

# Jesus Versus Demons

Mark 1:39

*And He was preaching in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and casting out demons.*

Our English word *demon* translates the Greek word *daimon* (pronounced *dī'mōn*). Although this Greek word and its derivatives appear often in the New Testament, it unhappily is translated *devil* in the King James Version. But the many demons are distinct from *the* devil, who is Satan (Revelation 12:9; 20:2).

The New Testament teaches us these facts regarding demons:

1. Demons are Satan's angels (Matthew 25:41).
2. Demons are "unclean" and "evil" spirits (Mark 5:12f & Luke 8:2).
3. Demons are distinct from God's "elect angels" (1 Timothy 5:21).
4. Demons (and Satan) were not created by God (see Genesis 3:1); rather, God created angels who became demons (and the devil) when they fell, sometime between the creation week and the temptation of Eve (see 2 Peter 2:4; Jude v.6).
5. Demons are active in all idolatry and in all worship contrary to Christ (1 Corinthians 10:20f; Revelation 9:20).
6. Demons reside in spiritual Babylon, which is anti-Christian seduction (Revelation 18:2).
7. Demons wander in "dry places" (Matthew 12:43), figuratively regions where disorder, desolation, and death dominate.
8. Demons disseminate errors among men and endeavor to seduce believers (1 Timothy 4:1).
9. Demons have taken possession of people in such a way as to control their actions (see Mark 5:2-5; 9:17-27). (*Demon-possession* today, if it exists at all, is not as it was in Christ's day. But there is much *demon-influence*, and far too much *demon-obsession*.)
10. Demons have afflicted people with physical disorders, including deafness and muteness (Mark 9:14-25), epilepsy (Matthew 17:14-18), spinal deformation (Luke 13:11-16), insanity (Mark 5:2-5).
11. Demons could speak through the mouths of the persons they possessed (Mark 5:7-10; Acts 19:13-15).
12. While no demon is good, some are more wicked than others (Matthew 12:45).
13. False doctrine, being contrary to wisdom descending from God above, is "earthly, sensual, demonic" (James 3:15).
14. Demons will gather the ungodly to make war against God and His Christ in the final battle at the end of this age (Revelation 16:14; cp. 20:7-9).
15. Demons will have their final destination in "the

everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matthew 25:41).

The Lord Jesus Christ had many confrontations with demons. In them all His adversaries recognized Him for whom and what He is, and succumbed to Him.

We here will consider:

1. Demons believe the truth regarding God – with trembling.
2. Demons acknowledge Jesus as whom and what He is.
3. Demons acknowledge Jesus as their superior.
4. Jesus casting out demons was proof that He had established His kingdom on earth.
5. Jesus conquered demons in His ascension into glory.
6. Jesus now rules over demons.
7. Jesus will be the final judge and executioner of demons.

**I. Demons believe the truth regarding God – with trembling** (James 2:19): "You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe – and tremble!"

James speaks of two different sorts of faith in God in the second chapter of his epistle (2:14-26).

First is *saving* faith, which trusts in God and manifests itself in justifying works. This was the faith of Abraham the patriarch and Rahab the harlot.

Second is *historical* faith, which acknowledges God's existence but does not trust in Him nor manifest itself in justifying works. This is the faith of most men.

This historical faith is also the faith of demons. They acknowledge God's existence, and know Him to be the only God, but do not trust in Him.

And demons "tremble" because what of what they believe about God.

O that men who believe in God but do not trust in Him feared Him as much as trembling demons do!

Never did demons tremble more than when they were in Jesus Christ's presence. For they rightly believe Jesus Christ is God.

**II. Demons acknowledge Jesus as whom and what He is.** Not only do demons know whom and what *God* is, they know the same of *Jesus*, and they know *Jesus is God*.

When Jesus confronted demons, He did not have to introduce Himself. For they told Him "I know who you are ..." (Mark 1:24 / Luke 4:34).

1. Demons knew Him as "*Jesus of Nazareth*" – a man from that small town in Galilee (Mark 1:24 / Luke 4:34).

They probably knew also of the denigration of that town in the eyes of those who contemptuously said “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” (John 1:46). But demons knew that indeed something good had come out of Nazareth, because ...

2. Demons knew Jesus of Nazareth as “the Holy One of God” (Mark 1:24 / Luke 4:34). This term “Holy One of God” evidently comes from Psalm 16:10, a Messianic psalm in which Christ says to His Father, “You will not leave my soul in Sheol, nor will You allow *Your Holy One* [the Holy One of God] to see corruption” (cp. Acts 2:27; 13:35).

Demons know the Holy Scriptures and believe what they say.

3. Demons knew Jesus as “*the Christ, the Son of God!*” (Luke 4:41; Mark 3:11). They knew Him as the *Messiah* (*Christ* being the Greek form of the Hebrew word *Messiah* [John 4:25]), Jehovah’s “Anointed One” (which is the meaning of Messiah/Christ). And they knew Him as Jehovah’s Son begotten from eternity through an eternal generation and as the One Jehovah had anointed to rule the nations (Psalm 2).

4. Demons knew Him as “*Jesus, Son of the Most High God?*” (Mark 5:7; cp. Matthew 8:29). As a son possesses the nature of his father, so does Jesus bear the divine nature of the Most High God, whose only-begotten Son He is.

5. Therefore, demons knew Jesus Christ as the *God-Man* – as both “Jesus of Nazareth” and “the Son of the Most High God”.

But, demons are proof that one may be very knowledgeable of whom and what Jesus Christ is but still not own Him as Savior.

### **III. Demons acknowledge Jesus as their superior.**

1. They *feared* Him (Mark 1:24 / Luke 4:34): “Let us alone! What have we to do with You ...?”

2. They “*begged Him earnestly*” (Mark 5:10) to not send them to a faraway place.

3. They *obeyed* Him (Mark 1:27): “For with authority He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him.”

4. They even *worshipped* Him (Mark 3:11): “And the unclean spirits, whenever they saw Him, fell down before Him and cried out, saying, ‘You are the Son of God.’”

Unhappily, many men fear and beg and worship Christ in the same manner as do demons. O that we may fear Him in reverential awe, beg Him earnestly to save us, and worship Him acceptably and faithfully!

**IV. Jesus casting out demons was proof that He had established His kingdom on earth** (Matthew 12:28f): “But if [in the sense of *since*] I cast out demons by the Spirit of God [‘with the finger of God’ in Luke 11:20], surely the kingdom of God has come upon you. Or how can one enter a strong man’s house [i.e., Satan’s domain] and plunder his goods [i.e., the souls and bodies of men], unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house.”

King Jesus has bound and overthrown Prince Satan, and plundered Satan’s house by delivering His own people from Satan’s dominion, and from them cast Satan’s demons, and established the Kingdom of God and His Christ on this earth. Demons were powerless to stop Him.

**V. Jesus conquered demons in His ascension to glory** (Revelation 12:7-9): “And war broke out in heaven: Michael [God’s archangel (Jude v.9), whose name means “Who Is Like God”] and his angels fought with the dragon [Satan the devil]; and the dragon and his angels [the demons] fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.”

“Having disarmed principalities and powers, Christ made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it” (Colossians 2:15).

**VI. Jesus now rules over demons** (1 Peter 3:22): “He has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels [including demons] and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him.”

**VII. Jesus will be the final judge and executioner of demons** (Matthew 8:29): They said to Him during the days of His incarnation, “Have You come here to torment us before the time?”

Demons knew that the place of their torment will be “the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels [the demons]” (Matthew 25:41). And they evidently knew that Jesus would execute them at His *second* coming, not during His *first* coming.

Be not like demons ... believing whom and what Jesus Christ is but refusing to trust in Him, serving Satan rather than Jesus, at last being judged for your sins and doomed to the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his demons.

Rather, trust in the One demons deny ... Jesus of Nazareth who saves His people from their sins (Matthew 1:21), and who preserves them forever from Satan and his demons.

– Daniel E. Parks