



MESSAGE

STUDY GUIDE

GROUP MATERIAL

SONGS

DEMONS: Their Origin, Activity, & Destiny

Bible Reading: Luke 7:18-35

1

DEMONS: Their Origin, Activity, & Destiny

I. DEMONS: Who/What Are They?

A. An “Unclean spirit” is a “Demon”

- “Now in the synagogue there was a man who had the spirit of an unclean demon, & he cried out with a loud voice” (Lk. 4:33 NET)

- Note: “Greek: “having an unclean, demonic spirit,” i.e., an evil spirit. This is the only place Luke uses this lengthy

phrase. Normally he simply says an “unclean spirit” or “demon.” [NET]

- “Just then a man with an unclean spirit was in their synagogue. He cried out...” (Mk. 1:23)

- “Luke’s Gospel re-writes [Mark’s] narrative about an unclean spirit in a man, naming it, ‘the spirit of an unclean demon’ (Lk. 4:33), it comes out of him (Lk. 4:35) &...the crowd...declare[s] that Jesus wields authority & power over unclean spirits (Lk. 4:36b).” [Mark G. Boyer, What’s Born of the Spirit, p.]

B. New Testament Usage

- “Essential...[to] the concept of being [demon-]possessed are that the demon has arrived from the outside, is alien to the person’s constitution, and causes harm to the person.” –Linda Joelson

- Jesus’ authority over unclean spirits is a major theme, demonstrating His power to cleanse & liberate from evil, signaling the arrival of God’s kingdom. His disciples also receive power to cast out unclean spirits.

- In the NT, especially the Synoptic Gospels (Mark, Matthew, & Luke), “unclean spirits” frequently appear as demonic entities that possess individuals and cause physical and mental afflictions.

- These spirits represent moral & spiritual impurity, wickedness, & opposition to God’s holiness. The term “unclean” highlights their defiled, impure nature contrasted with the holiness of God and the Holy Spirit.

II. DEMONS: What’s Their Origin?

A. Sons of God & Daughters of Mankind (Genesis 6:1-4 CSB)

- ❖ “When mankind began to multiply on the earth and daughters were born to them, 2 the sons of God saw that the daughters of mankind were beautiful, and they took any they chose as wives for themselves. 3 And the Lord said,

“My Spirit will not remain with mankind forever, because they are corrupt. Their days will be 120 years.” 4 The Nephilim were on the earth both in those days and afterward, when the sons of God came to the daughters of mankind, who bore children to them. They were the powerful men of old, the famous men.” (Gen. 6:1-4 CSB)

❖ “But the Lord saw that the wickedness of humankind had become great on the earth. Every inclination of the thoughts of their minds was only evil all the time. (Gen. 6:5)

❖ Note: Nephilim (6:4) Possibly means “fallen ones”; traditionally, “giants;” Num. 13:31–33

B. Genesis 6 is another ‘Fall,’ after Genesis 3

❖ “Ancient Jewish exegetes...found humanity’s initial fault in Genesis 6:1-4.” –JF. Parker

C. “Sons of God” are supernatural, spirit/angelic beings

• “The “sons of God” (Gen. 6:2, 4) is a phrase used three other times in the Bible outside of Genesis 6; Job 1:6; 2:1;

38:7. In all of these instances the “sons of God” are spirit/angelic beings, including Satan himself.” -AO Meshach

• “The view that Genesis 6:1-4 involves fallen angels mating with human females has a strong contextual, grammatical, & historical basis.” –S. Michael Houdmann

• “The ‘sons of God’ are spiritual beings (angels) which can take on physical form” –Tim Mackie

• “It seems contradictory to say that angels are ‘spirits’ and to say that the ‘sons of God’ were fallen angels who procreated with human females. However, while angels are spiritual beings (Heb. 1:14), they can appear in human, physical form (Mk. 16:5)...It is plausible that angels are capable of taking on human form, even to the point of replicating human sexuality & possibly even reproduction...The view that Genesis 6:1-4 involves fallen angels mating with human females has a strong contextual, grammatical, and historical basis.” [S. Michael Houdmann, “Questions about Angels & Demons,” in Got Questions? p. 241]

D. Source of the “Nephilim”

• “The biblical text of Genesis 6:1-4 [provided] the basis for the later emergence of [an origin story] of evil spirits ...Gen. 6:1-4, particularly its interpretation in [the Jewish extra-canonical] 1 Enoch 6-16, played an important part in...demonology during the 2nd Temple period. Accordingly, [by Jesus’ time] there was...a worldview

2 within Judaism in which the activity of autonomous or semi-autonomous evil spirits was regarded as a reality. This... is exemplified in the ministry of Jesus...in the Synoptic Gospels...There’s little evidence... during the earlier period of...evil spirits... able to afflict humanity at will.” [Archie T. Wright, Origin of Evil Spirits, p. 1]

• “Genesis 6:1-4 is a difficult passage...but provides a wealth of evidence for those seeking answers to the pre-post

Flood “Nephilim,” or “giants,” as Scripture describes. In Jewish tradition, the “sons of God” were fallen angels who left their assignment, as articulated in 2 Peter 2:4. These fallen angels had relations with “daughters of men,”

resulting in the Nephilim, or hybrids. The corruption of humanity in Genesis 6:1-4 reflects the supernatural transgression that takes place before the Flood and ‘afterward’ as Gen. 6:4 articulates. This verse clearly speaks of transgressions that took place before the Flood and afterward.” [Lisa M. Martinez-Leeper, Cosmic Conflict in Covenantal Literature, Liberty University (2023) p. 82]

E. “Demons”: the disembodied spirits of the Nephilim

• “Jewish...literature describes the Giants [‘Nephilim’] as a hybrid between angels [‘sons of God’] & humans [Gen.

6:1-4]...Upon death the Giants’ bodies were rendered incapacitated, yet their souls [spirits] continued to inhabit the earth ...[Jewish] Apologists identified these disembodied spirits [of Nephilim] as demons [which] act in opposition to God, using their powers to afflict humans.” [David L. Bradnick, Evil, Spirits, & Possession, p. 22]

• In Jewish literature “the giants [‘Nephilim’], like their human counterparts, were composed of two elements... a fleshly body, which could die, &...an immortal spirit (...[which] continued following physical death). The spiritual element of the giants, however, had a slightly different nature than that of the human spirit. The giants’ spirits, [unclean demons] unlike the human spirit, were able to roam the earth unseen... [& also] are able to invade the human body.” [Archie T. Wright, “Demonology...,” in LT. Stuckenbruck (ed.) Enoch & Synoptic Gospels, p. 230]

• “The story of Genesis shows [that] sin continues after the Flood. Genesis simply implies that sin survived through

Noah & his family, whereas the Watcher [Enoch] tradition recounts the survival of evil spirits as an explanation of why evil persists in the author’s day.” [Archie T. Wright, Op. cit., p. 232]

• “There were some Nephilim after the flood, according to Gen. 6:4. When the Israelites spied out the land of Canaan, they reported back to Moses, “We saw the Nephilim there (the descendants of Anak come from the Nephilim). We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, & we looked the same to them” (Numbers 13:33). Later, as Moses addressed the people of Israel before they entered Canaan, he mentioned the sons of Anak:

“You are now about to cross the Jordan to go in and dispossess nations greater and stronger than you, with large cities.

...The people are strong and tall—Anakites! You know about them & have heard it said: ‘Who can stand up against

the Anakites?’” (Deut. 9:1-2). These “giants” were destroyed by the Israelites with God’s help [GotQuestions.com]

F. Demons’ Origin: Not Fallen Angels, but, the disembodied spirits of the dead Nephilim

- “The opinion here is that demons are the spirits of the Nephilim, the children resulting from the sexual relationships between fallen angels & human women (Gen. 6:4) ...Demons, the disembodied spirits of the dead Nephilim...who attempt to possess bodies...” –Mark A. Quay

- “The NT doesn’t make it clear as to the origin of evil spirits. We...suggest that the Watcher tradition of 1 Enoch serves as a background to the demonology of the NT (see especially, Mark 5.)” [Archie Wright, Op. cit., p. 320]

- Genesis 6:1-4 “describes a transgression of supernatural & natural realms and how it produced demigods &/or giants &, ultimately, demons. (Nephilim are not the ones engaged in ‘interbreeding’ in Gen 6:1-4. They are the effect, not the cause.)” [Michael Heiser, “Biblical Scholar’s Perspective,” Peaceful Science (1 Jan. 2022) pp. 4-5]

- “The [Greek OT] LXX...clarifies the relationship between the [fallen] angels and their offspring [‘Nephilim’] (the giants). By describing the offspring as ‘giants,’ later passages (Gen. 10:8; Num. 13:34; Josh. 12:4) can be used to

suggest that this offspring was not annihilated during the flood.” [Phillip D. Haskell, Differentiating Satan’s Many Faces, McMaster Divinity College (2024) p. 36]

III. Supporting NT Statements:

A. Jude 1:6 ‘The angels didn’t keep their proper domain...locked up for the judgment’

- “You also know that the angels who did not keep within their proper domain but abandoned their own place of residence, he has kept in eternal chains in utter darkness, locked up for the judgment of the great Day.

7 So

3

also Sodom & Gomorrah... since they indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire in a way similar to these angels...” (Jude 1:6-7 NET)

- Jude 1:6 Greek: “who did not keep their own domain.” The idea is that certain angels acted improperly, going outside the bounds prescribed by God (their proper domain). [NET]

- “The angels are ‘the sons of God’ of Gen. 6:1-4, as interpreted in Jewish tradition (Jude 1:6 alludes specifically to...1 Enoch 6-11). They left their position of heavenly power, which they had exercised in the service of God, in order to subvert God’s purpose on earth.” [Richard Bauckham, 2 Peter-Jude, p. 14]

- Jude “links the sin of the angels with that of the inhabitants of Sodom...who...‘practiced immorality in the same way as the angels’ (Jude 1:7). The point here is that, in Jewish tradition, the initial sin of the angels was their sexual desire for & union with [human] women. The corresponding sin of Sodom... was not homosexual...[but] their desire for sexual relations with angels [Lot’s visitors] (Gen. 19:4-11). The two cases...in Jewish tradition [are] examples of outrageous transgression of the order of creation.” [Richard Bauckham, 2 Peter-Jude, p. 14]

B. 2 Peter 2:4-5 ‘God did not spare the angels who sinned, but...locked them up...’

•

4 For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but threw them into Tartarus & locked them up in chains in utter darkness, to be kept until the judgment,

5 & if he did not spare the ancient world, but did protect Noah, a

herald of righteousness, along with 7 others, when God brought a flood on an ungodly world...” (2 Pet. 2:4-5)

- “...if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but [‘casting them into Tartarus’] locked them up in chains in utter darkness...until the judgment, 5 & if he didn’t spare the ancient world, but did protect Noah...” (2 Pt. 2:4-5 NET) Note: Greek lit.: “casting them into Tartarus,” or “holding them captive in Tartarus.” This verb, ‘tartaroō,’ occurs only here in the NT, but its meaning is clear...‘Tartarus ...[to] the Greeks was a...place lower than Hades where divine punishment was meted out, & so regarded in Israelite apocalyptic as well’ (BDAG 991). [NET]

C. 1 Pet 3:18-20 Christ ‘went/preached to the spirits (angels) in prison who disobeyed in Noah’s day

- “Because Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, to bring you to God, by being put to death in the flesh but by being made alive in the spirit. 19 In it [spirit] he went & preached to the spirits in prison,

20 after

they were disobedient long ago when God patiently waited in the days of Noah as an ark was being constructed. In the ark a few, that is 8 souls, were delivered through water.” (1 Peter 3:18-20)

- “1 Peter 3:18-20 speaks about Jesus proclaiming His victory to the apostate angels in the abyss. “For Christ

also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit; in which also He went and made proclamation to the spirits now in prison, who once were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, 8 persons, were brought safely through the water (1 Pet 3:18-20). This passage is reminiscent of Genesis 6:1-4, in the days of Noah, & also 2 Peter 2:4 and Jude 5-7.”

- “Scripture records that Jesus...proclaimed to the apostate angels in prison...One interpretation suggests that these apostate angels are the same ones who “came into the daughters of men, and they bore children to them” (Gen 6:4), producing the Nephilim-hybrids (1 Pet 3:19; 1 Enoch 6-15). As [Michael] Heiser asserts, “Specifically, 1 Enoch 6:15 describes how the ‘sons of God’ (called ‘Watchers’...) who committed the offense of Genesis 6:1-4 were imprisoned under the earth for what they had done. The imprisonment is behind the reference to the ‘spirits in prison’ in 1 Peter 3:19, a view ‘embraced in the early church (Michael Heiser, *Unseen Realm*, p. 337).” [Lisa M. Martinez-Leeper, *Op. cit.*, pp. 181-2]
- The original offending ‘sons of God’ (Gen. 6:1-4) have been imprisoned –are “now in prison” (Pet. 3:19) (Jude 1:6; 2 Pet. 2:4). They are not ‘demons’ (unclean/evil spirits). the disembodied spirits of the dead Nephilim became the demons (unclean/evil spirits) we read about in the Synoptic Gospels.
- “The most popular myth...is found in the Bible, intertestamental literature, the rabbis & the Church Fathers: demons were the souls [spirits] of the offspring of angels who cohabited with humans [Gen. 6:4]. ...A group of angels descended from heaven & mated with human women, producing a race of wicked giants who conquered & defiled the earth with violence & bloodshed. To destroy them, God caused the Flood. The spirits of the drowned giants, neither angelic nor human [but ‘hybrids’], were trapped in the regions of the air which they haunt as demons seeking bodies to inhabit (cf. ‘the power of the air’ Eph. 2:2).” [GJ. Riley, DDD, pp. 238-9]

4

- Bible Reading: Luke 8:26-33 CSB

•

26 Then they sailed to the region of the Gerasenes...27When Jesus got out on land, a demon-possessed man from the town met him. For a long time he had worn no clothes and did not stay in a house but in the tombs. 28When he saw Jesus, he cried out, fell down before him, and said in a loud voice, “What do you have to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, don’t torment me!” 29 For Jesus had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. Many times it had seized him, and though he was guarded, bound by chains and shackles, he would snap the restraints and be driven by the demon into deserted places.

•

30 “What is your name?” Jesus asked him. “Legion,” he said, because many demons had entered him. 31And they begged him not to banish them to the abyss.

•

32A large herd of pigs was there, feeding on the hillside. The demons begged him to permit them to enter the pigs, and Jesus gave them permission. 33 The demons came out of the man and entered the pigs, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and drowned.

A. The Demoniac, ‘Legion’s Condition

0. “We are told nothing of how this man arrived at this condition” –Archie Wright

1. Unclothed: “For a long time he had worn no clothes” “He was scarcely even human” —Joel Green

2. Unclean: “Jesus meets a man with an unclean spirit living among unclean tombs surrounded by people employed in unclean occupations [pigs], all in unclean Gentile territory.” [James R. Edwards, *Mark*, p. 155]

➤ Unclean: “Descriptions of uncleanness dominate...The man is possessed by an [‘unclean spirit’ (8:29)] & lives among the tombs [(8:27)] ...His contact with the dead makes him unclean according to Scripture (Num. 5:2 [etc.]), so ...he is not only a Gentile, & therefore ‘unclean,’ but he is nearly ‘radioactive’ in his uncleanness.” [Timothy G. Gombis, *Mark*, p. 169]

3. Unhoused: “did not stay in a house, but in the tombs”

4. “Unhinged” –Not in his “right mind” (8:35) “madness...in connection with demon possession” –AR. Solevåg

5. Unrestrained: “no one could bind him...not even with a chain...His hands & feet had often been bound with chains & shackles, but he tore the chains apart & broke the shackles. No one could subdue him” (Mk. 5:3-4)

6. Demon-possessed: “a demon-possessed man;” Called “‘Legion,’ because many demons had entered him.”

7. Voice co-opted by demons: “he cried out...in a loud voice, “What do you have to do with me...” “It’s clear...”

that the spirit has the ability to control the man's speech" –Archie Wright

8. Seizures: "Many times it had seized him..."

9. Superhuman strength: "bound by chains & shackles, [but,] he would snap the restraints"

• "The unique characteristic of possession in this account is the man's superhuman strength. Luke's perspective on the man's extreme possession is clear. The legion of demons caused his social isolation, convulsive fits, madness, & extreme strength. Upon exorcism, the man is relieved from these ailments." [Joy L. Vaughan, Spirit Possession in Luke-Acts..., Asbury Theological Seminary, KY, US (2020) p. 151]

10. Violent: "extremely violent, so...no one was able to pass by that way" (Mt. 8:28) made the road impassable.

11. Self-harm: "Night & day...he would cry out & cut himself with stones" (Mk. 5:5) 'cut himself.' The goal of demons is to destroy the person created in the image of God. The man's demonization is evident in his social isolation, superhuman strength, & self-destructive tendencies." [ESV]