirits, then any current information could be related. This proves the existence of demons, but doesn’t really prove any intrinsic power on their part to speak of the future. It’s more like a supernatural parlour trick. This is also employed by demons when they disguise themselves as ghosts of historic figures, which is an incredibly popular phenomenon.

However, anyone displaying an ability to know obscure information while calling themselves a psychic or medium (etc.) may be having a real encounter with the demonic. They are not a heroic spiritual expert (*there are no such experts*), ridding the world of troubled ghosts; rather, they are a loose cannon, playing with fire. This is why it’s so dangerous to mess with even seemingly benign things such as fortune telling or mediums. Apart from the exceptional story of the witch at En-dor (*where the deceased Samuel appeared to the shock of the medium; 1 Samuel 28; note, even he wasn’t a ghost in limbo*), there are no ghosts (departed human spirits) mentioned anywhere in the Bible which communicate in the human realm. There are only demons. If someone is able to speak of obscure knowledge, they are tampering with the

same forces that were able to attack and strip seven grown men. I think there are safer ways to find out if your relative has become a brunette.

As a closing thought, also note that the possessed girl in Acts was heralding Paul's missionary efforts. Just because someone says nice things about the Bible doesn't mean that they are truly speaking from God.

[Update:]

For this updated edition, I thought I'd include information from the Septuagint (Lust, pg. 314). The Septuagint (LXX) was the Greek translation of the Old Testament which predated the Christian era. Many of the early Christians quoted from it, even in the New Testament.

Remember that in the New Testament there are two key words: *daimon* and *daimonion*.

Just like in the New Testament, *daimon* is very rare in the LXX. It only occurs in Isaiah 65:11...

But you who forsake the LORD, who forget My holy mountain, who set a table for **Fortune**, and who fill [cups] with mixed wine for Destiny, I will destine you for the sword, and all of you will bow down to the slaughter. Because I called, but you did not answer; I spoke, but you did not hear. And you did evil in My sight and chose that in which I did not delight. -- Isaiah 65:11-12

Instead of "Fortune," the LXX used *daimon*. This is like the other Old Testament references to demons that we saw; i.e., it is just a pagan description. Incidentally though, this perhaps influenced Paul...

But [I am saying that] what the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons and not to God. And I do not want you* to become participants of the demons. You* are not able to be drinking [the] cup of [the] Lord and [the] cup of demons; you* are not able to be partaking of [the] table of [the] Lord and of [the] table of demons. -- 1 Corinthians 10:20-21

The only occurrence of *daimon* in the entire Old Testament dealt with the same theme that Paul employed—the table of the Lord.

As for *daimonion*, just like in the New Testament, this term is more common; however, it's still fairly rare. It occurs in Deuteronomy 32:17, Isaiah 13:21/34:14/65:3, and Psalm 91:6 (90:6 in the LXX).

We've already made mention of Deuteronomy 32:17. This was one of the "hairy" references. It's noteworthy that the LXX authors thought this was a demon.

As for Isaiah...

But desert creatures will lie down there, and their houses will be full of owls [Or *howling creatures*]; ostriches also will live there, and shaggy goats [Or *goat demons*] will frolic there. -- 13:21

This is another reference to the "hairy" creatures. When I gave Deuteronomy 32:17 and Psalm 106:37 in relation to these satyrs, I was just trying to give popular renderings in English translations. You see, this word [*sa'ir*] can just mean a goat (cf. Genesis 37:31) or a hairy person (Genesis 27:11), etc. Many English translations prefer to render Isaiah 13:21 as referencing normal animals.

Moving on, the quote from Isaiah 34:14 is just like the one from 13:21. It is probably just speaking of exotic animals in wastelands. There could be a slight allusion to demons, as the wasteland motif in Isaiah is a picture of Hell—where all demons shall go.

The quote from Isaiah 65:3 is very similar to the usage of *daimon* in 65:11. It is just a simple gloss that is providing extra commentary on pagan practices.

Finally, there's Psalm 91:6...

Of the pestilence that stalks in darkness, or of the destruction that lays waste at noon.

There's no demon there, right? Well, the ancient Hebrews thought there was something odd going on here. The LXX and the Targum reflect this idea, as Adam Clarke explains...

The [rabbis] supposed that the empire of death was under two demons, one of which ruled by *day*, the other by *night*. The *Vulgate* and *Septuagint* have-the *noonday devil*. The ancients thought that

there were some demons who had the power to injure particularly at *noonday*.

Hence the expression, “Noonday devil.”

Well, the LXX basically just presents what we already found from our (Hebrew) Old Testament section. Yet, that fact is interesting in and of itself. Since the LXX didn’t have much to say about demons, their prominence in the New Testament is even more remarkable.

Let’s consider that topic now...

C. The Daimonion

Just to refresh your memory, it is under the family of words—including the most popular “daimonion”—that the majority of references to demons are found in the Bible. As we have seen, Saul was the first major case of demonic oppression. This is interesting, for he comes pretty late in the narrative of the Old Testament. Why start with him? I write extensively about Bible prophecy, and one fact that I’m often drawn to is Saul’s being a chief foreshadowing of the eschaton’s Antichrist. This could have something to do with possession playing a part of the future eschatological scenario.

Another reason for Saul being the prototype is because of his relation to David. Saul’s kingship would give way to David’s. Moreover, God promised that the Messiah would be born through David’s lineage one day. Thus, King David is a major plot-point in terms of salvation history. Owing to this, a demonic attack against David’s life is not surprising.

Similarly, conservative commentators have debated over the significance of the proliferation of demons in the New Testament. Were there so many examples because the evil realm was set on impeding the Messiah? I think it can be said that demons are much more intelligently organized than we might give them credit for. What they do might seem haphazard, as lone-wolf terrorists of a spiritual sort. However, considering the Ephesians quote about Paul’s wrestling (6:12), they actually are a part of a well-oiled, military-like machine. Thus, the numbers that the Lord Jesus Christ encountered were probably

disproportionate to what any of us could expect to find, as they probably were strategically arrayed.

Anyway, let's look at some of the examples now and glean a few more facts, and then I'd like to conclude this section by looking at a major offensive the maleficent soldiery of ethereal beings are waging in our generation.

The most famous example of demonic possession in the New Testament is the encounter the Lord Jesus Christ had with the "legion" near the banks of the Sea of Galilee. The story is told in all three synoptic Gospels (*interestingly, John never depicts an active daimonion in his Gospel*). You're probably very familiar with it, but please bear with me anyhow.

Jesus Christ and his disciples had just crossed over the sea when a notorious man (*Matthew says two men—8:28; one was probably a silent partner*) approached them. He was naked and living among tombs. He was incredibly violent, keeping people from traveling near him. Having seen Jesus Christ he came near and said...

What to me and to You [fig., What have I to do with You], Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg You, do not torment me! -- Luke 8:28

Details are given that people had tried to subdue him with chains and like things many times, but he would always break free from them. Moreover, he was constantly being driven out to the wilderness, and was also taken to hurting himself and yelling throughout the day and night (Mark 5:5).

He told the Lord that his name was "legion," for there were many demons involved. They pleaded with Jesus Christ not to punish them "before [the] time" (Matthew 8:29). He had complete authority over them, and they knew it. They ultimately made a strange request and it was granted...

And he [*the demoniac*] kept imploring Him that He would not command them to go away into the bottomless pit [or, the abyss]. Now a herd of many pigs was in that place being fed in the mountain, and they kept imploring Him that He would permit them

to enter into these, and He permitted them. Then the demons having gone out from the man, entered into the pigs, and the herd stampeded down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned! -- Luke 8:31-33

So let's review the story, especially noting reoccurring themes within parallel accounts. He was naked and living in tombs. This shows the inclination towards what is shameful and unclean. We saw that the demon who overpowered the seven men also stripped them naked. It's interesting that as society drifts further from God it becomes more obsessed with nudity, the occult, and extreme violence. Demons like to degrade and dishonour.

The possessed man was also very violent—to himself and others. We saw this with Saul, who tried on multiple occasions to murder David. It's doubtless that demons have played a part in many atrocities. For example, the crime scenes that the Manson family were responsible for seemed frightfully similar to a haunted house. It's also probable that men like Dahmer and Bundy and Berkowitz had demonic influences in their lives.

The demons implored the Lord not to be sent away into the abyss and not to be destroyed before the time appointed. This goes to show their knowledge of eschatology. They are aware of the coming Day of Judgment and what the Bible says will happen to every condemned human and angel.

But again, we should take comfort in the fact that these fierce demons were completely subservient to Jesus Christ. This vital element is repeated again in the synoptic Gospels.

Earlier in the ministry of Jesus Christ, he has a run-in with a demon inside of a synagogue. This sadly details the fact that evil spirits can be at home within religious institutions. The silly idea that religious emblems have some sort of repellent power must be the greatest ongoing joke within their realm. I'm sure there are cases where so-called "holy water" seemed to be a bother to a demon, but remember: *demonism has nothing to do with empiricism*. In the world of the demonic you can't "investigate" your way to the truth. After all, Satan, the chief of the demons, is called the father of lies (John 8:44).

Anyway, the Lord Jesus Christ confronts the demon within the synagogue...

...It cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Away! What to us and to You [fig., What have we to do with You], Jesus, O Nazarene? Did You come to destroy us? I know You, who You are—the Holy One of God!" And Jesus rebuked it, saying, "Be silenced, and come out from him!" And the demon having thrown him down into [the] midst, came out from him, in no way having harmed him! And amazement came upon all, and they were conversing with one another, saying, "What [is] this word, that with authority and power He commands the unclean [or, defiling] spirits, and they come out?"
-- Luke 4:33-36

I quoted this to show their reverence to the Lord; but while we're here I'd like to underscore something else which I alluded to earlier. Biblical exorcisms are completely different from most modern attempts. Not only is there the gaudy tomfoolery of ceremonial Christianity, but unbridled tongue-speaking and violence to the demonic have become frequent parts of elongated, bizarre rituals. We don't see any of that in the Bible. We see the Lord casting out the demons with his Word, and we also see his command to resort to "prayer and fasting" (Matthew 17:21). There are no other means employed that we are to understand as prototypical.

Finally, the account of the possessed near the shore of Galilee also shows the incredible number of demons. They said that they were "legion," which would indicate thousands. It would have been easy to consider them to be lying, yet given the fact that they were able to control a large herd of pigs, their numbers must have been truly great.

Moving on from that account, there are just three other facts that I'd like to discuss.

First of all, demons can be responsible for debilitations. On several occasions in the Gospels the blind and mute were said to have had demons cast out while being restored (cf. Matthew 9:32-33, 12:22; etc.). It's hard to know exactly what was going on, as clearly it's possible to simply be blind or unable to speak because of physical maladies, which the Bible also acknowledges. My guess would be that these people

displayed other signs of possession, and the blindness or dumbness was just a part of that package. There seems to be a strong connection between head trauma and possession. Many people claim to hear voices (etc.) after drug use, but also in the midst of incredibly stressful situations or head injuries. There seems to be a window to the inner person through some region of the brain, which is easier for spirits to access in some circumstances. This is just a loose theory. I offer no Biblical proof, although consider the strongman speech of the Lord Jesus (Matthew 12:29). Perhaps that verse can mean that a weakened mind is more open to demons.

More significantly, it is also written that demons have the ability to influence religious teachings...

Now the Spirit explicitly says that in latter times some will fall away [or, apostatize] from the faith, **paying attention to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons**, in hypocrisy [or, insincerity] of liars, having been seared in their own conscience, forbidding to be marrying, [commanding] to be abstaining from foods which God created for receiving with thanksgiving by the [ones who are] faithful and have acknowledged the truth. Because every[thing] created by God [is] good, and nothing [is to be] rejected, [if] being received with thanksgiving. -- 1 Timothy 4:1-4

It's an interesting fact that many cultic religions have twisted normal marriage and outlawed certain, tasty foods. This was true of David Koresh and Jim Jones. Remember, demons like to degrade and torture. They like to turn the human being away from that which is natural, wholesome, and brings lasting joy.

This quote from 1 Timothy however has a greater application. The passage makes it clear that demonic teachings can find their way into the Christian church. What's more, the doctrine can become so entrenched that people will follow the advice as if it were the command of God. This should keep us on guard. All these sort of dogmas arise because some allegedly holy person had a supposed dream or vision or angelic visitor, etc. Steer clear of such novel baloney, for God has already given us all things for life and godliness. He is not inventing new doctrine (Jude 1:3).

The last of the remaining three facts is that demons will give great signs in the future. This is specifically mentioned in 2 Thessalonians 2 and in Revelation 16. Specifically, Paul relates in Thessalonians that many wonders will accompany the time of the Antichrist. Revelation 16 pictures demons going forth, doing wonders, and causing the kings of the earth to travel unto Armageddon. Again, this teaches that they are able to convince people of falsehood through visual and audible communication. Therefore, we should be on guard against people who want to change established doctrine on account of their prophetic inclinations.

Bringing up the end times and false signs leads us to the last subcategory, where I'd like to draw attention to a massive demonic pandemic which is going on in our generation...

D. The Neo-Demonism of UFOs

The UFO phenomenon is global and popular—and the hoopla is growing exponentially. They are responsible for (short-term) physical craft, lights, spiritual messages, visions, (short-term) visitations, and countless other amazing feats. This master deception could only be carried out by a massive army of powerful creatures. Such is the world of fallen angels. I believe it is all aimed at spreading confusion in the end times, giving counterfeit explanations for the great things that are set to happen according to the eschatological texts.

The demonic nature of UFOs can clearly be seen when looking objectively at the detailed accounts that are out there. When there is a lot of information given about a particular incident, there is always a flaw in the spaceman story. Let me give you a couple of examples.

I've written about the Rendlesham Forest incident in the past, yet I've been going over it again because Nick Pope has written a book about it. He has penned the account because he believes it to have been an incredibly important affair. In case you don't know, Pope was a British government employee tasked with studying UFOs. If he thinks it's a significant case, then it must be, for he has reviewed and investigated scores of them. He states in the introduction...

...The Rendlesham Forest incident is by far the best-documented and most compelling UFO incident ever to have taken place...

The decades-old event involved a group of soldiers who went into some woods near military installations around Christmastime. What they saw as strange lights only became more fantastic the closer they investigated. One of the central figures was a man named Jim Penniston. He made it closest to the UFO on the first night of examination, claiming even to have approached and touched it. The craft eventually flew off in his presence...

Because the clearing was small and the trees were dense, at times the object seemed as if it had to maneuver through the trees. Finally, when it had cleared the trees, it accelerated away in an instant. Penniston, methodical and professional in the face of everything, wrote the following observation in his police notebook: "Speed—impossible." (from chapter 1)

He had stared at the object and touched it; moreover, it had been able to break tree limbs and leave heavy impressions on the ground. Yet, in an instant, it shot away so fast that he knew it was beyond explanation. Some heavy physical object couldn't accelerate that speedily. Impossible physical movement of "craft" is a common feature with these reports. For example, a remarkable incident occurred in Iran decades ago...

General Parviz Jafari (Ret.) of the Iranian Air Force wrote...

At about 11:00 p.m. on the evening of September 18, 1976, citizens were frightened by the circling of an unknown object over Tehran at a low altitude...I was ordered to take off in a second jet to approach the object, which I was piloting...I approached, and I got close to it, maybe seventy miles or so in a climb situation. All of a sudden, it jumped about 10 degrees to the right. In an instant! Ten degrees... and then again it jumped 10 degrees, and then again...We kept it locked on with radar...I thought this was my chance to fire at it. But when it—whatever it was—was close to me, my weapons jammed and my radio communications were garbled. We got closer, to 25 miles at our twelve o'clock position. All of a sudden it jumped back to 27 miles in an instant...Then I was startled by a round object which

came out of the primary object and started coming straight toward me...I attempted to fire, and looked at the panel to confirm my selection of the missile. Suddenly, nothing was working. The weapons control panel was out... (Kean, from chapter 9)

Obviously no craft could move this way; moreover, the intelligence that was manifesting this UFO could read Mr. Jafari's mind, anticipating his use of weapons and shutting down the appropriate systems.

There are two options in light of this: the craft isn't really a craft at all, or they possess technology that we don't even begin to understand. Of course a diehard alien aficionado will claim the latter, yet I would be very sceptical of that option even if I didn't believe that they were demons.

One of the reasons why I'd be sceptical is because the UFO phenomenon is forever mixing very convincing space-travel motifs with the ridiculous and absurd. This can be seen in the accounts of alien abduction. One of the most important works on this subject is *Alien Encounters* by David Jacobs. He interviewed scores of abductees and looked for similarities in their stories. His abduction narrative is rife with mixture of scientific spaceships and abject silliness.

Unfortunately, Jacobs acts as sort of a guardian of the information. He tries to shield the reader from the obvious implications of all the bizarre aspects of his reports. For example, not all people who have had abduction experiences have initially seen aliens...

...One abductee said she saw a wolf in her bedroom one night. The wolf was standing squarely on her bed looking her in the eyes. She clearly remembered its fur, fangs, and eyes. Other abductees have claimed to have seen monkeys, owls, deer, and other animals. (pg. 50)

This would seem to be fatal to the space-traveler theory of UFOs. However, Jacobs explains these as "screen memories." In other words, aliens have tried to mask their presence by interjecting these animals. Why would they do this? There's always this ridiculous conundrum with UFOs. They want to remain hidden (so the story goes), yet they leave behind more evidence to their crime than O.J. Why would they plant a "screen memory?"

The bizarre accounts continue as Jacob's cumulative research keeps unfolding. After the aliens enter the person's room, then the captive must be transported. This is supposed to have happened numerous times (why?), yet there are next to no accounts where anyone sees their neighbour being sucked out of their house via a celestial intruder. Jacobs attempts an explanation...

In spite of hundreds of accounts of people flying through closed windows, it is exceedingly rare to find an outside witness who has observed it. Therefore, although it sounds impossible, the physical mechanism that allows people to pass through solid objects probably renders them invisible, at least for this part of the abduction experience. (pg. 51)

Hmm; yes, that is one possible explanation. Yet I think a better one is that no one sees their neighbours being sucked through glass because no one is being sucked through glass.

UFOs are merely the latest demonic guise in a long string of supernatural, deceptive habiliments. Yesterday they were werewolves, satyrs, or fairies. They are able to morph their appearance to fit the culture. Many authors have pointed out the similarities between ancient supernatural lore and modern UFOs. For example, Nick Pope—who wrote the above-cited book about Rendlesham Forest—detailed some of the parallels between UFOs and fairy-folk in another book...

One chapter dwells on the similarities between experiences with “little people” and alien encounters...

Fairy, dwarf, goblin, hobgoblin, pixie, elf, sprite, abatwa, sidhe. These are just a few of the words used to describe the little people. These accounts come from all around the world, and one of the most likely explanations when an account of something is found in such a cross-cultural pattern is that what is being described genuinely exists, in some form... (from chapter 1)

Pope lays out in this section several interesting similarities.

The first is their size:

The most significant physical characteristic is of course the small size of many of these strange beings. Straight away one sees a link

between these folkloric descriptions and more modern accounts of the small, grey beings often reported as being responsible for alien abductions.

Next, he mentions the proclivity for night-time visitations, and also the bizarre emphasis on reproductive programs. On a footnote, we see here the emphasis on fear and sex. What else would you expect from demons?

Most fairy activity occurs at night, and often includes abducting a human baby and replacing it with a replica, known as a *changeling*...

...Cross-cultural folkloric beliefs about the taking of babies, and about changelings, are mirrored in accounts of alien abductions where the creation of hybrid human/alien babies is a central theme, and is the favourite theory of those ufologists who make a particular study of abductions. Variations on this theme include the accounts of marriages between fairy folk and humans, and intriguing stories of midwives being abducted to assist with fairy births. Again, there is an inescapable parallel with the whole concept of the genetic breeding programme that many ufologists insist lies behind the modern abduction phenomenon...

Then, there is a pronounced dilemma in regards to the passing of time...

There are other common themes; other clues that point to a link between the ancient and the modern accounts. In fairyland, time does not run as it does in the normal world. Witness the many accounts of people taken away by the fairies who find that on their return much more time has elapsed than they had realised.

That has been a very famous aspect of ufology. Famously, this was a feature of Betty and Barney Hill's experience. It's often lost time that encourages people to seek explanations. Then, after undergoing hypnotic treatments, all the "information" about aliens pours forth.

Finally, both genres are very dependent on altered states. It is out of this fog that the recipient of these violations struggle for answers...

Folkloric tales of human interaction with fairies often focus on the otherworldly nature of such encounters. It is not simply that time

behaves in peculiar ways; there is an altered state of consciousness. The participants seem to enter another universe altogether. This is an effect which is also to be found in many modern-day alien abductions.

The parallels are very strong and very chilling.

The demons have always used supernaturalism to beguile people. Now, being as the end days may be approaching, their activity has been turned up to max-capacity. As I've related in the past, I believe that demons are on a mission to cloud the waters of the apocalypse. They want to provide a counter-narrative to God's powerful judgments. People would much rather have space aliens to contend with in the future as opposed to the judgment of an all-powerful and hallowed God.

IV. Conclusion

I've sought to present a short, Biblical survey of demons. My goal was to provide the reader with a primer as to what the Bible says on the matter. I haven't attempted to delve into the hairy world of exorcisms too much, for that is a difficult topic. In short, I commend the Roman Catholic Church for caring a lot more about this subject than your average evangelical pastor. Moreover, I believe it may be possible for God to use any person to assist in fighting a demonic outburst.

For example, the Lord Jesus Christ said when his adversaries were slandering him...

And if I cast out the demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your* sons [fig., followers] cast [them] out? For this reason, they will be your* judges. -- Matthew 12:27

He seems to imply that these adversaries had actually cast out demons. A like implication can be extracted from a text found earlier in Matthew...

Many will say to Me in that day, "Lord, Lord, we prophesied in Your name, and **cast out demons in Your name**, and did many miraculous works in Your name, did we not?" And then I will declare to them, "I never knew you*; be departing from Me, the ones practicing lawlessness!" -- 7:22-23

Therefore, I don't want to interject myself into the conversation by pretending to know what God has been willing to use in helping people. I think the psychiatrist and the quasi-Christian exorcist may have similar beneficial results in pacifying an extremely volatile situation. Pacification is good, but there needs to be a deep, abiding cure as well. That abiding cure can only come through a personal relationship with God, through Jesus Christ his Son.

The Lord Jesus Christ said something to this effect while lecturing on the subject of demons...

But when the unclean [or, defiling] spirit goes out from the person, it goes through waterless places seeking rest and does not find [any]. Then it says, "I will return to my house from where I came out." And having come, it finds [it] unoccupied, having been swept and having been put in order. Then it goes and takes with itself seven different spirits more evil than itself, and having entered in, they dwell there; and the last [state] of that person becomes worse [than] the first... -- Matthew 12:43-45

It's not merely enough to cast Satan out. We must also bring Christ in. This can be done by calling out to God, confessing that we are sinners, and asking to be forgiven and redeemed through the death of Christ on our behalf. Becoming born again of God is the greatest offensive and defensive weapon that we can acquire in any struggle with the demonic. However, it's not unheard of that people with Christian experiences can still go off the deep end. Ted Bundy had an interest in Christianity before his crimes began. We must not only trust in Christ, but we must make our calling and election sure, and also seek to know him and walk with him through prayer and Bible study.

After all, God has indeed given us all things for life and godliness, and these things are bound up with the testimony of his Son. Demons are indeed permeating the culture; yet, through Jesus Christ, we can be lifted out of the culture...

His divine power has given to us all the [things] pertaining to life and godliness through the full [or, true] knowledge of the One having called us by glory and excellence, through which the most precious and great promises have been given to us, so that through

these you* shall become participants of a divine nature [or, sharers in [the] divine nature], having escaped from the corruption [that is] in [the] world by lust. -- 2 Peter 1:3-4

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Works by Me

* * *

[*Anything not here that bears my name I've discarded due to poorness of quality.*]

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A Fortnight from God (A Dialogue with Dom)

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