

## Lesson #4

### The Existence and Activity of Demons

Introduction:

A. *Their Creation and Fall*

See Col. 1:16; Rev. 12:7-9

B. *Demons in the Old Testament*

1. **Deut. 32:17; Ps. 106:36-37 (cf. Ps. 96:4-5)** - Here we see that the idols worshipped by Israel during her time of rebellion were in fact demons. Visible images are but fronts for invisible demonic spirits.

2. **Lev. 17:7; 2 Chron. 11:15; 2 Kings 23:8** - The reference in these texts is to a "he-goat," lit., "hairy ones" (cf. the "satyr" = ½ goat and ½ man of Greek mythology). This word refers to a male goat in Lev. 16:7-10,15,18,20-22,26-27. Some believed that demons assumed the shape or form of a goat (Joshua 24:14; Ezek. 20:7). Others suggest that the references here are simply to goat idols (common in Egypt), behind which were demonic spirits. The goat head is a common symbol or representation of Satan in modern occultic activity.

3. **1 Sam. 16:14-16,23; 18:10; 19:9** - Each of these texts describes "an evil spirit" that comes "from God" or is sent by God. Is this a reference to a good angel who is sent to afflict someone with evil, or is it a demon whose very character is evil who is used by the sovereign God to accomplish His purposes? The latter seems most likely. Notice several important things:

- Demons are subject to the will of God, no less than good angels.
- The spirit "terrorized" Saul. The precise nature of this suffering is not specified, but surely it was both physical and emotional.
- On two occasions the presence of this spirit led/induced/prompted(?) Saul to become violent and make an attempt on David's life (1 Sam. 18:10-11; 19:9-10). What, if anything, does this tell us about the relationship between demonic affliction and human sin? Note well that Saul himself acknowledges the sinfulness of his attempts to kill David, even though it was in some way "prompted" or "stirred" by the evil spirit. See 1 Sam. 24:16-21 and 26:21.
- The sending of the evil spirit from God is portrayed as an act of divine judgment. *It was in reponse to Saul's disobedience.*
- The evil spirit left Saul whenever David played his harp (1 Sam. 16:16-23). Why? Was it merely the fact that *music* was played, or was it the fact that it was *David* who played it? See especially v. 18.

4. **Isaiah 13:21; 34:14** (cf. Lev. 17:7) - The word used in these texts is that which in other texts simply means "male goat" (the sort presented as a sin offering). It is likely, however, that in the two texts from Isaiah it refers to demons. As Page notes, "in both cases, the word appears in a prophecy of the destruction Yahweh will bring to an enemy of Israel. Chapter 13 describes the devastation of Babylon, and chapter 34 paints a similar picture for Edom. Both passages envisage a time when Israel's enemies will be utterly destroyed, when their centers of power will no longer

be inhabited by humans but become a dwelling place for the denizens of the desert. The *se'irim* are included among the future inhabitants of these waste places" (69).

Many believe that Rev. 18:2 is an allusion to Isa. 13:21. In the former text we read, "Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great! She has become a home for demons and a haunt for every evil spirit, a haunt for every unclean and detestable bird." Here again we see the association of demons with desolate places abandoned by humans

In Isa. 34:14, another word occurs that probably refers to demons. It is the Hebrew word translated *Lilith*, rendered "night monster" by the NASB and "night creature" by the NIV.

In Babylonian demonology, Lilith could refer to several things: a) a child-stealing witch; b) Adam's first wife, before Eve, believed to be the mother of all demons; or c) a night demon that prowled about in dark and desolate places. In post-biblical times, Lilith became the topic of much speculation in Judaism. "She came to be regarded primarily as a demon who seduced men in their dreams, who murdered young children, and who was a special threat at childbirth. More recently, she has emerged as a positive symbol for Jewish feminists" (Page, 73). Some have argued that the reference to "the terror of night" in Ps. 91:5 is an allusion to Lilith.

Although not biblical terms, the existence of demonic spirits known as *incubus* and *succubus* needs to be addressed. Incubi (from the Latin, *incubare*, "to lie upon") are said to be demons who take on the shape/form of men to seduce sleeping women; as succubi they assume the shape/form of women to seduce men. Since demons are incapable of producing either semen or eggs, there is no reproductive fruit from such encounters. Their motivation is primarily to humiliate and corrupt their victims. [Are demons capable of "lust"?] Most often the victim feels physically immobilized and thus raped. However, it is not uncommon for the demon to *deceive* the victim into thinking that he/she was a *willing* partner, thereby intensifying the feelings of deep, personal shame and self-loathing. Many also often find it difficult to develop a healthy sexual relationship with their spouse.

5. **Psalm 82** - In this psalm God is portrayed as presiding or ruling over the divine assembly. He accuses the "gods" of failing in their duty to protect the poor and powerless and condemns them to death (v. 7). Who are these "gods"? Some argue they are human beings or judges who are called "gods" because they represent God when they issue their verdicts. More likely this is a reference to supernatural beings. Several things indicate this.

- The setting of the psalm (see v. 1) is the heavenly council or divine assembly.
- The terms "gods" (v. 1) and "sons of the Most High" (v. 6) more naturally refer to celestial beings.
- In v. 7 it is said they will die "like mere men," which assumes they are not human (otherwise, there is no purpose for the comparison with humans).
- The idea that celestial beings have been given responsibility for the administration of justice in particular nations is found elsewhere in the OT, such as Deut. 32:8.
- It may not be wise to draw too sharp a distinction between celestial beings and earthly human rulers, for "the psalmist may well have believed that the celestial 'gods' exercised their influence on earth through terrestrial rulers" (Page, 58). Thus, I conclude that the "gods" of Ps. 82 are fallen angels, originally assigned as patrons of various nations, who shirked their responsibility and abused their powers.

"The text is silent about the circumstances of their fall from innocence, but obviously these are fallen beings whose sin had a devastating impact on human society. The angels stand accused of aiding and abetting the wicked in their exploitation of the poor and powerless.

Indeed, the plight of the marginalized in society was exacerbated by the actions of these gods. So great was their influence that verse 5 says, 'All the foundations of the earth are shaken.' When justice is perverted, the very structure of the cosmic order comes under attack, threatening chaos. Obviously, the psalmist saw the promotion of inequity and the absence of compassion as grievous sins that are not due to human moral deficiencies alone. So great is the evil of social injustice that it can only be accounted for by the activity of cosmic forces opposed to God" (Sydney Page, 59).

What are the implications of this for our understanding of and response to social injustice and oppression of the poor and powerless?

6. **Isaiah 24:21-22** - Here we read of a time when God will punish "the host of heaven on high" or "the powers in the heavens above." In support of the interpretation that this is a reference to fallen angels: a) Note the contrast in v. 21 with earthly rulers or kings. These demons are thus in some way allied with the kings of various nations; i.e., they are "patron" angels of earthly nations and are involved in the sins mentioned in v. 5. b) The word translated "powers" (*saba*) is used elsewhere in the OT to refer to angels (1 Kings 22:19). This passage also suggests that these demons will be imprisoned in an intermediate place of detention awaiting the final judgment (v. 22; cf. 2 Peter 2:4 and Jude 6).

7. **1 Kings 22:19-23** (2 Chron. 18:18-22) - Ahab was seeking to form an alliance with Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, whereby they might together attack Ramoth Gilead which was under Aramean control. Jehoshaphat insisted that they first consult a prophet to get God's perspective. Ahab, on the other hand, gathered 400 of his prophets who told him to attack Ramoth Gilead and he would be victorious. Jehoshaphat consulted with the prophet Micaiah who told him of a vision he had had of a meeting of the heavenly council. In the vision, God asked who would go to entice Ahab into attacking Ramoth Gilead, in which battle Ahab would die. A "spirit" (angel?) volunteered to be a "deceiving spirit in the mouth of all his [Ahab's] prophets" (v. 22). God agreed. The spirit went forth, Ahab heeded the voice of the prophets, and went forth in the battle where he eventually died. Note several things:

- The scene in Micaiah's vision is similar to that in Job 1: a heavenly council at which the angels are all present.
- Some have argued that the "spirit" was in fact Satan, but there is no indication of this in the text. The spirit is portrayed as simply one among many others. There is no evidence he held some superior or special position.
- Was this a fallen spirit, a demon? Probably. It performs an evil function: it prompts Ahab's prophets to speak lies. Although the spirit is not Satan himself, there are undeniable parallels between this text and Job 1. Also, the passage seems to draw a distinction between the spirit that inspires Ahab's prophets and the one that inspires Micaiah (see v. 24). "The implication is that Micaiah and Ahab's prophets could not both have received their messages from the same source. There are, of course, two distinct sources, but it is Micaiah who has the right one. After all, it is his prophecy that comes to pass" (Page, 79).
- Perhaps most important of all is the fact that even this demonic spirit is absolutely subject to the will of God. It does God's bidding. Micaiah is clear that it was God who "put a deceiving spirit in the mouth of all these your prophets; and the Lord has proclaimed disaster against you" (v. 23). Thus God can and often does use demonic spirits to fulfill His purposes. Again we see that the question, "Who did it, God or the devil?" may be answered, "Yes." But God is always ultimate.
- A close parallel with this passage is the account in Judges 9:23 where God sent an evil spirit to provoke discord between Abimelech and the people of Shechem.

### C. *Demons in the New Testament*

Much of the Jewish literature dating from the NT era focused on identifying demonic spirits by name (e.g., Raux, Barsafael, Artosael, Belbel). Aside from a single reference to Satan as Belial (2 Cor. 6:15), the apostle Paul does not identify any demonic being. Three terms most commonly used are:

- 1) *daimon* or *daimonion* = demon, used 63x (54 of which are in the gospels)
- 2) *pneumata* = spirits. Cf. Luke 10:17 with 10:20. Also, "unclean spirits" (used 21x, half of which are in Mark; cf. Lk. 11:19-26) and "evil spirits" (only 8x in the gospels and Acts; cf. Lk. 8:2).
- 3) *angelos* = angel (see Mt. 25:41; 1 Pt. 3:22; Rev. 12:7).

The term "devils" is technically incorrect. *Diabolos* is never used in the NT of demons, but only of **the Devil, Satan**.

### D. *Characteristics and Activities of Demons*

More will be said about their activities when we study demonization. Virtually everything true of angels is true of demons: properties, personality, powers, etc. The only difference is that the demons are evil, serving Satan, and the angels are good, serving God.

1. Although demons are rarely named in the NT (see Lk. 8:30), it is reasonable to conclude that each has a name (holy angels have names: Michael, Gabriel).
2. Demons can speak to and communicate with humans (Lk. 4:33-35,41; 8:28-30; Acts 19:13-17).
3. Demons are intelligent (Lk. 4:34; 8:28; Acts 19:13-17).
4. Demons formulate and propagate their own doctrinal systems (1 Tim. 4:1-3).

We see from this that distortions and misrepresentations of the truth are not always the product of merely human misunderstanding or miscalculation. Paul believes that often they are demonically inspired. Note: this does *not* mean, however, that everyone who disagrees with you on any particular point of doctrine is an unwitting tool of a demon! On the other hand, it is entirely possible that certain false doctrines that well-meaning Christians hold (e.g., cessationism; 70 a.d. = 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Christ) may be demonically energized.

This passage, as well as 1 John 4:1ff., teach us that demons are extremely active in promoting falsehood in the church. According to 1 John 4, behind false prophets (such as those who deny the incarnation of Jesus [*The Myth of God Incarnate* and the infamous *Jesus Seminar*]) are supernatural agents of the Enemy.

5. Demons have emotions and experience a variety of feelings (Js. 2:19; Lk. 8:28).
6. There are differences or degrees in their strength (Mk. 9:29) and sinfulness (Mt. 12:45).
7. Like the holy angels, demons can appear to us in various forms, both spiritual and physical (Mt. 4; Rev. 9:7-10,17; 16:13-16).

If holy angels can visit us without our knowing it (Heb. 13:1-2), there is every reason to believe that demons can do so as well.

8. Demons can infuse their victims with super-human strength (Acts 19:16; Mk. 5:3).
9. Like the holy angels, demons can move swiftly through space (Dan. 9:21-23; 10:10-14). Normal physical barriers do not restrict their activity (a "legion" [6,000] of demons inhabited one man and later 2,000 pigs).
10. Demons can physically assault someone and/or cause physical affliction.

Luke 9:39 (Mt. 17:15) speaks of a demon's *seizing* a young boy. He is thrown to the ground or into fire or water, together with other violent symptoms. In Mt. 9:32-34 a man's inability to speak is attributed to a demon (cf. 12:22-24; Lk. 11:14-15). Be it noted, however, that there are several cases in the gospels of blindness or the inability to speak which Jesus heals that are *not* attributed to demonic influence (Mt. 9:27-31; 20:29-34; Mk. 7:31-37; 8:22-26; 10:46-52; Lk. 18:35-43; John 9:1-7).

11. Demons inspire and energize the false wisdom of the world that all too often infiltrates the church and poisons inter-personal relationships in the body of Christ.

In James 3:13-18 he describes two kinds of wisdom, that which comes from heaven and that which is characterized as "earthly, natural, demonic" (*daimoniodes*). "James clearly considered the arrogant, sectarian spirit of his opponents to be demonic" (Page, 230).

12. Demons animate and energize all non-Christian religions and all forms of idolatry (1 Cor. 10:14-22).

In Gal. 4:3,8-9, Paul refers to the "elemental things" of this world, lit., the *stoicheia*, to which both Jews and Gentiles were held in bondage prior to their conversion to Christ. Many believe this term is a reference to demonic powers. Thus, according to Arnold,

"at one time they thought they were worshipping real gods and goddesses in their pagan worship, but they were soon to find out that these were mere idols --- tools of the devil and his powers of darkness. The Galatians had appeared to have turned their backs on their pagan gods, but they were now tempted to add Jewish legal requirements to the pure gospel of Christ, which Paul had taught them. In Paul's mind this would be trading one form of slavery to the powers for another. . . . Both pagan religion and the Jewish law surface here as two systems that Satan and his powers exploit to hold the unbeliever in captivity and re-enslave the believer" (*Powers of Darkness*, 131-32).

13. Demons may have been responsible, in part, for the crucifixion of Jesus.

In 1 Cor. 2:6-8, Paul refers to the "rulers of this age" (vv. 6,8) who "crucified the Lord of glory". Some insist this is a reference to the *human* rulers of the day such as Annas, Caiaphas, Pilate, etc. Others argue that the evidence points to *demonic* powers. Evidence supporting this latter view is two-fold.

- The term "ruler" is used elsewhere by Paul of Satan (Eph. 2:2). It is also used this way by Jesus (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11). However, it is also used of human rulers in Rom. 13:3.
- These "rulers" are said to be "passing away" (NASB) or "are coming to nothing" (NIV), translations of the verb *katargeo*, a term used later in 1 Cor. 15:24 of Christ's ultimate defeat/destruction of the principalities and powers. This verb is never used by Paul for the ultimate doom of unbelieving humanity. It is also used in Heb. 2:14 for the defeat of the devil by Christ.

If the "rulers" = demonic forces, then we must conclude that

"Paul held the demonic rulers responsible for Christ's death. He assumes that these powers of Satan were working behind the scenes to control the course of events during the passion week. It was not a part of Paul's purpose to explain exactly how these demonic rulers operated. At the very least we can imagine they were intimately involved by exerting their devious influence in and through Judas, Pilate, Annas and Caiaphas, and by inciting the mob. Demonic victory over God's plan by putting Christ to death failed. The powers did not apprehend the full extent of God's wisdom – how the Father would use the death of Christ to atone for sin, raise him victoriously from the dead and create the church. Least of all did they envisage their own defeat!" (Arnold, *Powers of Darkness*, 104).

[Be it noted, however, that an equally strong case can be made that the "rulers" here are human, earthly rulers.]

14. Demons are presently in one of three places:

- a. active in the earth
- b. confined in the abyss (Lk. 8:31; although this confinement may not be permanent, see Rev. 9:1-3,11)
- c. permanently confined/imprisoned in hell/tartarus (2 Pt. 2:4; Jude 6; and possibly 1 Pt. 3:18-20).

The verb *tartaroo* ("to send to hell") occurs only here in the NT, but is found frequently in Greek mythology where it refers to the depths of the underworld. There is a textual problem in v. 4. Some manuscripts say they were committed to "pits" of darkness while others say "chains" of darkness. It has been suggested that since Peter's language is necessarily figurative he need not be interpreted as saying that these demons are permanently confined but only significantly restricted in what they can do in the earth. I find this latter suggestion highly unlikely.

[*Excursus:* What was the "sin" of those demons referred to in 2 Pt. 2:4 and Jude 6 (and poss. 1 Pt. 3:18-20) for which they are now confined in hell? This "sin" was *not* their original rebellion, for why, then, would only *some* be confined and not all? It can't be that only the more wicked were permanently confined, for Satan, the most wicked of all, is still free. The context in both 2 Pt. 4 and Jude 6 links this "sin" with the flood of Noah (cf. 1 Pt. 3:18-20). This takes us back to **Genesis 6**. Possible interpretations:

(1) The "sons of God" were humans, the godly male descendants of Seth, whereas the "daughters of men" were ungodly female descendants of Cain. There are several reasons why this view is unlikely. First, the phrase is "daughters of *men*" not "daughters of *Cain*," which on the surface seems more likely to describe daughters of men in general. Second, surely not all the daughters (female descendants) of Cain are to be thought of as significantly more evil than other females in the earth. Third, whereas the phrase "sons of God" is used to describe the nation as a whole, it is never used in the OT to refer to a particular group within humanity noted for their piety. Fourth, on the other hand, it *is* used specifically of celestial beings.

(2) The "sons of God" were men of nobility (kings, rulers, princes) who because of lust married outside and well below their rank and status (their sin was polygamy). But as Oropeza observes, "it is not clear . . . why God would abhor polygamy enough to destroy the entire earth by the flood. Long after the flood, the Israelites engaged in polygamy without incurring God's displeasure" (61).

(3) This text describes a massive intrusion of the demonic into the domain of humanity. This was the interpretation dominant in the patristic period until Augustine (354-430) argued for View 1 above. Arguments in support of this interpretation: First, the phrase "sons of God" is used in Job

1:6; 2:1; 38:7; Pss. 29:1; 89:6; and probably Deut. 32:8 to refer to angelic beings. [Although we should not give it too much weight, it is worth noting that the phrase "sons of God" was understood to refer to angels in the earliest known exposition of Gen. 6, that is, in 1 Enoch 6-11.] Second, the contrast between "sons of *God*" and "daughters of *men*" suggests that the former are to be distinguished from human beings. The contrast is most naturally taken to be between beings who are not human and beings who are. Third, Jude 6-7 imply that the sin of these angels was sexual in nature.

The most frequently cited objection to this view is that angels/demons do not marry or procreate (Mt. 22:30), thus it is inconceivable that demons could engage humans in any kind of sexual relationship. But in Mt. 22 Jesus is describing the *heavenly* behavior of *holy* angels, *not* the *earthly* misbehavior of *evil* angels. Also, the point of Mt. 22 is that angels do not intermarry with *each other*, i.e., they are not a race that propagates itself. But they still might seek sexual interaction with *humans*. We should also remember that in Gen. 18-19 angels appeared in human form, ate solid food, and were pursued by the homosexual community of S & G. Clearly, "an angel's involvement in sexual activity was not foreign to the Pentateuch's world of thought" (Page, 49). When we add to this that the NT portrays demons as longing to inhabit human bodies, it suggests that Gen. 6 is describing not so much demons *per se* but *demonized humans*, i.e., humans in whom demons are dwelling. Page summarizes as follows:

"The sin had a sexual nature, yet it was not simply a sexual sin. More fundamentally, it was a sin of rejecting the order created by God and violating distinctions he had instituted between the various kinds of creatures he had made. Not content to live within the parameters established by Yahweh, the angels formed unnatural unions with human women. The ancient Israelites may well have preserved this story because they saw in it a warning to shun the fertility religions with their sacred marriages between gods and humans" (53).

Oropeza suggests that these were not in fact demonized humans but "incarnated demons" (for lack of a better term). He then asks the question: "If angels really did manifest themselves in human form, how is it that they were able to duplicate the human DNA structure necessary to produce offspring (if indeed our current understandings of human structuring are correct)? Even if angels are supernatural and were intelligent enough to do so, creating human life seems to be a work that is reserved only for God" (64). He goes on to suggest that perhaps "the sons of God saw the wickedness of humans and asked God to clothe them with bodies so that they could come to earth to teach men laws and morals. . . . It was at this time that angels descended from heaven to earth. After they were clothed with human flesh, however, they fell to the same passions as do all humans, and so they gave themselves over to the lusts of the flesh, desiring earthly women" (65).

Two final observations:

- Contrary to what many assume, the text does not explicitly state that the Nephilim were the offspring of the intermarriage between the sons of God and the daughters of men. [The word *Nephilim* recurs in Num. 13:33 in reference to the Canaanite giants who intimidated the Israelites into not entering the promised land.]
- The language of Gen. 6:2 echoes the account of the temptation in Gen. 3. The Hebrew words for "saw", "good", and "took" in Gen. 3:6 which describes how Eve "saw" that the forbidden fruit was "good" and therefore "took" some to eat, are found here in Gen. 6:2. "The author seems to have deliberately represented the action of the sons of God as a repetition of the sin in the garden" (Page, 53).

In summary, I believe that Gen. 6 describes the "sin" mentioned in 2 Pt. 2:4 and Jude 6 (and 1 Pt. 3:18-20). Subsequent to their fall from heaven, and as an expression of their moral depravity, an unspecified number of those demons inhabited (took up residence in) human bodies and contracted marriage relationships with

the "daughters of men." Thus we are reading about a case of demonized men entering into marriage with women and contributing greatly to the increase of depravity and corruption in the earth (Gen. 6:5-7). These demons were, at some later time, consigned to permanent imprisonment until the day of final judgment.]

15. Demons engage in cosmic level warfare with the holy angels (Rev. 12:1-12).

There are four levels of spiritual conflict or warfare: (1) the conflict between God and Satan (Heb. 2:14; 1 John 3:8); (2) the conflict between the elect angels and the evil angels (Rev. 12; Dan. 10); (3) the conflict between Satan and the saints (either *direct* [a sensible, often tangible encounter between intelligent evil beings and the believer; Eph. 6], or *indirect* [the inescapable conflict from simply living in a world that lies in the power of the evil one (1 John 5:18-19), a world shaped by the values, ideologies and institutions energized by Satan]); and (4) the conflict between Satan and the unsaved (2 Cor. 4:4; Acts 26:18; Col. 1:12-13; Eph. 2:2; Mt. 13:1-23); although "conflict" is probably not a good word insofar as the unbelieving world willingly sides with Satan, even though they may not know they do. Our immediate concern is with level (2) . . . and for this we turn to Rev. 12:1-12.

Vv. 7-12 are introduced by John to explain why the Woman had to flee into the wilderness (vv. 1-6), why Satan's fury is now unleashed against the church of Jesus Christ *on earth*. The reason: he has lost his place and position *in heaven*; his power has been curtailed.

When did (or when will) this expulsion of Satan and his demons from heaven occur? Theories:

- (1) It will occur in the future, during the "tribulation" period.
- (2) It is timeless. No specific moment in history is in view. It is a highly symbolic description of Satan's downfall.
- (3) It is because of the incarnation, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus that this defeat of the Devil occurs, indeed, *has already occurred*. Michael and his angels are given the task of expelling Satan consequent to the victory of Jesus *at the time of His first coming* (Lk. 10:18). Christians carry on this victory over Satan (v. 11) as they stand on the achievements of the cross and boldly proclaim the authority of Jesus' name.

I believe view (3) is correct. In that light, four observations are in order.

First, when Satan rebelled he enticed a large number of angels to follow him (v. 4). Whether it was precisely 1/3 of the angelic host is unimportant. Clearly, though, they are now regarded as "his angels" (vv. 7,9).

Second, Satan's accusations no longer have any legal or moral force following his defeat at the cross. This, I believe, is the meaning of his being "thrown down" and there no longer being a "place found for them in heaven." In other words, this is not a description of a literal or spatial or geographical change in the devil's dwelling place. "Rather we should recognize that Satan's power was broken through what happened on the cross so that he can no longer successfully bring accusations against God's people" (Page, 215). After all, v. 10 affirms that the one who "has been" (past tense) thrown down is the one who "accuses" (present tense) believers "before our God day and night". This ongoing work of accusation is countered by the intercessory ministry of Jesus (Rom. 8:33-34; Heb. 7:25; 1 John 2:1-2).

Third, we learn from this that events in the heavenly or angelic realm have consequences for us on earth. More on this when we study Dan. 10.

Fourth,, Michael and his elect angels are more powerful and stronger than Satan and his demonic hosts (v. 8). Why? Because of the cross and resurrection of Jesus! Two other texts substantiate this point.

2 Peter 2:10-11 - "Angelic majesties" (NASB) or "celestial beings" (NIV) = lit., "glories" = evil angelic beings = demons. The false teachers mock/insult them, something not even the elect angels do. Elect angels [is this a reference to all holy angels or only archangels such as Michael?] are "greater" in "might and power" than evil angels. What is the explanation for this superior strength? It isn't by virtue of creation; i.e., it isn't inherent within them. Rather, it is by virtue of the victory of the cross and resurrection and exaltation of Jesus.

Why would false teachers speak disdainfully of demons. Richard Bauckham explains:

"The most plausible view is that in their confident immorality the false teachers were contemptuous of the demonic powers. When they were rebuked for their immoral behavior and warned of the danger of falling into the power of the devil and sharing his condemnation, they laughed at the idea, denying that the devil could have any power over them and speaking of the powers of evil in skeptical, mocking terms. They may have doubted the very existence of supernatural powers of evil" (262).

*Jude 8-9* - Here we see that Michael, though greater and more powerful than Satan (2 Pt. 2:11; Rev. 12:8), because of Christ's victory, did not pronounce a judgment against his rival. There is no reference in the OT to this dispute. It comes from Jude's reconstruction of the lost ending of the *Testament of Moses* (1<sup>st</sup> c. b.c.). See Deut. 34:1-6. According to T.Mos, Michael was sent by God to Mt. Nebo to remove Moses' body to its burial place; before he could do so, Satan, making one last effort to gain power/authority over Moses, tried to obtain the body (hoping, perhaps, to make it an object of worship among the Israelites [idolatry] or at least to deprive Moses of the honor of burial by the archangel. It was a legal dispute, as Satan sought to prove Moses unworthy of honorable treatment, accusing him of murder (Ex. 2:12). Michael, not tolerating such slander, appealed to divine authority and said: "May the Lord rebuke you, devil!"

This is *not* designed to teach us to show reverence for the devil. Rather, the point is that Michael, unlike the false teachers, did not presume to be a law unto himself but referred the matter to the proper moral authority: God. Again, Richard Bauckham explains:

"The point of contrast between the false teachers and Michael is not that Michael treated the devil with respect, and the moral is not that we should be polite even to the devil. The point of the contrast is that Michael could not reject the devil's accusation on his own authority. Even though the devil was motivated by malice and Michael recognized that his accusation was slanderous, he could not himself dismiss the devil's case, because he was not the judge. All he could do was ask the Lord, who alone is judge, to condemn Satan for his slander. The moral is therefore that no one is a law to himself, an autonomous moral authority" (61).

<p>This does <b>not</b> mean that we, as Christians, are forbidden to rebuke or verbally resist or pronounce judgment against demonic beings. Neither unbelievers (the "false teachers") nor even the holy angels have the authority which we have received by virtue of our being in Christ. In Christ, with his authority, we both can and must resist and rebuke the Enemy. See Luke 10:1-20; Acts 5:16; 8:7; 16:16-18; 19:12. Jude makes no attempt to extend to Christians the restriction placed on Michael.</p>
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