



## **DEMONISM: DOCTRINE OF**

1. Demon possession, or intercourse with demons, is possible but prohibited.
  - A. Deuteronomy 32 contains the words of a song which Moses spoke to the people of Israel. Beginning in v. 16 he said, **“They [the people of Israel] made Him [Lord God of Israel-- Jesus Christ] jealous with strange {gods;} with abominations they provoked Him to anger. They sacrificed to demons who were not God, to gods whom they have not known, new {gods} who came lately, whom your fathers did not dread. You [Israelites] neglected the Rock who begot you [Jesus Christ], and forgot the God who gave you birth.”**
  - B. Psalm 106 say’s, **“But they [the people of Israel] mingled with the nations [foreign, heathen nations], and learned their practices, and served their idols, which became a snare to them. They even sacrificed their sons and their daughters to the demons, and shed innocent blood, the blood of their sons and their daughters, whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan; and the land was polluted with the blood,”** vv. 35-38.
2. Demon possession, a crime against the divine institutions, was punishable by death in Israel.

Leviticus 20:27 say’s, **“Now a man or a woman who is a medium [sorceress] or a spiritist [wizard] shall surely be put to death [for consulting demons and demon possession]. They shall be stoned with stones, their bloodguiltiness is upon them.”**
3. The following activities lead to the possibility of demon possession for the unbeliever or demon influence for the believer.
  - A. Passive submission to demons through idolatry.

In 1 Corinthians 10 Paul writes, **“What do I mean then? That a thing sacrificed to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything? {No,} but {I say} that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons, and not to God; and I do not want you to become sharers in demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons,”** vv. 19-21.
  - B. Dedication of one’s body to demons; e.g., the Hindu soma, or “mysteries.”
  - C. Chemical destruction of the norms and standards of the soul through drug addiction or alcoholism.

In the NT we find this spoken of in Galatians 5:19-20, which say's, **“Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions.”** **“Sorcery”** is from the Greek word *farmakei/a* (*pharmakeia*), which means- *employment of drugs for any purpose*; drug addiction. It describes a particular dimension of witchcraft and sorcery where hallucinogenic drugs are used to achieve ecstatic states where 'spirits,' demons may be contacted.

- D. Self-hypnosis or automesmerism through orgies or dances, such as the whirling dervishes of the Sudan.

“With all its simplicity and gravity, the Mohammedan worship has also its frantic excitement of the Dervishes. On the celebration of the birthday of their prophet and other festivals, they work themselves, by the constant repetition of ‘Allah, Allah,’ into a state of conscious ecstasy, ‘in which they plant swords in their breasts, tear live serpents with their teeth, eat bottles of glass and finally lie prostrate on the ground for the chief of their order to ride on horseback over their bodies.’

I will add a brief description of the ascetic exercises of the ‘Dancing’ and ‘Howling’ Dervishes which I witnessed in their convents at Constantinople and Cairo in 1877.

The Dancing or Turning Dervishes in Pera, thirteen in number, some looking ignorant and stupid, others devout and intensely fanatical, went first through prayers and prostrations, then threw off their outer garments, and in flowing white gowns with high hats of stiff, woolen stuff, they began to dance to the sound of strange music, whirling gracefully and skillfully on their toes, ring within ring, without touching each other or moving out of their circle, performing in four different acts, from forty to fifty turnings in one minute, their arms stretched out or raised to heaven, their eyes half shut, their mind apparently lost in a sort of Nirvana or pantheistic absorption in Allah. A few hours afterward I witnessed the rare spectacle of one of these very Dervishes reeling to and fro in a state of intoxication on the street and the lower bridge of the Golden Horn.

The Howling Dervishes in Scutari present a still more extraordinary sight, and higher degree of ascetic exertion *but destitute* of all grace and beauty. The performance took place in a small, plain, square room and lasted nearly two hours. As the monks came in they kissed the hand of their leader and repeated with him long prayers from the Koran. One recited with melodious voice an Arabic song in praise of Mohammed. Then, standing in a row, bowing and raising their heads, they continued to howl the fundamental dogma of Mohammedanism, *La ilaha ill Allah*, for nearly an hour. Some were utterly exhausted and wet with perspiration. The exercises I saw in Cairo were less protracted, but more dramatic, as the Dervishes had long hair and stood in a circle, swinging their bodies backward and forward in constant succession and nearly touching the ground with their flowing hair. In astounding feats of asceticism the Moslems are fully equal to the ancient Christian anchorites and the fakirs of India.” Schaff, History of the Christian Church, Vol. 4- Medieval Christianity, pp. 193-194 \* Italics mine.

E. The Phallic cult.

Jeremiah recorded for us in 32:35, that Israel “...built the high places of Baal that are in the valley of Ben-hinnom to cause their sons and their daughters to pass through {the fire} to Molech, which I had not commanded them nor had it entered My mind that they should do this abomination, to cause Judah to sin.”

F. Mental attitude sins carried to an extreme, e.g., bitterness, jealousy, vindictiveness, anger, hatred, implacability, etc.

G. Religious sensitivity training.

1) In Isaiah 8:19 the prophet wrote, “**And when they [false prophets] say to you, ‘Consult the mediums [bwo] (owv)- fem., women sorcerers-- necromancers-- who consulted the dead, really, demons; equivalent to the Greek *engastrimuthos*; the witch of En-dor was an *ob* (1 Sam. 28:7)] and the spiritists [masc. counterpart; from the root *yada-* to know; lit.- *the knowing one*; wizard, conjurer] who whisper [to chirp or peep like a bird; high-pitched sounds and voices] and mutter [*hagah-* is a low, deep sound, characteristic of the moaning of a dove or the growling of a lion over its prey (Isa. 31:4); these witches ‘whispered and moaned’ through the function of the e)ggastrimu/qoj (engastrimuthos)- *ventriloquist*; a demon who controls the vocal chords of the medium],’ should not a people consult their God? {Should they} {consult} the dead [demons] on behalf of the living?”**

2) In 29:4 Isaiah records the Lord speaking to the inhabitants of Jerusalem concerning their inevitable destruction, “**Then you shall be brought low; from the earth you shall speak, and from the dust {where} you are *prostrate*, your words {shall come [a form of necromancy in which the medium puts her ear to the ground, ostensibly to hear the voice of the ‘dead’].} Your voice shall also be like that of a spirit from the ground [*ob-* demon indwelt female necromancers], and your speech shall *whisper* [same word as Isa. 8:19] from the dust.”**

H. ESP (extra sensory perception); telepathy; clairvoyance, etc.

4. The gods and idols of nations are actually demons.

A. Psalm 96:4-5 say’s, “**For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; He is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the peoples [Gentile nations] are idols, but the LORD made the heavens.”**

B. The Apostle Paul asks the question, in 1 Corinthians 10:19-20, “**What do I mean then? That a thing sacrificed to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything? {No,} but {I say} that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons, and not to God; and I do not want you to become sharers in demons.”**

5. The judgment of demons involved the destruction of demon-possessed people and / or the religious system associated with idolatrous practices.

A. Listen to the prophet Isaiah in 19:1 and 3 as he gives “**the oracle concerning Egypt.”** “**Behold, the LORD is riding on a swift cloud, and is about to come to Egypt; the**

idols of Egypt will tremble at His presence, and the heart of the Egyptians will melt within them. Then the spirit of the Egyptians will be demoralized within them; and I will confound their strategy, so that they will resort to idols and ghosts of the dead [both references to demons], and to mediums [demon possessed witches] and spiritists [demon possessed wizards].”

B. The Lord told Israel in Deuteronomy 7:4-6, that “...they [Canaanites] will turn your sons away from following Me to serve other gods; then the anger of the LORD will be kindled against you, and He will quickly destroy you. But thus you shall do to them: you shall tear down their altars, and smash their {sacred} pillars, and hew down their Asherim, and burn their graven images with fire. For you are a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for His own *possession* out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.”

C. The judgment of Egypt’s firstborn included the judgment of demons.

The Lord told Moses in Exodus 12:12, “...I will go through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike down all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt [which are demons] I will execute judgments - I am the LORD.”

D. The Jews were to be protected from this judgment.

1) Leviticus 17:7 say’s, “And they shall *no longer* sacrifice their sacrifices to the goat demons with which they play the harlot. This shall be a permanent statute to them throughout their generations.”

2) Deuteronomy 32:17 say’s, “They sacrificed to demons who were not God, to gods whom they have not known, new {gods} who came lately, whom your fathers did not dread.”

6. Many nations have been destroyed for demonic practices.

A. E.g., the Canaanites.

Moses said to the Israelites in Deuteronomy 18:9-12, “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 [the Canaanites] out before you.”

B. And the Babylonians.

Isaiah 46:1 say’s, that “Bel has bowed down [‘Bel’ is the same as Marduk, the chief Babylonian god; he was the god of war and the patron deity of the city of Babylon], Nebo stoops over [‘Nebo’ was the Babylonian god of education, literature, writing, wisdom, the arts, and sciences; the special seat of his worship was at Borsippa, near Babylon; the

Akkadian form of this name is Nabu]; **their images are {consigned} to the beasts and the cattle. The things that you carry are burdensome, a load for the weary {beast.}**”

In vv. 6-7 of this same ch. Isaiah say’s, **“Those who lavish gold from the purse and weigh silver on the scale hire a goldsmith, and he makes it {into} a god; they bow down, indeed they worship it. They lift it upon the shoulder and carry it; they set it in its place and it stands {there.} It does not *move* from its place. Though one may cry to it, it *cannot* answer; it *cannot* deliver him from his distress.”**

Isaiah addresses the conquering nation in v. 1 of ch. 47, **“Come down and sit in the dust [a sign of mourning], O virgin daughter of Babylon; sit on the ground without a throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans. For you shall no longer be called tender and delicate.”**

In vv. 11-13 he say’s, **“But evil will come on you which you will not know how to charm away; and disaster will fall on you for which you cannot atone, and destruction about which you do not know will come on you suddenly. Stand {fast} now in your spells and in your many sorceries with which you have labored from your youth; perhaps you will be able to profit, perhaps you may cause trembling. You are wearied with your many counsels; let now the astrologers, those who prophesy by the stars, those who predict by the new moons, stand up and save you from what will come upon you.”**

7. Demonism has exercised great influence in history.

A. Ezekiel 21:21-22 say’s, **“For the king of Babylon [Nebuchadnezzar] stands at the parting of the way, at the head of the two ways [Egypt or Jerusalem], to use divination; he shakes the arrows, he consults the household idols, he looks at the liver. Into his right hand came the divination, ‘Jerusalem,’ to set battering rams, to open the mouth for slaughter, to lift up the voice with a battle cry, to set battering rams against the gates, to cast up mounds, to build a siege wall.”**

B. In Daniel 10:13 Gabriel tells Daniel, that **“...the prince of the kingdom of Persia [kosmokrator demon] was withstanding me for twenty-one days; then behold, Michael, one of the chief princes [archangels], came to help me, for I had been left there with the kings of Persia.”**

C. Often in history, rulers of nations have been demon-possessed.

D. Evil is, at times, associated in the Word of God, with the rule of demon-possessed kings (cf. 2 Kings 21:1-6, 9-11, 14-16).

8. Involvement with necromancy is a sign of negative volition to doctrine and frequently leads to association with demonism; e.g., Saul.

1 Chronicles 10:13-14 tells us, that **“...Saul died *for his trespass which he committed against the LORD* [twofold], [1] *because of the word of the LORD which he did not keep* [this was Saul’s failure to execute God’s wrath upon the Amalekites-- 1 Sam. 15];”**

**“...and also [2] because he asked counsel of a medium, making inquiry {of it}, and did not inquire of the LORD. Therefore He [God] killed him, and turned the kingdom to David the son of Jesse.”**

9. Satan has the power to kill when God *allows* it.

A. When Job, as the most mature believer on earth, became in his evidence testing, the *focus* of the Angelic Conflict for a period of time, the **“Lord said to Satan, ‘Behold, he is in your power, only spare his life,’”** Job 2:6.

B. The writer of Hebrews informs us in 2:14, that our Lord Himself partook of flesh and blood, **“in order that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, *the devil*.”**

10. Satan is used by God to administer discipline.

A. In 1 Corinthians 5:5 Paul wrote to the Corinthian Church concerning the man who was having a sexual relationship with his stepmother, an incestuous sin for which the Mosaic Law prescribed stoning (Lev. 18:8; Deut. 22:30), and one which was a *crime* even under Roman Law. He said, **“{I have decided} to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.”**

B. In 1 Timothy 1:20 Paul speaks of delivering **“Hymenaeus and Alexander... over to Satan, so that they may be taught not to blaspheme.”**

11. Demons can indwell animals.

We can see from Mark 5:11-12, how **“...there was a big herd of swine feeding there on the mountain. And {the demons} entreated [begged, beseeched]”** Jesus, **“saying, ‘Send us into the swine so that we may enter them.’”**

12. Demon possession can cause erratic, abnormal behavior as well as physical debilities.

A. Job 2:6-7 say’s, **“So the LORD said to Satan, ‘Behold, he is in your power, only spare his life.’ Then Satan went out from the presence of the LORD, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head.”**

B. Cf. Mark 5:1-5.