

# Can a Believer be Demon Possessed?

## GOSPELS

This period shows many examples of demon possession. The presence of Jesus and casting out demons relate directly to the Messiah's offer of the kingdom to Israel (**Mt.12:28**). Speaking to the Pharisees, Jesus told them, "But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you." The presence of demons display's the power and authority of Jesus over them. The King of the kingdom is present in the person of the Messiah. This is why Jesus said, "the kingdom of God has come upon you."

The multitudes recognized the work of the Messiah was before them. They responded to Jesus' healings and casting out those demon-possessed with "the Son of David." This is a messianic title for the awaited King. "22Then there was brought to Him a demon-possessed man who was blind and dumb, and He healed him, so that the dumb man spoke and saw. 23And all the multitudes were amazed, and began to say, 'This man cannot be the Son of David, can he?' (**Mt.12:22-23**).

Jesus proves He has authority over Satan and demons by casting out the demon-possessed (**Mt.8:16-17**). "16And when evening had come, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed; and He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were ill. 17in order that what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, 'He Himself took our infirmities and carried away our diseases.'" This is in fulfillment of Isaiah 53:4. Isaiah speaks of the suffering servant saying, "Surely our griefs He Himself bore, and our sorrows He carried; yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken of God, and afflicted." When the people saw Jesus' authority over the demons, they should have remembered Isaiah, and recognized that the King is present and the kingdom is at hand (offered).

Some use **Luke 13:10-16** as evidence that a believer may be possessed by a demon, because "a daughter of Abraham" had been bound by Satan for 18 years (Lk.13:16). The phrase "daughter of Abraham" simply means one who is a descended of Abraham. Just because someone is a descendant of Abraham does NOT make them a believer (See Jn.8:37; Ro.9:6-8). It is a fallacy to assume she was.

### SUMMARY

*Jesus' authority over demons demonstrates that He is the Messiah and is offering the kingdom. The multitudes recognized this by calling Jesus the Messianic title, "Son of David." It is not good practice to base theology merely on the Gospels, for this was a unique period when the kingdom was being offered, and the very king was present. There are no degrees of demon-possession. One has a demon in them or not.*

## ACTS

**Ac.8:4-8** "7For in the case of many who had unclean spirits, they were coming out of them shouting with a loud voice; and many who had been paralyzed and lame were healed. 8And there was much rejoicing in that city."

**Ac.16:16-18** Paul cast out the spirit from the slave-girl. This got Paul in trouble from those who wanted to profit from the spirit of divination.

**Ac.19:11-20** Paul cast out the evil spirits at Ephesus. This resulted in "the name of the Lord Jesus being magnified" (v.17).

### SUMMARY

*This authority to cast out demons (Lk.9:1) extends through the lives of the Apostles as Christ's representative. This power validated their Apostleship. It should NOT be considered normative for believers today, who have not been given the same authority to cast out demons as the Apostles. Apostolic authority ended with the death of the Apostles. This same authority has not been commanded or transferred to believers today.*

## EPISTLES / CHURCH AGE

**Jn.17:15** Jesus prayed to the Father to keep us "from the evil one." Jesus, Who always prays in the will of the Father, prayed a prayer that God will answer. We will be kept from Satan's harm. Jesus' prayer is a promise to us of protection as believers. This does not apply to unbelievers.

**1 Jn.5:18-19** "18We know that no one who is born of God sins; but He who was born of God keeps him and the evil one does not touch him. 19We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one." Scripture is clear that God does NOT allow Satan to touch us. However, a believer who chooses to stay in sin may have his body turned over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh that the spirit may be saved (1Co.5:5). He is not possessed, but physically killed.

**1 Jn.4:4** "You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world." The "He" who is in us is the Holy Spirit. The "he" who is in the world is the Devil. The Holy Spirit is always greater than the Devil, and will prevail to protect us.

### SUMMARY

*Demons promote false doctrine (1Ti.4:1-3); they are associated with idolatry (1Co.10:20); they cause divisions (Ja.3:13-16); Satan wars against God's plans (Ep.6:11-12). The epistles are specifically written as instruction to the church. But the epistles do not teach anywhere for us to deal directly with demons. They teach their existence, and reveals their activity, but no formula is provided to deal directly with them. We are told to "resist" (Ja.4:7) and "test the spirits" (1Jn.4:1), but never cast out or dialogue with them. The emphasis in the epistles for the believer is on dealing with the flesh and sin (Ro.8:4-10; Ga.5:16-17), not demons.*

SUMMARY

*Scripture provides no examples of any believer being possessed by demons. Some Christians resort to experience or clinical evidence to find "formulas" for exorcism or demonic freedom. If it is possible for a believer to be possessed, the Word of God, which is sufficient for all matters of Christian life (2Pe.1:3), would at least address it. "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue" (KJV). Experiences cannot add to the Word of God. Also, why should we think clinical medicine would have any idea how to deal with spiritual matters. Sin and spiritual matters cannot be evaluated. For physical concerns clinical medicine makes since. But spiritual matters find their answer solely in the Word of God. Those who seek, however sincere, a formula from experience or medicine, discredits the finished work of Christ in the life of the believer and the indwelling Holy Spirit.*

SUMMARY