

English Transcript

Foundations of the Christian Faith – Course 3

Lesson 2 – Demons or Fallen Angels

Welcome back to Foundations of the Christian Faith – Course 3. In Lesson 2 we will explore what the Bible teaches about the origin of demons or fallen angels, as well as how they are classified and organized. We will also consider their leader, their work and their ultimate destiny.

As we begin this lesson, you may want to go back to the prior lesson and review your list on page 4. Take a minute to add to your list anything you may already know about demons or fallen angels. Pause the recording now and then begin listening again once you have updated your list.

Pause recording now to complete the activity on page 4 in your handout.

Welcome back!

The existence of demons is widely accepted by Christians. But what are they? How much power do they possess? Should we fear them? Should we ignore them? We will explore these and other important issues in this lesson.

Let us start our discussion by reading 1 Peter 5:8.

“Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.”

- *What comes to mind when you hear that our adversary is like a ‘roaring lion’?* Often lions roar as a way to mark their territory, establish a position of dominance, invoke fear in the community, and communicate with other members of their group. We can see how these attributes of a roaring lion can apply to Satan as well.
- *How does he “devour?”* Satan can not take away the salvation of a believer but he can deceive, distract, discourage and side-track believers.
- *What does it mean to be “sober-minded” and “watchful?”* We must remain alert and be on guard at all times.
- *How do we “resist the devil” (James 4:7)?* We can resist the devil by first knowing our enemy, stay connected in community, care for the weak and lame, stay in the Word, pray, serve, stand strong in the full armor of God at all times, walk in humility, live a life of worship filled with praise and thanksgiving, confession and repentance.

Turn with me to the top of page 12 in your handout as we explore the Fall of angels.

When God created the world, he “saw everything that he made, and behold, it was very good” (Gen 1:31). This means that even the angelic world that God had created did not have evil angels or demons in it at that time. But by the time of Genesis 3, we find that Satan, in the form of a serpent, was tempting Eve to sin (Gen 3:1-5). Therefore, sometime between the events of Gen 1:31 and Gen 3:1, there must have been a rebellion in the angelic world with many angels turning against God and becoming evil.

Demons are not prominent in the Old Testament compared with being referenced more than 100 times in the New Testament. Satan appears in 19 of the 27 books of the New Testament. Jesus referenced Satan 25 times. In the Old Testament, demons appear to be connected with idol worship and the worship of false gods.

Deuteronomy 32:16-17

“They stirred him to jealousy with strange gods; with abominations they provoked him to anger. They sacrificed to demons that were not God, to gods they had never known, to new gods that had come recently, whom your fathers had never dreaded.”

Psalms 106:28-29, 35-39

“Then they yoked themselves to the Baal of Peor, and ate sacrifices offered to the dead; they provoked the Lord to anger with their deeds, and a plague broke out among them.... but they mixed with the nations and learned to do as they did. They served their idols, which became a snare to them. They sacrificed their sons and their daughters to the demons; they poured out innocent blood, the blood of their sons and daughters whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan, and the land was polluted with blood. Thus they became unclean by their acts, and played the whore in their deeds.”

Why did they fall?

Demons, or fallen angels, were created as good spiritual creatures. It appears that Satan was created perfect and beautiful (Ezekiel 28:15). However, led by Satan, some of the angels rebelled against God and were cast out of heaven as a result (Ezekiel 28:15-17; Revelation 12:4). This was the fall of angels into evil. Their sin seems to have been pride, a refusal to accept their assigned place, for they “did not keep their own position but left their proper dwelling” (Jude 6). Satan also lured a third of the remaining angels to follow him (Revelation 12:4, 7) and led Adam, the head of the human race, to rebel against God (Genesis 3).

There are a number of views on the origin of demons.

They are spirits of wicked, deceased people

This view seems to come from the ancient Greek belief about demons as being the disembodied spirits of deceased people. It has no support in Scripture since the Bible always places the unsaved dead as confined in a place of torment, unable to return to roam the earth (Psalm 9:17; Luke 16:23; Rev 20:13).

They are disembodied spirits of a pre-Adamic race

This view understands Satan as originally ruling over a perfect earth, a pre-Adamic race of people. When Satan sinned against God, this race of people were somehow involved in his rebellion. They lost their bodies and became disembodied spirits or demons. Nowhere does the Bible hint at the existence of a pre-Adamic race. Indeed, the Lord declared that Adam was the first man (Matthew 19:4). Also, the Bible nowhere indicates that deceased people are free to return to earth.

They are fallen angels

This view states that demons are angels who rebelled with Satan. Satan is designated as the prince of demons (Matt 12:24), indicating him as their leader. Satan, is an angel, thus the demons must be angels. They are fallen like Satan. In several places demons are called spirits (unclean), which associates them with the spirit world of angels, not humans (Matt 17:18; Mark 9:25; Luke 10:17-20).

What does their fall mean to us?

The fall of angels had serious consequences.

Fallen angels lost their original holiness and became corrupt in nature and conduct (Eph 6:11-18).

Adam was influenced by Satan. As a result, all creation was cursed because of sin.

Fallen angels continue to oppose the works of God, especially those works accomplished through his holy angels (Daniel 10:12 and following; Revelation 12:7-9).

Fallen angels oppress human beings and oppose God's human servants (I Peter 5:8).

In the end, they will be cast into the lake of fire (Matthew 25:41; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6; Revelation 20:1-3, 10).

- *What caused the angels to follow Satan in his rebellion?* They were created with free will and chose to rebel against God.

- *Can fallen angels be saved? Why or why not?* The Scriptures do not speak clearly about salvation for fallen angels. It is doubtful since the Scriptures do state that hell was created for Satan and his angels and their eternal destiny appears to be certain.
- *Should we be afraid of fallen angels? Why or why not?* We are not to fear fallen angels but rather to be sober-minded and alert. We are to resist Satan and his angels and stand strong in God's mighty power, and they will flee from us.

As with the good or holy angels, we may also explore the classification and description of fallen angels.

It is possible to classify demons under the same categories as holy angels. However, those classifications are largely meaningless for fallen angels. Satan surely does not wish us to know how his armies are organized. Were God to describe it, Satan would doubtless change it. Thus, the classification of demons is mysterious. However, there are some distinctions and descriptions which are useful.

Some fallen angels are imprisoned

Some fallen angels are kept in confinement awaiting judgment (2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6). The nature of the sin which has caused this imprisonment is unclear.

2 Peter 2:4

"For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment."

Jude 6

"And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day."

Why are some imprisoned now?

Some suggest the unnatural sin of Genesis 6:2-4 committed by some of the fallen angels (called "sons of God" in the passage) caused their confinement. Though angels do not reproduce after their kind, they may have been permitted to cohabit with human women on this one occasion to produce human offspring. If this is the case, the human partners in this sin, of course, perished in the Flood.

We may consider another perspective on Genesis 6. Angels are non-material beings, and according to Jesus, do not marry (Matt 22:30), facts that cast doubt on the idea that "the sons of God" are angels who married human wives. Nothing in the context of Genesis 6 indicates that the "sons of God" should be understood to be angels. It is far more likely that the phrase

“sons of God” refers to people belonging to God, and, like God, walking in righteousness (possibly marking the beginning of the line of Seth in Genesis 4:26). The text in chapter 5 traces the descendants from God through Adam and Seth to many “sons”. The larger purpose of the narrative seems to trace the parallel development of the godly (ultimately messianic) line of Seth and the ungodly descendants of the rest of mankind. Therefore, the “sons of God” in Genesis 6:2 could have been men who were righteous in their imitation of the character of their heavenly Father, and the “daughters of men” are the ungodly wives whom they marry.

Most fallen angels are free

Most evil angels remain free and are actively opposing the works of God. Satan leads them. They apparently retain the relative power with which they were created and function as the enemy of every Christian.

Ephesians 6:12

“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.”

Fallen angels are referred to as demons

“Demons” is the most common word describing angels who have fallen. They are also called “unclean spirits”.

The activity of demons is limited by God

Ultimately God sets limits which demons cannot exceed.

The leader of the fallen angels is Satan

Many debate whether Ezekiel 28:11-19 and Isaiah 14:12-17 provide more background into the nature of Satan and his sin. These passages do speak about the king of Tyre and the fall of the king of Babylon. It is not unusual though for prophetic passages to refer both to a historical person of that day and also to someone else who fully fulfills the prophecy. This is true of many passages that relate both to King David and Jesus Christ. It is also true of the reference to the prince of the kingdom of Persia in Daniel 10:13, a reference that must include a superhuman being related to the kingdom of Persia.

What might we learn about the origin, nature and sin of Satan from Ezekiel 28:11-19 and Isaiah 14:12-17? Let us read these two passages and look for hints that may provide a glimpse of Satan before his fall and what may have contributed to his downfall.

Ezekiel 28:11-19

Moreover, the word of the Lord came to me: “Son of man, raise a lamentation over the king of Tyre, and say to him, Thus says the Lord God:

“You were the signet of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering, sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, emerald, and carbuncle; and crafted in gold were your settings and your engravings. On the day that you were created they were prepared. You were an anointed guardian cherub. I placed you; you were on the holy mountain of God; in the midst of the stones of fire you walked. You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created, till unrighteousness was found in you. In the abundance of your trade you were filled with violence in your midst, and you sinned; so I cast you as a profane thing from the mountain of God, and I destroyed you, O guardian cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. Your heart was proud because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor. I cast you to the ground; I exposed you before kings, to feast their eyes on you. By the multitude of your iniquities, in the unrighteousness of your trade you profaned your sanctuaries; so I brought fire out from your midst; it consumed you, and I turned you to ashes on the earth in the sight of all who saw you. All who know you among the peoples are appalled at you; you have come to a dreadful end and shall be no more forever.”

Isaiah 14:12-17

“How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low! You said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.’ But you are brought down to Sheol, to the far reaches of the pit. Those who see you will stare at you and ponder over you: ‘Is this the man who made the earth tremble, who shook kingdoms, who made the world like a desert and overthrew its cities, who did not let his prisoners go home?’

From these passages, most theologians see a reference not just to the kings of Tyre and Babylon, but to Satan. He was a cherub in Eden. He was the most beautiful of angels. He was known as the light bearer or Day Star from which the Latin name of Lucifer is connected. His pride was his downfall, his desire to be like or greater than God. As a result, he was cast down and lost his high position.

Satan has many names and descriptions in the Bible. We can know more about his schemes and plans by understanding his names. Names reflect one’s character.

- The name 'Satan' (I Chronicles 21:1) means "adversary."
- He is also called the devil (Matthew 13:39). This New Testament description is used in connection with his slander and accusations against believers.
- Satan is the dragon of Revelation 12:3.
- He is also called the serpent (Genesis 3:1) because of his deceitfulness. He is the Father of lies (John 8:44).
- He is called Beelzebub (Matthew 10:25), meaning "lord of dung."
- He is called Belial (2 Corinthians 6:15) meaning "worthless one."
- He is also called Lucifer (Isaiah 14:12). This may have been Satan's original name since it means "light bearer" or "son of the morning". However, since his fall, he can only masquerade as an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14).
- He is rightly described as the evil one (Matthew 13:19).
- He is also the tempter (Matthew 4:3).
- He is described as the god of this world (2 Corinthians 4:4). He is the prince of the power of the air (Ephesians 2:2). He is the ruler of this world (John 12:31).

The Work of Fallen Angels

The work of Satan

In addition to leading the evil angels, Satan's own direct work is suggested by his titles and descriptions. He currently has power, a throne, and great authority (Matthew 4:8). He seeks to extend this power to take the place of God. He opposes God's plan at every turn, tempting humans in the garden, seeking to destroy his people, and attempting to destroy the Messiah. Satan now attacks God's servants. We should be aware of his methods.

The work of demons

Demons actively oppose the work of God wherever they can do so.

- They try to separate believers from Christ (Romans 8:38).
- They oppose angels (Daniel 10:12 and following).
- They carry out the orders and plans of Satan (Matthew 25:41).
- They cause physical and mental disorders (Matthew 9:33 et al).
- They lead people into moral impurity (Matthew 10:1).
- They spread false doctrines (I Timothy 4:1-2).
- They pervert God's Word (Genesis 3:1; 2 Corinthians 4:3-4).
- They oppose the spiritual progress of believers (Ephesians 6:12; 1 Thessalonians 2:18).
- They can possess humans or animals (Mark 5:8-14).

- They deceive humans (2 Corinthians 11:3).
- They are sometimes used by God in carrying out his purposes. Judas under Satan's influence, betrayed Jesus (Luke 22:3). This led to the cross and Satan's ultimate defeat by God.

There is an activity of page 17 in your handout that you may complete on your own as you further explore the schemes of the devil and his angels. You may look up each reference and describe how Satan attacks. Think of specific examples of when you have resisted Satan in these areas in your own life.

1. Tempting (Matt. 4:1)	4. Lying (John 8:44)	7. Robbing (Matt. 13:19)	10. Harassing (2 Cor. 12:7)
2. Hindering (I Thess. 2:18)	5. Sifting (Luke 22:31)	8. Imitating (Matt 13:25)	11. Accusing (Rev. 12:10)
3. Striking with disease (Luke 13:16)	6. Possessing (Mark 9:17-18)	9. Killing & Devouring (John 8:44)	

We are not ignorant of his schemes (2 Corinthians 2:11), but we must be sober and alert to resist him (James 4:7; I Peter 5:8). We should not speak lightly of him (Jude 8). But fight him using the full armor of God (Ephesians 6:11).

What is our relationship to Demons today?

"If Scripture gives us a true account of the world as it really is, then we must take seriously its portrayal of intense demonic involvement in human society. Our failure to perceive that involvement with our five senses simply tells us that we have some deficiencies in our ability to understand the world, not that demons do not exist. There is no reason to think that there is any less demonic activity in the world today than there was at the time of the New Testament. The unwillingness of modern society to recognize the presence of demonic activity today is, from a biblical perspective, simply due to people's blindness to the true nature of reality."

(Wayne Grudem, Systematic Theology)

But what kind of activity do demons engage in today? Are there some distinguishing characteristics that will enable us to recognize demonic activity when it occurs? Many of these thoughts are shared in Wayne Grudem's book, *Systematic Theology, chapter 20: Satan and Demons*.

Not all evil and sin is from Satan and demons.

The emphasis of New Testament teaching is on telling believers not to sin and to live righteous lives. Whether it be covetousness, divisions, sexual immorality, lawsuits among believers, or some other category of sin, the response was not to rebuke a spirit greed, envy, dissension, lust, or selfishness but rather to examine yourself, confess sin, repent and walk in obedience by the power of the Holy Spirit.

When proclaiming the gospel, occasionally Paul would cast out a demonic spirit that was causing significant hindrances to the gospel in a certain area. But this was not the usual pattern of ministry presented throughout the Bible. In no instance does anyone in the New Testament summon a territorial spirit, demand information from demons about a local demonic hierarchy, or declare that demonic strongholds over a city have to be broken before the gospel can be proclaimed with effectiveness. Rather, Christians just preach the gospel.

The New Testament leads us to understand that there is some degree of demonic influence in nearly all wrongdoing and sin that occurs today. Not all sin is caused by Satan or demons, nor is the major influence or cause of sin demonic activity, But demonic activity is probably a contributing factor in almost all sin and destructive activity that opposes the work God.

If there is a pattern of persistent sin in the life of a Christian, the primary responsibility for that sin rests with the individual Christian and his or her choices to continue that wrongful pattern. There could possibly be some demonic influence contributing to and intensifying that sinful tendency. If after prayer and repeated efforts to overcome an area of sin, the believer may consider whether a demonic attack or influence could be contributing to this situation and hindering his or her effectiveness for the Lord.

Can a Christian be demon possessed?

The term "demon possession" must be defined. This term is not in the Bible. The biblical accounts state that a person "has a demon" or that they are suffering from demonic influence (daimonizomai). The language never suggests that a demon actually "possesses" someone. Using the term "demon possession" implies that the person under attack has no choice but to succumb to it and will be completely under the domination of the evil spirit. This may have

been the case in extreme situations, but this was not necessarily the norm. A better term may be that a person is “demonized” or under attack or battling varying degrees of demonic influence.

Can a Christian be completely controlled by an evil spirit? The answer is no.

Can a Christian experience differing degrees of demonic attack or influence? The answer is yes.

How can demonic influence be recognized?

In severe cases of demonic influence as reported in the gospels, the affected person would exhibit bizarre and often violent actions, especially in opposition to the preaching of the gospel (Mark 1:23-24; Mark 9:17-22; Mark 5:2-5)

Sometimes Christians may have a subjective sense of the presence of an evil spiritual influence. In addition, someone who is under spiritual attack from a demonic power may know it or sense it. It may be helpful to ask the person, “Do you think that an attack by any evil spiritual force could be a factor in this situation?”

Jesus appears to give all believers authority to rebuke and command demons to leave.

Through the cross, Jesus disarmed the principalities and powers and made a public example of them, triumphing over them in him (Col 2:15). Because of Christ’s death on the cross, our sins are completely forgiven, and Satan has no rightful authority over us.

Second, our membership as children in God’s family is the firm spiritual position from which we engage in spiritual warfare. We have no need to fear demons (1 John 4:4; 2 Tim 2:7; Phil 1:28; Eph 6:16; 2 Cor 10:4; 1 John 5:18).

Does God want us to speak directly to a demon who is troubling someone rather than just praying and asking God to drive away the demon? Consider these situations ...

- Should we just pray for an unsaved person to respond to the gospel or do we also share the gospel with them?
- Should we just pray for a discouraged person or do we take the time to also encourage them?
- Should we just pray for the person involved in sin or do we speak a word of rebuke or admonition?

In each case, God has called us to be actively engaged in the world to advance His kingdom purposes. In actual practice, this authority to rebuke demons may result in briefly speaking a

command to an evil spirit to leave when we suspect the presence of demonic influence. We are to resist the devil (James 4:7), and he will flee from us. Sometimes a very brief command in the name of Jesus for the evil spirit to leave and not return will be enough. At other times it will be helpful to quote Scripture in the process of commanding an evil spirit to leave.

Appropriate use of the Christian's authority in ministry to other people.

Do not frighten people due to the fact that they may be unfamiliar with spiritual attack. The Holy Spirit is a Spirit of gentleness and peace (1 Cor 14:33). It may be helpful to ask questions about whether they think an evil spirit may be attacking them or if you may pray a word of rebuke over any evil spirit that may be a factor.

If the person gives permission to do so, a brief command should be spoken aloud, telling the evil spirit to leave. You may ask if the person felt or sensed anything different when those words were spoken.

This does not have to be a highly dramatic or emotionally charged procedure. There is no indication in the New Testament that demons are hard of hearing, nor are there examples of such long periods of conflict in order to get a demon to leave. The power to cast out demons comes not from our own strength or the power of our own voice, but from the Holy Spirit (Matt 12:28; Luke 11:20). Thus a firm, confident, authoritative tone of voice should be sufficient.

If the person is not a Christian, we should urge them to trust Christ as Savior immediately after the demon has been cast out so the Holy Spirit will reside in the person and protect them from future attacks (Matt 12:43-45).

The effectiveness in difficult cases of demonic influence may be related to our own spiritual condition (Matt 17:18-20; Mark 9:29; Luke 10:17, 20). Living an abiding life in Christ and walking in obedience in a continual attitude of prayer will result in a spiritual preparedness to effectively confront demonic attack or influence.

We should expect the gospel to come in power to triumph over the works of the devil!

If we really believe the scriptural testimonies of the existence and activities of demons, and if we really believe that “the reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil” (1 John 3:8), then it would seem appropriate to expect that even today when the gospel is proclaimed to unbelievers, when prayer is made for believers who have perhaps been unaware of this dimension of spiritual conflict, there will be genuine triumph over the power of

the enemy. We should expect that this is a normal part of the work of Christ in building up his kingdom, and rejoice in Christ's victory in it.

The Destiny of Evil Angels

Believers will have a role in judging demons (I Corinthians 6:3). All evil angels (those free as well as those now imprisoned) will be cast into the lake of fire.

Matthew 25:41

Then he will say to those on his left, "Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels."

The destiny of Satan

Satan will have a role in future events attempting, as always, to overthrow God's work. However, he will not succeed. Satan will be cast into "the abyss", where he will be bound for a thousand years.

Revelation 20:1-3

Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain. And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be released for a little while.

He will then be set free for a brief time during which he will lead mankind's final rebellion against God. But his plans will be thwarted when fire from heaven consumes his armies and he himself is cast into the lake of fire with his demons for all eternity.

Revelation 20:7-10

And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle; their number is like the sand of the sea. And they marched up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, but fire came down from heaven and consumed them, and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

As Lesson 2 comes to a close, it might be helpful to go back to page 4 and review what you wrote about Fallen angels or demons. Take a few minutes to add to your list whatever you have learned or may have been reminded of through this lesson.

Satan and his demons must be taken seriously. They are powerful beings bent on destroying God's works and believers. They accomplish this destructive work chiefly by means of fear and deception. However, Satan is a defeated foe! We need not fear him or his demons. If we resist him, he will flee. We resist him by fleeing temptations, by fighting lies with truth, and by claiming the name and authority of Jesus Christ in whom we stand. No demon can own a Christian since we already belong to Christ. We need only to combat Satan's lies with these truths to resist him and cause him to flee.

Here are a few closing thoughts related to the invisible spiritual realm and your position and authority in Christ.

- Satan is a defeated foe (John 12:31).
- Jesus destroyed the work of the devil (Col 2:14-15; 1 John 5:18).
- We are victorious in Christ (1 Cor 15:55-58).
- We have the power to resist Satan (1 John 4:4).
- We must learn to continually "put on the full armor of God" in daily living (Eph 6:13-17).
- There is an invisible world that is just as real as the visible world (2 Kings 6:8-23).
- We are involved in an invisible war, a cosmic conflict, that has eternal consequences (2 Cor 4:4; 1 Peter 5:8).
 - Personal life (Eph 4:26-27)
 - Marriage/Family (1 Cor 7:5)
 - Church life/False Teaching (1 Tim 4:1)
 - Culture (Dan 10; Eph 2:2; Jude 9; Rev 12 :7)
- Our foe is formidable, and his goal is to kill, steal, discredit, and destroy the cause of Christ (1 Peter 5:8; Jude 9).
- Respect our foe, be aware of his schemes, but do not fear him (Eph 6:11; 2 Cor 2:10-11).
- We fight from a position of victory not for victory (Col 2:9-15; Eph 4:7-10; 1 John 4:4; 1 John 5:4-5; James 4:6-10; Rev 12:11).

This brings a close to our first two lessons on the doctrine of angels, good angels and fallen angels. When we continue with Lesson 3, we will begin our study of the doctrine of the Church.