



### LESSON 20

# DEMONISM

## INTRODUCTION

Having exposed the superstitious pagan origin of Spiritism (the belief in a mythical “spirit realm” inhabited by good and bad “spirit beings,” we can now examine a further aspect of this diabolical philosophy: **Demonism** (the belief in mythical “spirit beings” that scare, torment and possess the minds and bodies of people). This perverted myth has been used over the centuries by pagan priests to control people through fear. Once indoctrinated to believe in the existence of so-called “supernatural beings” (“demons,” “devils,” “ghosts,” etc.) that have power to incarnate, possess people, control and torment them, a person’s mind becomes vulnerable to priestcraft manipulation. However, knowledge of the true scriptural meaning of “spirit” (motivation, disposition) frees us from that deception.

As we’ve explained the true meaning of “spirit,” we will now examine the scriptural use of the terms “unclean spirit,” “evil spirit,” “devil,” and “demon.” We’ll also examine the expressions, “being possessed” and “casting out.” Once superstition and mysticism are removed, the truth of these Biblical terms and expressions is revealed and the priestcraft’s manipulative schemes are exposed.

## EVIL AND UNCLEAN SPIRIT(S)

In the *King James Bible*, the terms “evil spirit(s)” and “unclean spirit(s)” appear thirty-four times. A person inclined toward demonism will interpret these references as instances referring to wicked supernatural “spirit beings.” However, this is not the case, as we will see.

KING JAMES TRANSLATIONS	
“evil spirit(s)” 13 times	“unclean spirit(s)” 21 times

## EVIL SPIRIT(S)

### FIND THE ANSWERS

#### Read Judges 9.

1. Verse 23 states that God sent an \_\_\_\_\_ spirit between Abimelech and the men of Shechem.
2. According to verse 23, what was the result of this action? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Does the above verse mean that God sent an invisible “spirit being” to work trouble between Abimelech and the men of Shechem? Nowhere in this episode is there any evidence of such a mythical creature. When we apply the correct meaning of “spirit” to this passage, we can see that God caused the men of Shechem to have an adverse disposition or attitude toward Abimelech that motivated them to do bad things against him. The treachery done to Abimelech was not the work of a mythical “spirit being.” Rather, it was the result of a bad attitude or motivation on the part of the men of Shechem.

### FIND THE ANSWERS

#### Read 1 Samuel 16.

3. According to verses 15 and 16, what was it that troubled Saul? \_\_\_\_\_
4. From where did this trouble come? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Verse 23 states that when David played a harp, Saul was \_\_\_\_\_ and was \_\_\_\_\_
6. What then departed from Saul? \_\_\_\_\_

Are we to believe that God caused a wicked “spirit being” to possess and trouble Saul, and that David’s harp playing caused this creature to leave him? Such a proposition is ridiculous. Again, applying the correct meaning of “spirit” to this account, we can see that Saul was troubled by an adverse disposition or state of mind – i.e., he was disturbed, agitated, irritated. David’s playing soothed him and made him feel better – the mental anguish subsided. No mythical creature left him; rather, his adverse disposition was replaced with a calm state of mind.

### FIND THE ANSWERS

#### Read 1 Samuel 18:6-16.

7. What does verse 10 indicate came upon Saul? \_\_\_\_\_
8. According to verse 11, what did Saul try to do to David? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Verses 12 and 15 indicate that Saul was \_\_\_\_\_ of David.

Did a wicked “spirit being” possess Saul and try to kill David? No, Saul was driven by evil motives – i.e. he was motivated to kill David because Saul feared David and had adverse feelings toward him. If it had been a supernatural “spirit being” why would it be afraid of a mortal man? However, Saul feared David’s popularity with the people, and because Yahweh was with David and not with Saul. Saul was motivated by a spirit of jealousy and fear, not by an imagined mythical spook creature. See 1 Samuel 19 for a similar attempt to kill David.

### FIND THE ANSWERS

**Read Luke 7:18-22.**

1. Verse 21 states, “And in that same hour He [Jesus] cured many of their \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, and of \_\_\_\_\_; and unto many that were \_\_\_\_\_ He gave sight.”
2. In describing His healings in verse 22, did Jesus say anything about casting so-called evil “spirit beings” out of people? \_\_\_\_\_

Applying the correct meaning of “spirit” to this passage, we see that Jesus cured people of adverse mental dispositions – i.e., bad motives – as well as physical ailments. This included erroneous beliefs and thoughts that existed in their minds. The preaching of the gospel (the giving of truth) cured the problem of ignorance. Replacing false information and false beliefs with truth is what Jesus did for people. He replaced bad motives and patterns of thought with godly motives and Christian thoughts. He is doing this today. Scripture calls this the giving of life through the New Covenant. This giving of life is a tremendous healing process. To attribute this miracle to the casting out of so-called wicked “spirit beings” is a tragedy and a disgrace to the glory of Christ and His gospel.

### FIND THE ANSWERS

**Read Acts 19:11-20.**

3. According to verse 12, \_\_\_\_\_ departed from the sick and \_\_\_\_\_ went out of them.

Notice how diseases, as well as bad motives, departed from the sick. Are we to believe that these “diseases” were living creatures? No! Why then would the bad motives be living creatures? Both departed from people, but that doesn’t indicate they were live creatures. Obviously, this verse means that sick people were cured of their bad states of mind (evil spirits) as well as their physical infirmities (diseases).

### FIND THE ANSWERS

**Read Acts 19:11-20. (cont’d)**

4. According to verse 13, \_\_\_\_\_ called over those which had evil spirits and said, “We \_\_\_\_\_ you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth.”

In the preceding passage, the word “adjure” is translated from the Greek word “horkizo” (#3726 in *Strong’s Concordance*) which is defined as “to put on oath, i.e., make swear.” The word “exorcists” is translated from the Greek word “exorkistes” (#1845 in *Strong’s*) which is defined as “one that binds by an oath (or spell), i.e., an exorcist (conjurer).” According to *Strong’s*, this word is derived in part from #3726 which was defined above. These exorcists were practicing magic, or sorcery, and claiming it to be in the name of Jesus (by his authority). Obviously, these were religious con-men.

## CONJURE

1. To call upon or entreat solemnly, especially by an oath. 2. To summon by oath or magic spell. 3. To cause or effect by magic.

## CONJURER

1. One who practices magic or legerdemain (sleight of hand). 2. One who entreats.

*The American Heritage Dictionary*

### FIND THE ANSWERS

#### Read Acts 19:11-20. (cont’d)

1. Verse 15 states, “And the evil spirit \_\_\_\_\_ and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?”

Some would use this verse as proof that the “evil spirit” must have been a live creature if it was speaking. In actuality, the man was simply demonstrating his adverse disposition or motive – i.e., his adverse spirit (state of mind, attitude) was being expressed through speech and actions. Note, also, that the man was responding to a statement made by exorcists who proclaimed the existence of supernatural “spirit beings.” It was the man, himself, who was adverse and speaking – telling them that he recognized Jesus and Paul, but he did not recognize them. They had no authority over him.

### FIND THE ANSWERS

#### Read Acts 19:11-20. (cont’d)

2. According to verse 16, the man with the evil [adverse] spirit \_\_\_\_\_ upon them, and \_\_\_\_\_ them, and \_\_\_\_\_ against them, so that they fled out of the house naked and wounded.
3. Verse 19 states, “Many of them also which used \_\_\_\_\_ brought their books together, and burned them before all men...”

Verse 16 is used by some to argue that “spirit beings” can inflict physical bodily damage on people and, thus, must be real. However, note that this verse clearly states that it was the man – not an invisible spirit – that inflicted the damage. The man had a violent disposition that drove him to attack the conjurers.

The phrase “curious arts,” mentioned in verse 19, could have been literally rendered “magic practices” – a reference to sorcery and witchcraft. Within the context of this account, it is obvious that this phrase related back to the mention of “exorcists” in verse 13. Evidently, those who burned their books realized that their methods didn’t work. Their form of magic (speaking to and casting out supposed “spirit beings”) was exposed for what it was – a hoax and a fraud that only worked for tricking people.

## UNCLEAN SPIRIT(S)

### FIND THE ANSWERS

**Read Zechariah 13:1-4.**

1. Verse 2 states, "And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD of hosts, that I will cut off the names of the \_\_\_\_\_ out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered: and also I will cause the prophets and the \_\_\_\_\_ spirit to pass out of the land."

The above verse is the one and only reference to the English term "unclean spirit" found in the KJV Old Testament. Does this verse mean that God was going to chase a so-called "ghost" or "spirit entity" out of the land? Few serious Bible students would assert that interpretation. What seems obvious is that the Israelites had a bad disposition; a sinful attitude. They practiced idolatry. They listened to fake prophets who spoke lies in the name of Yahweh. They had a natural disposition of rebellion against God which needed to be purged. By purging their bad disposition God would change Israel's lifestyle causing her to abandon her bad attitude and prefer God's ways.

Now let us look in the New Testament.

### FIND THE ANSWERS

**Read Matthew 10:1 and Mark 6:7.**

2. According to Matthew 10:1, Jesus gave His disciples authority against \_\_\_\_\_ spirits, to \_\_\_\_\_ them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and disease.

Some use the above verse to show that Jesus sent his disciples out to war against invisible "spirit beings." Someone who is oriented toward a belief in demonism would probably reach that conclusion. However, if we apply the correct meaning of "spirit" to this passage, we see that Jesus gave His disciples the ability to clean and correct the minds of those having bad dispositions – i.e., those with impure motives or attitudes. The word "unclean" is translated from the Greek word "akathartos" (#169 in *Strong's*) which is defined as "impure."

### FIND THE ANSWERS

**Read Luke 6:17-19.**

3. Verse 18 states, "And they that were \_\_\_\_\_ with unclean spirits: and they were \_\_\_\_\_."

Churches interpret the above verse as meaning that Jesus was an exorcist. However, there is absolutely no mention of "exorcism." Instead, this passage of Scripture says that these people were **healed**. Jesus didn't cast out "spirit entities." Rather, He healed people with spiritual and mental disorders (vexations). There is a big difference between "exorcism" and "healing." We must be careful not to read into Scripture what is not there.

## HEAL

"The act or process by which a cure is effected."

## HEAL

- a. To restore to health or soundness; cure: heal a sick patient.
- b. To ease or relieve (emotional distress): "Only time can heal her grief."
- c. To set right; repair.

*The Free Dictionary.com*

## EXORCISM

The expulsion of evil spirits from persons or places by certain adjurations and ceremonies; also the solemn ceremony or incantation used for this purpose.

Exorcism was common among the Jews, and still is a part of the superstitions of some churches; the Greek and Roman Catholic churches use it in the baptism of both infants and adults and in specific cases where individuals are supposed to be possessed by evil spirits.

*Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary*

### FIND THE ANSWERS

**Read Acts 5:12-16.**

1. According to verse 16, what happened to those vexed with unclean spirits who were brought to Jerusalem? \_\_\_\_\_

Again, these people were healed of their unhealthy mental dispositions right along with those who were healed of physical sickness. No supernatural "spirit beings" were "exorcised" from these individuals. Their unsound minds were replaced with sound minds. The specific kinds of spiritual and mental disorders are not indicated; but, like today, a wide variety of mental aberrations and confusions existed which impaired normal behavior.

At this point in our study, it should be noted that the Greek and Roman cultures were steeped in demonism. It was a common belief that individuals with mental disorders and physical maladies were possessed by a demon (evil spirit being). Judeans embraced this pagan concept. In fact, the Israelites in the Babylonian and Assyrian captivities were also indoctrinated in this superstition and certainly brought some of this thinking with them when they migrated to the land of Palestine. Individuals who sincerely believed they were possessed by invisible beings would tend to behave accordingly, and their peers (if they believed in demonism) would treat them accordingly.

### FIND THE ANSWERS

**Read Acts 8:4-8.**

2. Verse 7 states, "For unclean spirits, \_\_\_\_\_ with loud \_\_\_\_\_, came out of many that were possessed with them..."

The above translation makes it sound like invisible entities were actually speaking. However, a more literal rendering of this verse indicates that the people themselves with unclean spirits were crying out. How could so-called spirit beings without physical vocal cords speak audible words? Voices come from people – from human vibrating vocal chords – not from immaterial spirit beings. It is not uncommon for a person to cry out during mental anguish, physical pain, or punishment.

## FIND THE ANSWERS

### Read Mark 1:21-28.

1. Verse 23 indicates that a \_\_\_\_\_ with an unclean spirit \_\_\_\_\_ out.
2. The man says in verse 24, "Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to \_\_\_\_\_ us?"
3. In verse 25 Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ the man.
4. Verse 26 indicates the unclean spirit had \_\_\_\_\_ the man.

Some would have us believe this passage is a conversation between Jesus and a ghost or "spirit being." However, verse 23 clearly states that it was the man who was crying out. Jesus wasn't talking to a "spirit being." He was talking to a man who had a mental vexation. From the man's response in verse 24, he apparently feared that Jesus would somehow expose or judge him and his kind.

After the man was rebuked by Jesus, he was "torn." The word "torn" in verse 26 is translated from the Greek word "sparasso" and means "to convulse; throw into spasm." This word is a form of the Greek word "spao" through the idea of "spasmodic contraction." The man had spasms; he wrenched and cringed. But, he was relieved by Jesus who freed him from the burden of his malady and healed him – made him whole. This is not an account of a struggle with a ghost. Rather, it describes a miraculous healing. It is possible that the man was an epileptic.

## FIND THE ANSWERS

### Read Luke 9:37-42.

5. Verse 39 states, "And, lo, a spirit taketh him, and he suddenly crieth out; and it teareth him that he \_\_\_\_\_ again, and \_\_\_\_\_ him, hardly departeth from him."
6. Verse 42 states that the \_\_\_\_\_ threw the child down and \_\_\_\_\_ him.
7. Verse 42 also says that Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ the unclean spirit and \_\_\_\_\_ the child.

Notice that it was the child that cried out, obviously from the anguish and pain he was suffering. The word "teareth" in verse 39 is from the same Greek word we saw in Mark 1:26 (spao), meaning "to have spasms." The word "tare" in verse 42 is translated from the Greek word "susparasso" which is another form of the same word and means "to convulse violently." From the use of the words "foameth" and "bruising," it is reasonable to conclude that the boy was having epileptic seizures. Any bystander who believed in demonism that witnessed this bizarre behavior would likely assume he was possessed by a demon. However, verse 42 clearly states that Jesus healed the child – He did not "exorcise" him.

In verse 42 the *KJV* says "the devil" threw him down. But the Greek word is "daimonion" or demon. It is interesting that the terms "spirit," "demon," and "unclean spirit" are used interchangeably in this account, indicating they are equivalent in meaning: referring to the boy's affliction. Let's examine a second record of this episode for more information.

## FIND THE ANSWERS

### Read Matthew 17:14-18.

1. In verse 15 the father states that his son is “ \_\_\_\_\_ , and sore vexed ...”
2. According to verse 18, Jesus rebuked the \_\_\_\_\_ and the child was \_\_\_\_\_ .

The English word “lunatic” comes from the word “lunar” which means “moon.” It is translated from the Greek word “seleniazomai” meaning to be moon-struck ... in other words crazy. Why was the boy considered to be “moon-struck”? He was having seizures and losing bodily control, causing him to fall and thrash about – i.e. he was acting crazy. The word “lunatic” is an idiomatic expression. It doesn’t literally refer to the “moon.” Instead, it is used to describe someone who exhibits crazy or insane behavior. This boy was most likely an epileptic.

The word “devil” in verse 18, again, should have been translated “demon.” It refers again to the boy’s disorder. Like the word “lunatic,” “demon” was an idiomatic expression. Superstitious people may have attributed the boy’s affliction to a ghost possession. But in fact it didn’t refer to a “spirit being.” Instead, it referred to an obvious disorder that caused the boy to behave in bizarre ways.

At this point someone might argue that the use of the pronoun “he” in verse 18 in the phrase “he departed out of him” proves that this “devil” (demon) was a living “being.” However, in the Greek the word “demon” is neuter gender meaning that Jesus rebuked “it,” not “him”; and the boy was cured from that very hour.” By using the personal pronoun “he,” rather than “it,” the translators infer that this “daimonion” (demon) was a living “being.” This, of course, was the established “church” position at the time the *King James Version Bible* was produced. However, that does not make it right.

## FIND THE ANSWERS

### Read Matthew 4:23-25.

3. Verse 24 states, “...and they brought unto him [Jesus] all \_\_\_\_\_ people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were \_\_\_\_\_ with devils, and those which were \_\_\_\_\_, and those that had the palsy ...”
4. According to the last part of verse 24, what did Jesus do for these people? \_\_\_\_\_

These people had physical and mental disorders. They did not have ghosts or spirit creatures incarnating them. Jesus was not sent to fight supernatural “spirit beings” that can control people like puppets. Jesus came to address troubles in the minds of men. He came to help flesh-and-blood men, to heal them – i.e. to change men, not to fight invisible creatures of mythology. To make Jesus out to be some kind of “ghost buster” reduces Him to the level of a pagan mystic or sorcerer.

## FIND THE ANSWERS

### Read Mark 5:1-20.

5. Verse 2 indicates Jesus was met by a \_\_\_\_\_ with an unclean spirit.
6. According to verse 4, the man had often been \_\_\_\_\_ with fetters and chains.
7. In verse 7, the man cried with a loud \_\_\_\_\_ and asked Jesus to not \_\_\_\_\_ him.



## FIND THE ANSWERS

### Read Mark 5:1-20. (cont'd)

1. When asked his name, the man answered in verse 9, "My name is \_\_\_\_\_:  
for we are \_\_\_\_\_."
2. Verse 15 indicates the people saw the man who had been "possessed with the devil" sitting and  
clothed and in his \_\_\_\_\_.

This passage is a favorite for those who want to believe that evil "spirit beings" can incarnate us, that they can "possess" people, and that Jesus was an exorcist. However, let's analyze this account. First of all, note that it was the man who cried out and conversed with Jesus, not some "spirit creature." Secondly, the bedeviled man was not alone. There were others like him who had been forced to live out among the graves (tombs) because he said they were many ("legion"). They were apparently men who were criminals or for some reason not allowed to live in town. They had also been bound with shackles and chains. He probably feared that Jesus had come to further assault him, and begged Him not to do so. Then the man and some of his fellow rejects of society ran into a nearby herd of swine and chased them into the sea where they drowned. Note, again, that the terms "unclean spirits" and "devils" are used interchangeably. They are both idiomatic expressions referring to a state of an unsound mind. Later, the man whom the *KJV* says was "possessed by the devil" (the Greek term is correctly translated "demoniac" - i.e., a crazy man) was seen to be healed and in his right mind.

## UNCLEAN SPIRIT = DEVIL

Other examples in Scripture show how the terms "evil spirit" and "devil" are used synonymously.

## FIND THE ANSWERS

### Read Mark 7:25-30.

3. Verse 25 states that a woman's daughter had an \_\_\_\_\_.
4. In verse 26 the woman asks Jesus to cast the \_\_\_\_\_ out of her daughter.
5. Jesus tells the mother in verse 29 that the \_\_\_\_\_ is gone out of her daughter.

### Read Luke 4:31-37.

6. Verse 33 states that the man had a \_\_\_\_\_ of an unclean \_\_\_\_\_.
7. After Jesus rebuked the man, verse 35 says, "And when the \_\_\_\_\_ had thrown  
him in the midst. He came out of him, and hurt him not."
8. Verse 36 indicates that the people were amazed because Jesus had power and authority  
over \_\_\_\_\_.

The word "devil" in the above examples is translated from the Greek word "daimonion" which meant "a demon" which is how the pagan Greeks used the term. Greek mythology is full of such "spirit creatures." However, this definition does not fit the Scripture passages we have just studied. In those examples, this Greek word (daimonion), which was translated as "devil(s)," is used synonymously with the term "unclean spirit(s)" which we have seen is an idiomatic expression referring to human mental or behavioral disorders. In Scripture, the idiomatic expressions "possessed by devils" and "having unclean spirits" refer to a person who is plagued by some kind of physical or mental disorder. In like manner, the idiomatic expression "casting out devils" refers to the curing or healing of such infirmities.

## CASTING OUT OF DEVILS

### FIND THE ANSWERS

Read Matthew 9:32-34.

1. Verse 32 states that a \_\_\_\_\_ man possessed with a devil was brought to Jesus.
2. According to verse 33, what was the dumb man able to do after Jesus cast the devil out?  
\_\_\_\_\_

This man was obviously afflicted with a physical or mental disorder that prevented him from speaking. In idiomatic terms as commonly used in that day, he was “possessed by a demon.” Or it could be said that the man was “bedeviled” by a disability. Once Jesus corrected his disorder (ie., cast out the devil), he was able to speak. This passage describes a healing, not the “exorcising” of a so-called “spirit being.”

Idiomatic expressions are typical in every culture. In modern culture, for example, when there is chaos it is often defined as “pandemonium.” This term is a combination of two words: 1. “pan” (meaning “all” – and “demonium” meaning a condition caused by demons. Thus, “pandemonium,” if taken literally, would mean “demons all around, or everywhere.” In other words, it would be a condition of chaos caused by demons being all around. But that literal definition is not what people actually mean when they use the term. Nonetheless, someone translating from English could easily claim, if he was so inclined, that the chaotic situation had been caused by demons.

Thus we can see that the idiom that referred to a sickness as a demon in the first century AD was not talking about an invisible spirit creature. It was merely referring to an affliction.

### SUMMARY

In this lesson we have seen that the *KJV* translators used the terms “evil spirit(s),” “unclean spirit(s),” and “devils” in referring to bad dispositions and physical or mental disorders. These terms are not used in Scripture to refer to mythical, supernatural “spirit beings” but rather have been inserted or inferred by pagan church interpretations and men’s superstitious imaginations. We have also seen that the phrase “casting out of devils” is an idiomatic expression for the healing or curing of people suffering from various physical and mental maladies. Scripture does not use this expression for the so-called “exorcism” of “spirit creatures.”

Demonism – the belief in wicked, invasive, supernatural “spirit beings” (ghosts, demons, devils, etc.) that possess, haunt and torment people – is a product of pagan mysticism. It has no foundation in God’s Word. Such beliefs are contrary to Scripture. In fact, Scripture warns against getting involved with such heathen things.

If Christians will quit believing in and fearing spooks, ghosts, demons, devils, etc., and begin to rely on the truth of God’s Word, they will be freed from the yoke of priestcraft manipulation and deception. The fact is, the only folks who claim to be bothered by so-called “evil spirit beings” are those who have been brainwashed to believe in them. The folks who don’t believe in them are never bothered by them. That shows that so-called “demon possession” is a product of religious superstition.



### LESSON 20

# DEMONISM

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1. evil [Heb. "ra" - adverse, bad]
2. The man of Shechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech.
3. an evil (adverse, bad) spirit
4. from God
5. refreshed; well
6. the evil (adverse, bad) spirit
7. an evil (adverse) spirit from God
8. kill him with a javelin
9. afraid (he feared David)

#### Page 193

1. infirmities; plagues; evil spirits; blind
2. No, He didn't.
3. diseases; evil spirits (bad motives)
4. exorcists; adjure

#### Page 194

1. answered
2. leaped; overcame; prevailed
3. curious arts (sorcery; witchcraft)

#### Page 195

1. idols; unclean
2. unclean; cast
3. vexed; healed

#### Page 196

1. They were healed.
2. crying; voice

#### Page 197

1. man; cried
2. destroy
3. rebuked
4. torn
5. foameth; bruising
6. devil; tare
7. rebuked, healed

#### Page 198

1. lunatic
2. devil; cured
3. sick; possessed; lunatic
4. He healed them.
5. man
6. bound
7. voice; torment

#### Page 199

1. Legion; many
2. right mind
3. unclean spirit
4. devil
5. devil
6. spirit; devil (the Greek is "demon")
7. devil (again, the Greek is "demon")
8. unclean spirits

#### Page 200

1. dumb (meaning unable to speak)
2. He was able to speak.

**NOTES**