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Conducted by  
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**What were the demons as mentioned in the N.T. and are they still to be found today?**

In order for us to get a clearer picture we need to examine the scriptures relating to this question. In quite a number of instances the word 'demon' is mistranslated 'devil', as in Matt. 8:31 "So the devils besought him saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go into the herd of swine". This, of course, refers to the episode of the Gadarene swine. Before we go any further, then, it would be as well to state the essential difference between 'demon' and 'devil'.

In the N.T. demon is given by the Greek word DAIMON and denotes an evil spirit. Devil, on the other hand, is given by the word DIABOLOS, which denotes an accuser, a slanderer, and should be applied only to Satan as a proper name. We might say that there are many demons but only one Devil. It is necessary for us to examine the teaching relating to this subject so that the characteristics of each might be established.

#### Demons

In the N.T. DAIMON should always be translated demon. It would seem that demons were the spiritual agents acting in all idolatry. Every idol had its devils (demons) and these induced people to worship the idol rather than the true God. Paul had reason to comment on this in his first letter to Corinth, "But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils (demons), and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils; ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and the table of devils" 1 Cor. 10:20,21. In these references, as I have said, demon should be substituted for devil. It is quite evident that some in the church at Corinth were particularly concerned about the meat offered to idols, and the consequences of the offence to God if they ate of this meat. The point is well made that there can be no fellowship between demons and God, and between those who say they have fellowship with God and still are influenced by the spiritual agents of idolatry. We find this spiritual adultery condemned by God in the days of God's dealings with the nation of Israel, "And they shall no man offer their sacrifices unto devils, after whom they have gone a whoring" Leviticus 17:7

#### Work of Demons

There are a number of evidences in the scriptures of What demons did, and I believe, still do. It might help to look at some of these

- 1 They spread errors among men and seek to seduce believers, "Now the spirit speaks expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of demons", 1 Tim. 4:1.
- 2 They seek to make adherents to Spiritism by intimating that there are mediums, i.e., those who have 'familiar spirits', who can communicate with deceased human beings. This, however, seems to be condemned in scripture, "Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them; I am the Lord your God" Lev. 19:31.

- 3 Acting under Satan, demons are permitted to afflict with bodily disease. Concerning the woman who had suffered an infirmity for eighteen years Jesus said, "And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day? Luke 13:16. We remember that Jesus gave his disciples power to cast out unclean spirits, and to heal all manner of sickness and disease. Matt. 10:1.
- 4 It would seem that they will instigate the rulers of the nations at the end of this age to make war against God and His Christ, "And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of demons, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty" Rev.16:13,14

#### The Work of the Devil

It can be rightly said that Satan is the malignant enemy of God and man. Even though God has conquered Satan through the Lord Jesus Christ, the work of Satan attempts to bring God into disrepute and to seduce man from believing in God. The Bible shows us some of the work of Satan.

- 1 Satan accused God to Eve and she believed him. Gen. 3:4&5.
- 2 He afflicts men with physical suffering. Concerning Jesus, Peter said, "Who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil: for God was with him". Acts 10:38.
- 3 He tempts men, by his wiles, to do evil. Paul said, "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil". Eph. 6:11. In the same letter Paul teaches that the Ephesians once, "walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" Eph. 2:2.
- 4 He goes about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. 1 Pet. 5:8.
- 5 His fury and malignity is especially directed to people on the earth, "Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea, for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time" Rev. 12:12.

#### What About the Present Age?

There are evidences of the seemingly demoniacal powers that exist in the world today. We have all read about the bestial violence which is practiced by some; the malignant delight of those who inflict suffering, both physical and mental, upon others. The battered babies; the attacks upon old people; the murderings and the rape; all these are symptomatic of the irrational and inexplicable, in short, we look upon them as being un-natural. The Bible teaches that Satan is still working out his evil designs against the world and particularly against the children of God. There is no doubt at all that he will use every agency available to him in order to spread error and seduce the Church of God. We know that we have the victory in Christ Jesus, but in the meantime let us keep on guard; let us resist the devil and he will flee from us.

(All questions, please, to brother Alf Marsden, 66 Mitchell Street, Newtown, Wigan, Lancs.)