

CHAPTER 7

THE DEVIL – PLUS A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO DEMONS, CURSES AND THE OCCULT

¹⁸For we wanted to come to you - I, Paul, more than once - and yet Satan hindered us.

1 Thessalonians 2:18 (NASB)

¹³For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. ¹⁴No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. ¹⁵Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will be according to their deeds.

2 Corinthians 11:13 -15 (NASB)

¹⁵ I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one.

John 17:15 (ESV)

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.

Ephesians 6:12 (ESV)

⁸Be of sober spirit, be on the alert Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. ⁹But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world.

1 Peter 5:8-9 (NASB)

² During supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him,

John 13:2 (ESV)

²⁷ Then after he had taken the morsel, Satan entered into him.....

John 13:27(a) (ESV)

Who is the Devil (Satan) and what are demons?

Lucifer, also known by the titles “the Devil”, or “Satan”, was, and still is, an extremely powerful ‘cherub’. As we shall see more clearly below, there are three main orders of created beings which were created in God’s image before us. The lowest of these were the angels, with the archangels in command of them. They were the most numerous. Above the angels were the seraphs, or ‘seraphim’ who were given the honour of being allowed to surround God’s throne.

But above them were the cherubs or ‘cherubim’ who were given the greater privilege of being allowed to be under God’s throne. Then, even senior to the cherubs, was Lucifer whom we might view as an “Arch Cherub”. He was given the unique privilege of being allowed to be *over* God’s throne, forming a *canopy* over it. That shows how exalted his status was.

Lucifer was therefore the most senior created being God ever made. God created him, together with all the other angels, seraphs and cherubs before this world began and before the human race was created. Lucifer was the most important of all the cherubs and was also hugely gifted, beautiful, musical and talented.

However, a day came when pride rose up in his heart and he rebelled against God and then recruited multitudes of angels to join his rebellion. As far as I know, we are not told whether any other cherubs or even seraphs joined him in his rebellion against God. I personally think he got all, or at least most, of his followers from amongst the ranks of the angels, perhaps because they held him in greater awe than the cherubim and seraphim did, as the angels were more junior.

In the end, God stopped their rebellion in its tracks and Lucifer and all his newly recruited followers were thrown out of Heaven, i.e. out of the “third heaven” where God lives. He then acquired the new descriptive titles, ‘*Satan*’, which means *adversary*, and the ‘*Devil*’, which means *slanderer* or *accuser*, and his followers became known as demons.

When we say the ‘Devil’, what we actually mean most of the time is not the Devil personally, but him working together with all his fallen angels or demons. His title has become shorthand for the whole demonic realm, just as in World War 2, when men spoke of “*going off to fight Hitler*”, when what they really meant was fighting Nazi Germany. The Devil himself is very unlikely to meet ordinary people like you or me, or even to hear about us. He is busy dealing with Presidents and Prime Ministers and major world events.

He did get personally involved in opposing apostle Paul in the passage from 1 Thessalonians quoted above, but only because Paul's ministry was so strategically important. Satan could see that Paul warranted his personal attention, but he is not likely ever to bother with the likes of you or me, or even to be aware of our existence.

He has far bigger things to do. He will, however, make sure that some of the billions of demons under his command will give plenty of personal attention to you. Be assured, you won't be overlooked. They will definitely allocate you at least one demon to oppose you, especially if you start to get serious about the Gospel or about growing and maturing as a disciple.

Satan and his demon followers are consumed with hatred towards God and, in their bitterness, they seek to hit back at Him by striking at us. They know they have already had their Day of Judgment and been condemned and that they will therefore inevitably spend eternity in the Lake of Fire. There is no way out and no turning back for them and absolutely no hope of forgiveness.

Can you imagine how terrible that situation would be? Use your imagination for a moment and picture yourself trapped in a lake of burning sulphur and knowing it will continue forever, with indescribable pain, but without your body ever being consumed by the flames or the heat.

How does that prospect make you feel, even if it is not your firmly settled fate which, for them, it is? It explains, though it does not justify, their raging hatred towards God and anybody who serves Him. Yet, in His infinite wisdom, God has chosen to delay the actual carrying out of their dreadful sentence.

In the meantime, He has allowed them a large, *but not unlimited*, measure of freedom to attack, harass, deceive and undermine the human race. The demons know how much God loves human beings and

they therefore derive a perverted pleasure from hurting us, primarily because they know it hurts God when they do.

Their aim is to destroy as many as they can of the human race and to lead multitudes of us to follow them into the Lake of Fire that awaits them. That is their aim, but this book is intended to help you to understand their tactics and to learn how best to resist them. Apostle Paul tells us he was not unaware of Satan's schemes. He knew what kind of adversary he faced and how he operates:

“in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes.”
2 Corinthians 2:11 (NIV)

Sadly, most Christians today cannot say they are aware of Satan's schemes. On the contrary, most of us are almost entirely ignorant of his schemes and are making no effort to find out. We urgently need to address that deficiency.

Some people think demons are not fallen angels but are the ‘spirits’ of those who died in the Flood. I don’t believe that and the Bible doesn’t say it

I mention this in passing, just for completeness, as you might come across this view being expressed. The suggestion is that some of the demons, or unclean spirits referred to in the Bible are not fallen angels at all, but rather the spirits of people who died in the Flood. I do not accept this idea, and do not know of any conceivable basis for holding this view. I certainly see nothing whatsoever in the Bible to support it.

One argument I have heard put forward is that some of the things demons say during deliverance ministry can be so immature and childish as to cause people to wonder how a former angel could be so foolish. But there is no biblical basis for that view. It's just a suggestion and a weak one at that. My own response would be to say:

- a) At least 6000 years of sin and rebellion against God is likely to have caused those fallen angels to degenerate mentally and to become stupid, just as human beings do when they reject God. I have known people who had intellectual ability when young but decades of atheism, rebellion and sin lowers their IQ quite literally and they become what the Bible calls fools. Look at people today who believe the world came from a “big bang” whereby nothing turned into something and then, without any Creator or Designer, “evolved” from slime into amoebas and then into us. Others believe they can change their gender and become a woman by “identifying” as one. Some of these men believe they can then have a baby. What else can we call such ludicrous beliefs other than stupid? If so, then what are the people who hold such beliefs? Therefore, if human beings are capable of sinking to such intellectual depths, why can't fallen angels?
- b) Besides that, there is no reason, necessarily, to suppose that angels are all cleverer than us, or that all of them are clever at all. Obviously some are, just as some human beings are. But we are not all Einsteins and Shakespeares and I see no reason to suppose that all angels were created with huge mental abilities. I expect they vary widely, just as we do, and that some of them were given quite ordinary intellects.

I must also refer to Matthew 25:41 which speaks of the time when the Devil and all his angels, by which it means fallen angels who became demons, will be thrown into the Lake of Fire. The point is the verse uses the word “angels” for the very reason that demons are fallen angels, not the ‘ghosts’ or ‘spirits’ of dead people. If they were, then the Bible would not call them angels in this verse:

⁴¹ Then he will say to those at his left hand, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels;

Matthew 25:41 (RSV)

Accordingly, I put no credence at all in the idea that demons are the spirits of dead human beings, whether from the Flood or any other time. Everything we see in Scripture indicates that the dead depart at death and are never active here again, with the exception of the prophet Samuel who returned briefly and spoke to King Saul. There was of course also the Transfiguration when Moses and Elijah appeared and spoke with Jesus, though not with the apostles. But those are exceptions to the rule, not the rule itself.

Another argument put forward is that demons appear to want to reside within a body, as with the thousands of demons in the Gadarene demoniac who asked for permission to go into the pigs. The suggestion is made that former angels would feel no need to be inside a physical body but a former human being might want to be, because he used to have a physical human body. However, that is pure conjecture and speculation and there is nothing at all in the Bible to support that theory.

In any case, a very high proportion of demons, perhaps even a majority, are not inside people at all. Instead they are on the outside whispering in, or “sitting on the person’s shoulder” as they are often portrayed in drawings. Clearly, those demons who are performing that “whispering” role don’t need to be inside a body, whether they would prefer to be or not. On the whole, therefore, that argument is just an idea and has no biblical authority whatsoever.

Therefore, someone might be willing to consider it as a possibility but they would have absolutely no basis to treat the idea as a fact or as something the Bible teaches. Having said all that, it doesn’t ultimately matter who exactly the demons are. The point is we are told *what they do* and they are described as “evil spirits” or “unclean spirits”. That is what matters and it surely tells us all we really need to know in order to motivate us to resist and expel them.

How the Cherub Lucifer turned into Satan (the Devil)

The Devil himself is an individual created being who has fallen into sin and has thus been rejected by God. He was once the most, or at least one of the most, important beings in all of Heaven. Sadly, his greatness and extreme beauty led to him becoming proud and that pride caused his downfall. He began to harbour aspirations for himself and even set his sights on taking the place of the Son of God.

Of course, that was an absurd ambition, but his growing pride distorted his sense of reality and he became delusional, as the wicked usually are. His fall into sin then led to him being dismissed from his job as the chief of the cherubs and he also lost his honoured role as the canopy over God’s throne when he was cast out of Heaven. Jesus told His disciples He watched Satan being cast out:

¹⁸And He said to them, "I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning.

Luke 10:18 (NASB)

The Devil was therefore thrown out of Heaven, together with, I believe, about one third of all the angels who had chosen to follow his rebellion, and whom we now call demons. You might ask what my biblical authority is for saying that one third of all the angels rebelled and were cast out of Heaven.

I can't provide any explicit proof but there is a distinct clue given to us in Revelation 12:4. The verse is not, strictly speaking, referring to the time when the fallen angels were cast out of Heaven itself (the third heaven). That occurred much earlier, about 6,000 years ago.

But Revelation 12:4 refers to a future point, during the Tribulation, when one third of the angels (actually fallen angels or demons) who are currently located in the "heavenly places" (see below for a full explanation of that arena) are cast down from the air to the Earth. From that point on they will have to operate at ground level, not in the air.

³ And another portent appeared in heaven; behold, a great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems upon his heads. ⁴ His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven, and cast them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to bear a child, that he might devour her child when she brought it forth;

Revelation 12:3-4 (RSV)

These angels referred to in the verse as "stars", which is a biblical expression used to refer to angels, were cast down from the heavenly places (the second heaven or upper atmosphere) to the surface of the Earth. The thing to realise is these particular 'angels' are fallen angels so they are actually demons.

We are told they are "*a third of the stars of heaven*". In short, therefore, they had already been cast out of Heaven itself long ago, when Satan was cast out. They currently operate from the heavenly places, in the upper atmosphere, as do the other two thirds of angels *who did not fall* and who are therefore still angels.

So, what matters, for our purposes here, is that the demons would appear to be one third of the total number of angels originally created. The point in time at which that is being said is not the issue. The issue is what proportion they constitute of the whole angelic realm.

Lucifer (Satan) is referred to in detail in Isaiah chapter 14 and Ezekiel chapter 28. Here are two extracts. In the first, from Isaiah, Satan himself is being spoken to. It sets out how his pride caused him to go so far as to want the position of the Son of God saying "*I will make myself like the Most High*".

¹³ You said in your heart,

"I will ascend to heaven;

I will raise my throne

above the stars of God;

I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly,

on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain.

¹⁴ I will ascend above the tops of the clouds;

I will make myself like the Most High."

Isaiah 14:13-14 (NIV)

In the next passage from Ezekiel we go back even further into Satan's life story. It speaks of when he was still in Heaven in all his dazzling beauty and splendour. Saddest of all, it tells of how he was once sinless in the days when he was still Lucifer. The dramatic change came when he allowed his pride to rise up and, all of a sudden, wickedness was found in him.

The day when that happened was the first time, in all of eternity, that sin had ever existed. Before Lucifer fell into sin there was no such concept. Nobody had ever heard of it. Neither he nor any of the angels had ever had any experience of evil or rebellion. Those words were totally unknown to them.

Accordingly, none of the angels in Heaven had ever sinned until Lucifer persuaded about one third of them to rally round him and follow his lead. This terribly sad story is given more fully in Ezekiel chapter 28. It tells of how Lucifer fell and became Satan and of how he will, one day, be removed from this Earth altogether and trouble us no more:

¹² *"You were the model of perfection,
full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.*

¹³*You were in Eden,
the garden of God;
every precious stone adorned you:
ruby, topaz and emerald,
chrysolite, onyx and jasper,
sapphire, turquoise and beryl.
Your settings and mountings were made of gold;
on the day you were created they were prepared.*

¹⁴*You were anointed as a guardian cherub,
for so I ordained you.
You were on the holy mount of God;
you walked among the fiery stones.*

¹⁵ *You were blameless in your ways
from the day you were created
till wickedness was found in you.*

¹⁶ *Through your widespread trade
you were filled with violence,
and you sinned.
So I drove you in disgrace from the mount of God,
and I expelled you, O guardian cherub,
from among the fiery stones.*

¹⁷ *Your heart became proud
on account of your beauty,
and you corrupted your wisdom
because of your splendor.
So I threw you to the earth;
I made a spectacle of you before kings.*

¹⁸ *By your many sins and dishonest trade
you have desecrated your sanctuaries.*

*So I made a fire come out from you,
and it consumed you,
and I reduced you to ashes on the ground
in the sight of all who were watching.*

*¹⁹ All the nations who knew you
are appalled at you;
you have come to a horrible end
and will be no more.' "*

Ezekiel 28:12(b)-19 (NIV)

After his fall into sin and his expulsion from Heaven, Satan continued to degenerate. Eventually he reached his present condition of extreme malice, hatred and evil. He is now utterly wicked, self-absorbed and cruel. His only remaining pleasure is to inflict pain and suffering on human beings wherever he can and to resist God's purposes. The demons have the same aims and characteristics as him. They simply have less power, authority and brilliance than Satan has.

Although God allows the demons to do many things, there are far more things which He doesn't allow them to do.

However, despite all his genius and strength, Satan is still only a created being and not even remotely equal to God. He has limits and can't do everything. Above all, he personally can only be in *one place at a time*. Moreover, he can only do what God *permits him to do*. Therefore, strange though it may sound, anything Satan or his demons do *has been allowed by God*. They were permitted to do it for a number of possible reasons which we shall examine later.

However, there are thousands of other things the demons would like to do in your life to harm or kill you, your wife, your children, your church or your business, but God has withheld His permission. So, those things haven't happened. That is why we need to adjust our attitudes and, instead of blaming God for the specific things He does allow them to do, thank Him wholeheartedly for the thousands of other things He *refused to let them do*.

That is a far longer list and much of it we will never know, in this life, because it never happened. Just remember though that every demon is far more evil and more full of hate than any criminal in prison, even those mass murderers on death row. The difference is those men may be wicked, but they still have certain boundaries they wouldn't cross and things they wouldn't be willing to do, or even want to do.

But that is not so with the demons. There is nothing they wouldn't do and no depth of wickedness to which they wouldn't stoop. If God removed His hand of protection they would therefore move to a whole new level of viciousness and depravity which we have never seen, but only because God didn't allow them. So, see things in perspective and *be thankful for what never happened, not angry at what was allowed to happen*, because for everything which God allowed them to do there must be 1000 things He refused to let them do.

Where are Satan and the demons now and how is his kingdom organised?

Satan organises his demonic kingdom like an army under his command and acting on his behalf with different ranks each focusing on different areas and objectives to make sure the whole world is covered. In this way they whip up the maximum amount of sin and suffering and interfere as much as possible with God's plans.

Having lost his place in Heaven, he now operates from the air, i.e. "the heavenly places" which means the upper atmosphere of this physical planet. That is why another of Satan's names is "*the ruler of the kingdom of the air*". These names in the Bible are not mere poetry. They each mean something specific and significant. In the same way as Satan, the demons also are able to move around throughout the Earth's atmosphere, as well as on the ground, and to exert their influence on a worldwide scale.

They are *not in Hell*, as many wrongly imagine. Except for a particular group of demons who are kept chained in a prison called *Tartarus*, all the other demons are free to operate throughout planet Earth. If the demons were not equally free to move around in the air then Satan would hardly be called "the ruler of the kingdom of the air". That would be an odd title, and an odd kind of rulership, if only he himself was allowed to go there.

¹As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, ²in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.

Ephesians 2:1-2 (NIV)

What motivates Satan?

He has nothing good or wholesome to look forward to as his eternal fate is already sealed. Therefore, Satan's consuming obsession is to oppose God, to destroy as much as he can of the human race, and to frustrate God's plans for us. God's plan was to create a people who would be free to love and worship Him and freely relate to Him.

That kind of relationship with God is no longer available to Satan or his demons and never will be. Therefore, they want to rob you of it too, so you will share their dreadful fate. They are determined to bring you with them to the Lake of Fire by blinding your eyes to all that God wants you to see and to deceive you into rejecting God and losing your eternal life, just as they did.

We need to start to hate Satan and the demons instead of being limp and passive about them

What would you think of a human being who wanted to destroy your marriage, your church and to kill you and all of your family by tricking all of you into falling into a lake of fire? Would you consider such a person evil? Would their plans for your family bother you? Would you take them seriously? Would you be outraged? Then why do so many of us give the demons no thought at all and ignore them completely? It is because some of us have been blinded by the demons and therefore made passive, limp and unresponsive to the threat, with no fight in us.

³ *And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, ⁴in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.*

2 Corinthians 4:3-4 (NASB)

I am convinced that if any of us had a human enemy who was pursuing a lifelong vendetta against us and our family and seeking to harm us in every way possible, year after year, with utter malice and hatred then it would provoke in us a reaction of anger, outrage and even hatred. We would be highly motivated to resist that evil, demented person who was out to get us, and even willing to use lethal force in self defence.

And yet, would you agree that most people are astonishingly laid back and inert in their attitude to the demon(s) attacking them and their family? I think the key reason for the difference in response is that a deranged human murderer stalking our family with a deep grudge against us *would seem real* and feel significant and worth getting upset about.

But demons *don't feel real*, even to those of us who, at least theoretically, believe they exist. It can be just head knowledge which has not yet impacted our feelings or our will. Therefore, many of us sit and do nothing rather than rise up in anger to defend ourselves, our families and our church.

Why do Satan and the demons hate us so intensely and seek to destroy us?

I think their hatred for us is based on three main factors. Firstly, it is simply because God loves us. They hate Him, and so it follows naturally that they would choose to hate us. Secondly, they hate us out of envy as we now have the chance to acquire a place in Heaven, which all of them once had, but threw away by following Lucifer in his rebellion.

They deeply regret that stupid choice, but their regret at what they lost has never made them repent. It only made them resentful. They cannot repent now anyway. It is too late for that as their day of judgment has already taken place. They are therefore enraged at us for having that chance to repent which they will never have.

Thirdly, God chose to send His Son, Jesus Christ, to die for us to enable our sins, *but not theirs*, to be forgiven. No such opportunity for salvation was ever given to them. In their case, God moved directly to judgment, with no opportunity for salvation. We are not told God's reason for making that distinction between them and us.

I imagine they were held more accountable because they had the great advantage of having lived in Heaven, with direct access to God. Therefore, they had far greater knowledge than us and were more blameworthy. However, whatever God's precise reasons may have been, the fact that they cannot have the salvation that is being offered to us must cause some of the hatred the demons feel towards us and motivate them to try even harder to prevent us being saved, if only out of pure spite.

Where are Satan and his demons now living and what do they look like?

As we have seen, contrary to popular belief, Satan and the demons are not, and never have been, in Hell. Neither are they in the Lake of Fire. That is certainly where they are heading to, but they are not

there yet. That is one major error which many of us urgently need to correct. Far from being in Hell, most demons are at liberty to move all over the surface of the Earth. They also currently have a further freedom to operate in the air within ‘the heavenly places’.

They will retain that additional freedom until the mid point of the Tribulation spoken of in the book of Revelation. At that point Satan and the demons will be cast down from the heavenly places and confined to the surface of the Earth itself such that they will then have to operate at ground level throughout the second half of the Tribulation.

Strangely, Satan was even permitted to continue to walk back into Heaven (the third heaven) and to be in God's immediate presence, *even after his rebellion*. Look at this passage in the book of Job. The scene is in Heaven and the angels (*the sons of God*) are presenting themselves before God, as one would before a King.

By the way, the phrase “sons of God” is used to refer to any person, whether angelic or human, who is *directly created by God as an adult* and isn’t born as a baby. Therefore, it includes all the angels, seraphs and cherubs, and also Adam and Eve as well. But we are not called sons of God as we were all born as babies and therefore are called sons of Adam.

This meeting occurs after Satan’s fall but before the future point when he is thrown down to the ground at the mid point of the Tribulation. But Satan is right there amongst them. So Satan has obviously retained a “visitor pass” to Heaven. God even allowed Satan to engage Him directly in conversation, face to face:

‘Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them. ‘The LORD said to Satan, "From where do you come?" Then Satan answered the LORD and said, "From roaming about on the earth and walking around on it."

Job 1:6-7 (NASB)

It is possible that at least some of the other angels who were there that day were not aware of who Satan was, because he still has the appearance of an angel of light. Satan is not an ugly gargoyle-faced monster. He still has all his beauty, talent and brilliance. If you want to imagine him then picture a young Brad Pitt or Robert Redford (no disrespect to them). He would look like a top film star, not ugly at all.

¹⁴No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.

2 Corinthians 11:14 (NASB)

The “six abodes of Satan” – a brief look at Satan’s career and how he has repeatedly had to change his ‘address’ and will need to do so again before the end

I am indebted for these details to Dr Arnold Fruchtenbaum, a Jewish American Bible teacher. His excellent book on eschatology, “*The Footsteps of the Messiah*”, which is extremely detailed, includes a section on the various stages Satan has gone through and will go through in future and the various places or “addresses” which he has so far inhabited as his abode or where he will dwell in future. So, let’s briefly look at them in turn. Two of them are past. The third one is his present abode and the fourth, fifth and sixth are in the future.

The first abode of Satan (then called Lucifer)

We are told of this very first abode in Ezekiel 28:14 from the long passage we saw earlier. It is where Lucifer began and where he was stationed to carry out his duties from the very day he was created. So, he had no infancy or childhood. God created Lucifer as a fully grown adult, just as He did with Adam and Eve:

***¹⁴ You were the anointed cherub who covers,
And I placed you there.
You were on the holy mountain of God;
You walked in the midst of the stones of fire.
Ezekiel 28:14 (NASB)***

Note that this verse refers to him being “*the anointed cherub who covers*”. It also speaks of him being on the “*holy mountain of God*”. Usually, when the Bible refers to a mountain it is meant literally. But the word is sometimes also used symbolically. When it is used symbolically, it is consistently a reference to a kingdom, king or throne.

Therefore, Lucifer’s first abode was positioned *over* the throne of God where all could see him in that place of honour and his role was to provide a canopy to “cover” the throne. The rest of the cherubim were *under* God’s throne, which was also an exalted position but not as exalted as Lucifer’s.

The second abode of Satan – the Garden of Eden at the earlier time when it was made of precious stones

Arnold Fruchtenbaum writes about this second abode in great detail but I propose only to mention it briefly. We are told of it in Ezekiel 28:13:

***¹³ You were in Eden, the garden of God;
Every precious stone was your covering:
The ruby, the topaz and the diamond;
The beryl, the onyx and the jasper;
The lapis lazuli, the turquoise and the emerald;
And the gold, the workmanship of your settings and sockets,
Was in you.
On the day that you were created
They were prepared.***

Ezekiel 28:13 (NASB)

This is not exactly the same as the Garden of Eden where Adam and Eve later lived, as referred to in Genesis. It was the original of that, or the way it was beforehand. The Garden of Eden of Genesis was later filled with plants. But at this earlier time the garden was filled with precious stones. Lucifer served in this garden of precious stones for an unspecified period of time before Adam and Eve were created.

It may only have been for a very brief period, perhaps only hours. We simply aren't told. It was while Lucifer was serving in this original version of the Garden of Eden, while it was a garden of precious stones, that his fall took place. This fall is described in Ezekiel 28:16-17(a).

Note that even while Lucifer was in his second abode in the Garden of Eden, he still had full access to his original first abode in Heaven. Indeed, to be precise, he still has that access to Heaven, even now, as we have seen, and he will retain those temporary, intermittent "visiting rights" until the mid point of the Tribulation. At any rate, when Lucifer sinned, while occupying his second abode, that was when he was cast out of Heaven, from his exalted position covering God's throne:

*¹⁶ By the abundance of your trade
You were internally filled with violence,
And you sinned;
Therefore I have cast you as profane
From the mountain of God.
And I have destroyed you, you covering cherub,
From the midst of the stones of fire.
¹⁷ Your heart was haughty because of your beauty;
You corrupted your wisdom by reason of your splendor.
Ezekiel 28:16-17(a) (NASB)*

God cast Lucifer down from the place he was entitled to occupy above the throne, i.e. the "mountain", because unrighteousness was found in him. His pride had caused him to puff himself up and to seek to grab things for himself and, above all, to try to usurp the place of the Son of God. We see this pride from the various "I will" statements in Isaiah 14 that Lucifer makes in his self delusion and self aggrandisement.

The third abode of Satan – the heavenly places

Therefore, God had to cast Lucifer down out of Heaven, i.e. from the "third heaven" which apostle Paul visited but was forbidden to speak of. He was thrown down from there into the second heaven, "*the heavenly places*" which are the upper atmosphere. That is where Lucifer is now, with his new titles of Satan and the Devil. This third abode is described by apostle Paul:

² in which you previously walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.
Ephesians 2:2 (NASB)

¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.
Ephesians 6:12 (NASB)

Being in the second heaven or the heavenly places means Satan can travel about freely all over the Earth. But what few people realise is it also gives him a continuing right of access to revisit the third heaven, Heaven itself, as we saw above with reference to him visiting there to appear before God to discuss Job.

So, this third abode, where he now is, continues to give him intermittent access to Heaven, where he goes to be our accuser. That is why Jesus currently has the role of High Priest and intermediary or intercessor. He operates on our behalf as our defence advocate in the heavenly places and even when Satan visits Heaven, because, in both those forums, Satan is constantly accusing us and Jesus is constantly interceding on our behalf:

²⁵ Consequently he is able for all time to save those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

Hebrews 7:25 (RSV)

I assume the demons assist Satan in this accusing role as Satan can't do it all by himself. Indeed, he has never heard of most of us. So, Jesus also acts as our defence lawyer or advocate in relation to what the demons say about each of us, not just what Satan himself says. As well as operating from the air, Satan and the demons can also freely access any part of the Earth too, causing harm on Earth in addition to the lies and slander they spread about us in the heavenly places.

The fourth abode of Satan – the Earth

This fourth abode is still future and will not happen until the mid point of the Tribulation. We see this in Revelation 12:7-12:

⁷ And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. The dragon and his angels waged war, ⁸ and they did not prevail, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven. ⁹ And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. ¹⁰ Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying,

“Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers and sisters has been thrown down, the one who accuses them before our God day and night. ¹¹ And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death. ¹² For this reason, rejoice, you heavens and you who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you with great wrath, knowing that he has only a short time.”

Revelation 12:7-12 (NASB)

Note that not only Satan but also all his demons (referred to in Revelation 12:9 as “angels”) will be at this future point, thrown down with him from the heavenly places to the surface of the Earth. The very fact that the demons will be thrown down from the heavenly places further proves that that is where they currently operate from. Therefore, they travel to and from the heavenly places while harassing us. And the fact that they do so proves that Satan isn't there all by himself.

However, Satan and all the demons will, from that future point onwards, be confined to the Earth, operating at “ground level”, during the second half of the Tribulation. During that time they will focus on attempting to destroy the Jews. Sadly, as we see from Zechariah 13, two thirds of the Jewish people will die at that time.

However, one third of the Jews will survive and it is to them that Jesus the Messiah will return when they suddenly realise who He is and call upon Him to return. See my audio series on Israel and also on Matthew's gospel for more detail on all that, plus my written article on Israel.

The fifth abode of Satan – the abyss

The fifth abode is known as “the abyss” and is effectively a prison and Satan will be confined there during most of the 1000 years of the Millennium. So, during that time the level of sin on the Earth will drastically reduce. However, even then, it will not be a totally sinless world because many people, especially at the end of the Millennium, will be in their ordinary mortal bodies. Unlike us, who will by then have been resurrected and made perfect, they will not be sinless.

¹Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. ²And he took hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; ³and he threw him into the abyss and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he would not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time.

Revelation 20:1-3 (NASB)

Satan, and presumably the demons, will actually be released from the abyss briefly at the end of the Millennium and those who are then in mortal bodies will be given a choice as to whether to follow Jesus or Satan. See below.

The sixth abode of Satan – the Lake of Fire

This is where Satan will finally end up, after the 1000 year millennial Kingdom has ended. Note that at the very end of the 1000 years Satan and the demons are briefly released again and given one last chance to deceive people. Sadly, and inexplicably, many of those who are then in mortal bodies because they were born during the Millennium to mortal parents, will choose to follow Satan rather than King Jesus.

That is despite having lived during the most perfect era, up to that point, in all of world history, with Jesus visibly reigning over the whole world from Jerusalem. We are told of this in Revelation 20, and the Lake of Fire to which he and all the demons are sent is where they will all stay, *fully conscious*, for all eternity. Sadly, that is where every unsaved human being will also spend eternity.

Some people deny that those in the Lake of Fire are conscious and argue instead that they must be annihilated by the flames so they cease to exist at all. Personally, I wish that was true, as the Lake of Fire is so horrific I wouldn't wish it on anyone. However, it plainly isn't true because we are told they are “*tormented day and night forever and ever*”.

But how can they be “*tormented*” if they have been “*annihilated*” and therefore don't exist, or even if they are alive but not conscious? That is an example of the sort of confusion we can get into if we base our theological beliefs on what we would *like to be true* rather than on what the Bible actually says.

⁷When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison, ⁸and will come out to deceive the nations which are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them

together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore.⁹ And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them.¹⁰ And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

Revelation 20:7-10 (NASB)

What does God currently allow Satan and his demons to do to us?

God deliberately allows Satan and the demons to play a very significant part in our lives. That is the reason why he is now called Satan, which means '*adversary*'. God has given him and his demons substantial, *but not unlimited*, freedom to obstruct, attack, tempt and undermine us, just as he was allowed to do to apostle Peter. Indeed, Jesus tells us Satan '*demanded*' the chance to attack Peter and that God allowed it:

³¹"Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat; ³²but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers."³³ But he said to Him, "Lord, with You I am ready to go both to prison and to death!"³⁴ And He said, "I say to you, Peter, the rooster will not crow today until you have denied three times that you know Me."

Luke 22:31-34 (NASB)

God agreed in advance to this attack being launched upon Peter. Peter was unwise, just as most of us are, in the way he responded to Jesus' warning about Satan's intentions for him. Instead of taking the warning seriously and praying for God's help to face the test, Peter only protested that he would not let Jesus down.

He even announced in an over-confident way that he would follow Jesus even to death. That was not said in faith, but in complacency and presumption. That is why Jesus corrected him and told Peter that he would, in fact, deny three times that he even knew Jesus. Now see how things then developed:

⁵⁴Having arrested Him, they led Him away and brought Him to the house of the high priest; but Peter was following at a distance. ⁵⁵After they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and had sat down together, Peter was sitting among them. ⁵⁶And a servant-girl, seeing him as he sat in the firelight and looking intently at him, said, "This man was with Him too." ⁵⁷But he denied it, saying, "Woman, I do not know Him." ⁵⁸A little later, another saw him and said, "You are one of them too!" But Peter said, "Man, I am not!" ⁵⁹After about an hour had passed, another man began to insist, saying, "Certainly this man also was with Him, for he is a Galilean too." ⁶⁰But Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are talking about." Immediately, while he was still speaking, a rooster crowed. ⁶¹The Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had told him, "Before a rooster crows today, you will deny Me three times." ⁶²And he went out and wept bitterly.

Luke 22:54-62 (NASB)

Peter let Jesus down because he didn't handle it correctly beforehand. He should have prayed for help, instead of making macho announcements with such unwarranted boldness. However, Peter only did

what many of us do, ignoring God's warnings and acting in over confidence and complacency until it is too late.

Now let's look at what the demons were allowed to do to oppose apostle Paul who faced many intense and prolonged demonic attacks. In this next passage he explains why God permitted them to harass and hinder him so much. It wasn't because he was sinful or was behaving wrongly.

On the contrary, it was for a very different reason, to prevent him from becoming proud as a result of the exceptional level of knowledge and revelation that had been given to him. He had personally met Jesus face to face, had been taught by Him, and had even been to Heaven (the third heaven) and seen and heard things he was forbidden to speak about:

² I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago—whether in the body I do not know, or out of the body I do not know, God knows—such a man was caught up to the third heaven. ³ And I know how such a man—whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, God knows—⁴ was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which a man is not permitted to speak. ⁵ On behalf of such a man I will boast; but on my own behalf I will not boast, except in regard to my weaknesses. 2 Corinthians 12:2-5 (NASB)

Therefore, to prevent all of these amazing privileges from going to Paul's head, God allowed a powerful demon, a "messenger of Satan" to get in his way, to harass him severely on an ongoing basis, and to make life extremely difficult throughout his entire ministry:

⁷Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me—to keep me from exalting myself! ⁸Concerning this I implored the Lord three times that it might leave me. ⁹And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. ¹⁰Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong. 2 Corinthians 12:7-10 (NASB)

To get a better picture of the kind of dreadful things the senior demon (the messenger of Satan) was allowed to do to him we can look at the list of his sufferings which Paul sets out in this next passage:

²⁴Five times I received from the Jews thirty-nine lashes. ²⁵Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I have spent in the deep. ²⁶I have been on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers on the sea, dangers among false brethren; ²⁷I have been in labour and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. ²⁸Apart from such external things, there is the daily pressure on me of concern for all the churches.

2 Corinthians 11:24-28 (NASB)

Few have ever endured opposition of the level and frequency Paul experienced. It was so extreme it was off the scale. There can be no doubt most of it was caused by demons. It cannot all have happened naturally or by coincidence. Paul was a marked man and was targeted by the demons for non-stop opposition.

The demons' purpose in doing all that was very different from God's reasons for allowing it. From the demons' perspective it was not to help him stay humble but to slow him down and frustrate his plans. So, if things like that can happen to Peter and Paul, why should you or I expect to be immune? Let's look now at Job and the things God allowed (and did not allow) Satan to do to this exceptionally righteous man:

⁸The LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, fearing God and turning away from evil." ⁹Then Satan answered the LORD, "Does Job fear God for nothing? ¹⁰"Have You not made a hedge about him and his house and all that he has, on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. ¹¹"But put forth Your hand now and touch all that he has; he will surely curse You to Your face." ¹²Then the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your power, only do not put forth your hand on him." So Satan departed from the presence of the LORD.

Job 1:8-12 (NASB)

Note how Satan has the impertinence to issue a direct challenge to God. He says the only reason Job is so remarkably righteous is because life has been going well for him, but that if he (Satan) was given freedom to attack him, then Job would turn against God. You might imagine God would reject such a challenge from Satan, or refuse to speak with him at all.

In fact, God accepts the challenge and Satan is given permission to destroy all Job's children, all his servants and all his livestock, just not Job himself, or his wife who is considered to be part of himself, since God views a married couple as "one person". So, we are looking here at an attack of an exceptionally extreme nature and Satan immediately seizes the opportunity to kill or destroy almost everything Job has:

¹³Now on the day when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, ¹⁴a messenger came to Job and said, "The oxen were plowing and the donkeys feeding beside them, ¹⁵and the Sabeans attacked and took them. They also slew the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you." ¹⁶While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants and consumed them, and I alone have escaped to tell you." ¹⁷While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "The Chaldeans formed three bands and made a raid on the camels and took them and slew the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you."

¹⁸While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "Your sons and your daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, ¹⁹and behold, a great wind came from across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell on the young people and they died, and I alone have escaped to tell you." ²⁰Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head, and he fell to the ground and worshiped. ²¹He said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked I shall return there The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away. Blessed be the name of the LORD." ²²Through all this Job did not sin nor did he blame God.

Job 1:13-22 (NASB)

Amazingly, despite all these traumas happening all at once, Job did not blame God for it although we see later that Job correctly concludes that God allowed it to happen. Therefore, 'round one' of the contest went to God. Satan's attacks on Job's family and possessions, despite their ferocity, did not

succeed in getting Job to curse God to His face. But Satan now issues a fresh challenge, after being allowed yet again to come into God's presence in Heaven, as discussed earlier.

This time Satan asks for permission to attack Job's own body, i.e. to take away his health. And again, permission is given to him. The only limit God imposes is that Satan must not take Job's life. Note how Satan then does exactly what is permitted and no more, because he knows he cannot go beyond what God allows him to do:

¹Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the LORD. ²The LORD said to Satan, "Where have you come from?" Then Satan answered the LORD and said, "From roaming about on the earth and walking around on it." ³The LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man fearing God and turning away from evil. And he still holds fast his integrity, although you incited Me against him to ruin him without cause."

⁴Satan answered the LORD and said, "Skin for skin! Yes, all that a man has he will give for his life. ⁵"However, put forth Your hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh; he will curse You to Your face." ⁶So the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, he is in your power, only spare his life." ⁷Then 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. ⁸And he took a potsherd to scrape himself while he was sitting among the ashes. ⁹Then his wife said to him, "Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die!" ¹⁰But he said to her, "You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God and not accept adversity?" In all this Job did not sin with his lips.

Job 2:1-10 (NASB)

I won't tell the whole account, because it is long, but Job holds his integrity to the end, despite all that Satan does. Then God eventually restores Job to health and gives him twice the possessions he had before. But note that God only gives him the same number of children. That is because all Job's original children were in "Abraham's bosom" and thus he had not truly lost them. He would see them all again when he died.

The point of this account from the book of Job is to illustrate that Satan was given power in the life of a *believer* (and a very righteous believer at that) to kill his children, kill his servants, destroy his property and ruin his health. That sounds pretty extensive, as few of us are ever called upon to endure anything of that magnitude and certainly not all at the same time.

Most of us therefore need to adjust our theology to accommodate all of this as we find this very surprising and some would even call it impossible. And yet it happened to Job. Therefore, do not assume you are exempt from all this and that God would never allow you to be tested. The point is Satan could not do any of those things until God had given him express *permission*. Note also how he could not go one inch beyond what God authorised him to do.

Recognising that fact enables us to see our own suffering in a very different light, i.e. as something God has expressly permitted, for whatever reason. Job's sufferings were something God allowed the Devil to cause because God had purposes of His own, which the Devil's interventions were actually furthering rather than hindering, though Job did not realise that at the time. And neither did Satan.

Why does God allow Satan and his demons to attack us?

God gave Satan a lot of freedom to attack Job and He allows something similar with us. There is no getting away from that distressing fact. For believers and unbelievers alike, there is no immunity from demonic attacks. They do to us all the same things Satan did to Job and more besides, albeit hopefully not at such an extreme level. We have to conclude, therefore, that God still permits this, whatever level it might be for us.

But why? Why does God allow Satan and the demons to be at large and to cause us so much opposition, trouble, illness, damage and death? It does sound very strange, and at first sight, it is hard to make any sense of it. Here, in brief, are some reasons why I believe God allows us to come under demonic attack but we shall enlarge on all of this in the following chapters.

a) To keep us from becoming proud

Paul himself had to endure repeated attacks from a messenger of Satan and he disliked the suffering and opposition so much he asked three times for it to be taken away. But God repeatedly refused. Paul therefore had to come to terms with the fact that he was going to have to put up with it. It might surprise you that God should consider the reduction of pride to be so important. That is partly because most of us are unaware of our pride and don't see it as a sin. But God does. He absolutely hates pride and is willing to go to extraordinary lengths to tackle it.

My advice to you therefore is to make such measures unnecessary, or at least to limit their scope, by freely choosing to deal with your pride by humbling yourself, repenting of pride and ceasing to exalt yourself. Otherwise, you give God no option but to tackle it on your behalf by allowing you to face trouble and hardship so as to knock the pride out of you. Any sensible person will realise that voluntarily tackling it for yourself is by far the easier option.

b) To provide opposition for us

Demonic opposition gives us the opportunity to fight battles and to grow into 'overcomers'. If God did not allow such opposition, a major part of this assault course aspect of life would be removed. This is a little bit like the way the British Army is trained by putting it into real life combat situations. Due to our Empire and the worldwide connections we still have, the UK is engaged in a real war somewhere in the world virtually all the time.

From the British Army's perspective this constant conflict has its advantages, because it allows our troops the chance to train by seeing frequent active service, and in all sorts of climates and terrains, whereas the armies of some other nations hardly ever see any action and can only train on assault courses and firing ranges.

That is one reason why the British army was, until recently, one of the best armies in the world, man for man, until of course they became woke and started to focus on recruiting women, homosexuals and Muslims instead of masculine British men. I think there is an element of that same training dimension in the spiritual conflict we have to face. God is toughening us up by our exposure to real life battles, with real opponents, rather than mere theory taught in a classroom.

c) To knock the rough edges and corners off our characters

If God simply told us to alter our characters and become more like Jesus and then left it entirely up to us to do that, it wouldn't work. Realistically, most of us are not capable of changing our ways and attitudes unless the bad parts of our character are 'knocked out of us' by involuntary adversity, suffering and pressure. We simply aren't willing to do it voluntarily.

It would be nice if we could learn every lesson just by being given good advice and freely choosing to adopt it, but it doesn't work that way for most of us. We aren't willing to take unpleasant advice, not even from God. Therefore, all the biggest lessons are learned through hardship imposed on us unwillingly, and who is better qualified to provide such opportunities for hardship than the demons?

d) To help us to grow in holiness (i.e. sanctification)

Opposition also helps us to grow in holiness. That is it assists in the process of sanctification. Again, the demons don't mean it for our good. Their only aim is to destroy us and hinder us. Some of the time they succeed in that and people are lost and ministries are ruined as a result of demonic attack.

I remember one man with a prominent local ministry amongst young people in the 1980s who had to have his ministry closed down by the Board of Overseers because he committed adultery with one of the young women volunteers. So, his ministry was not helped to grow in sanctification by demonic attack.

On the contrary, it was destroyed. However, that is a risk which God is evidently willing to take in order that some of His disciples will be strengthened and matured by the demonic opposition and grow in holiness and self control despite it all, or rather because of it.

The point is that if we can resist all temptation and deception and come through the ordeal still faithful and still a disciple, then the whole thing hugely backfires on the demons. What they meant for our harm turns into a major benefit for us and not only toughens us up but actually builds holiness and godliness in us. And that, in turn, then benefits others through our subsequent ministries.

e) To help us to grow in wisdom, insight and discernment

The same principle applies here. Though we can learn a lot from books and teachers, it is practical personal experience that fixes the lessons best in our minds. Things usually need to be experienced in real life before they fully make sense.

Also our ability to discern between good and evil and between what is of human origin and demonic origin mainly comes from actually encountering demonic opposition in our own lives and overcoming it. After that kind of experience we are better able to recognise it when we meet it again later or when we see it happening in the lives of others.

f) To test our faithfulness, courage and obedience to Jesus

These qualities of faithfulness, courage, obedience and endurance are best developed by real life experience of adversity and conflict. That's how those virtues are built in us, but it's also how our progress is tested. Our performance under fire enables God to find out whether we are real or false,

committed or lukewarm, and brave or cowardly. But how could we display those qualities, and how could God test them, unless we have some real adversity, and real adversaries, to face?

Actions have consequences. So, if we let demons into our life the result will be damage.

We have looked so far at reasons why God allows us to be opposed by demons because of the benefits it can produce in us, though of course *that is not why the demons do it*. Our growth in maturity is not their goal, even though it is God's objective. On the contrary, they aim to harm, hinder and tempt us.

By the way, when I speak of God allowing all that, I always mean situations where demons *operate from outside of us, not from inside*. I want to stress the fact that *God does not want any demons to gain entry to our body*, such that they can then operate from *inside of us*. He only ever wants them to harass us from the *outside*, not from within. That is where and how He wants the training exercises to be conducted.

So, if they ever get access to operate *inside us* it has gone beyond what God wants. However, I believe the sad fact is that if we live sinfully and especially if we get involved in (or were previously involved in) the occult, then they may be allowed to enter us. At any rate, there is a high chance of it.

Sadly, actions have consequences. So, if we commit serious sin, or have anything to do with the occult, or if we are seriously failing to forgive a person who has wronged us, and are filled with bitterness instead, the result is we potentially create openings for demons which give them a right of access into our lives. They then use that opening to attack us. *This is not something which God desires*. On the contrary, He warns us of it and wants us to avoid all those things which create these openings or 'gaps in our armour'.

Nevertheless, though it is not His wish, He does allow demons to enter us. And of course, in most cases, these things that caused that had already happened even before we became Christians. As for why there are exceptions such that some people who sin badly or get involved in the occult or false religion don't end up with a demon inside them, my guess is it may be because somebody, somewhere, probably faithful parents or a godly teacher or pastor, were praying for them at the time.

It is a little bit like the stories that are sometimes told from World War 2 of how men survived death despite terrible odds, and they later learned that their godly mother was woken up in the night by the LORD and began to pray earnestly for them, and when they later check their diaries it turned out to be the exact moment when the danger arose. That is one possible explanation, but there may well be others.

A very brief introduction to the subject of curses

One of the mechanisms by which these attacks come upon us is '*curses*'. This is an area which causes much confusion. It may surprise you, or even offend you, when I say that the main person from whom curses come is God Himself. He will send curses on anybody, *including us*, if we disobey Him and act in sinful ways.

One place where we see this in the Bible, although it is not in operation today, is in the Law of Moses which ended when Jesus died. Nonetheless, the way God speaks of His curses in books like Leviticus

and Deuteronomy helps us to understand how the general principle of curses operates, even though that particular source of curses has ceased, i.e. when the Law of Moses ended.

Let us, nevertheless, look at some examples of such curses from the Law of Moses and then we will look at whether, and if so how, curses of other kinds might still affect us today as Christians, even though we are not under the Law of Moses. Consider for now what Moses told the people of Israel.

¹"Now it shall be, if you diligently obey the LORD your God, being careful to do all His commandments which I command you today, the LORD your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth. ²"All these blessings will come upon you and overtake you if you obey the LORD your God:

Deuteronomy 28:1-2 (NASB)

Moses then sets out a long list of blessings from verses 3-14 which come from faithful obedience to God's Word. However, he then goes on to speak of God's curses and how those arise due to disobedience:

¹⁵"But it shall come about, if you do not obey the LORD your God, to observe to do all His commandments and His statutes with which I charge you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you:

Deuteronomy 28:15 (NASB)

Moses sets out an even longer list, from Deuteronomy 28:15-68, of the curses that came from God to those Israelites who disobeyed the Law of Moses. It involves a wide range of problems and blights, such as illness, poverty, defeat, frustration, confusion, exile, captivity, fear, etc. Here is just a short extract, because the full list is very long:

¹⁵ "But it shall come about, if you do not obey the LORD your God, to observe to do all His commandments and His statutes with which I charge you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you:

¹⁶"Cursed shall you be in the city, and cursed shall you be in the country.

¹⁷ "Cursed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl.

¹⁸ "Cursed shall be the offspring of your body and the produce of your ground, the increase of your herd and the young of your flock.

¹⁹ "Cursed shall you be when you come in, and cursed shall you be when you go out.

²⁰ "The LORD will send upon you curses, confusion, and rebuke, in all you undertake to do, until you are destroyed and until you perish quickly, on account of the evil of your deeds, because you have forsaken Me. ²¹The LORD will make the pestilence cling to you until He has consumed you from the land where you are entering to possess it. ²² The LORD will smite you with consumption and with fever and with inflammation and with fiery heat and with the sword and with blight and with mildew, and they will pursue you until you perish. ²³ The heaven which is over your head shall be bronze, and the earth which is under you, iron. ²⁴ The LORD will make the rain of your land powder and dust; from heaven it shall come down on you until you are destroyed.

²⁵ "The LORD shall cause you to be defeated before your enemies; you will go out one way against them, but you will flee seven ways before them, and you will be an example of terror to all the

kingdoms of the earth. ²⁶Your carcasses will be food to all birds of the sky and to the beasts of the earth, and there will be no one to frighten them away.

²⁷“The LORD will smite you with the boils of Egypt and with tumors and with the scab and with the itch, from which you cannot be healed. ²⁸The LORD will smite you with madness and with blindness and with bewilderment of heart; ²⁹and you will grope at noon, as the blind man gropes in darkness, and you will not prosper in your ways; but you shall only be oppressed and robbed continually, with none to save you.

Deuteronomy 28:15-29 (NASB)

Let me emphasise again that *we are not under the Law of Moses anymore*. It has been fulfilled and then revoked as a result of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. Thus, neither the blessings nor the curses contained within Deuteronomy 28 or Leviticus 26, (or any other part of the Law of Moses) apply to us. Please refer for more detail to my commentary on Galatians and also my article on the Law of Moses, plus the two separate audio series I did on them.

However, that does not mean God no longer curses anybody or that curses are no longer an issue for us. He does still do so and they are still an issue. The difference today is we operate under the Law of Christ, which does still allow a place for curses, albeit not of the type which Moses wrote about. For example, some curses which are still in operation, *even for Christians* are:

a) the curse which God sends upon those who lie and steal:

We are told of this curse in Zechariah 5 and it makes grim reading. We shall refer to it again in more detail in Book 9 but, basically, this is how God will curse anyone who lies or steals. The curse is presented rather like a heat seeking missile pursuing an aircraft. It goes after the person, even into their home. Moreover, there is nothing to suggest this only applies to unsaved unbelievers. On the face of it, it applies to everyone:

¹ Then I raised my eyes again and looked, and behold, there was a flying scroll. ² And he said to me, “What do you see?” And I said, “I see a flying scroll; its length is twenty cubits, and its width ten cubits.” ³ Then he said to me, “This is the curse that is going forth over the face of the entire land; everyone who steals certainly will be purged away according to the writing on one side, and everyone who swears falsely will be purged away according to the writing on the other side. ⁴ I will make it go forth,” declares the Lord of armies, “and it will enter the house of the thief and the house of the one who swears falsely by My name; and it will spend the night within that house and destroy it with its timber and stones.”

Zechariah 5:1-4 (NASB)

b) the curse which God will send on anyone who curses/hates/opposes Israel and the Jewish people:

I discuss this in much greater detail in my Israel series which is available on my website as audio talks, and also as a written article. Please refer to these for the full story. However, the basic fact is God has stated that He will bless anyone who loves and blesses the Jews and curse anyone who curses them. And there is no reason at all to suppose this doesn't apply to genuine Christians.

On the contrary, it applies to everyone, which is sad, because I know a lot of real Christians who, despite all their other qualities, have a blind spot on this issue of Israel and the Jews. They therefore think it is

alright for them to criticise Israel, or to condemn Israeli politicians, or accuse them of “genocide”, or to just dislike the Jews in unspecified, undefined terms, usually without even knowing why.

But let me break it to you – it’s not alright! God will hold you accountable for what you think, say and do in relation to Israel and the Jews. Therefore, show a grain of common sense and start supporting them, blessing them and praying for them. And, above all, stop criticising them. There are already far too many people doing that so your contribution isn’t needed. You can be very sure of that.

I will give you just a few brief references from Scripture to prove this, but please refer to my article and talks on Israel for the full story. It begins with a promise made to Abraham that God will bless him and his descendants, the Jews, *and curse those who curse them*:

² And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and him who curses you I will curse; and by you all the families of the earth shall bless themselves.”

Genesis 12:2-3 (RSV)

The promise was then restated to his son Isaac and God specifically promised to fulfil the oath He had sworn to Abraham so that earlier promise is effectively incorporated by reference and restated:

² And the Lord appeared to him, and said, “Do not go down to Egypt; dwell in the land of which I shall tell you. ³ Sojourn in this land, and I will be with you, and will bless you; for to you and to your descendants I will give all these lands, and I will fulfil the oath which I swore to Abraham your father. ⁴ I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven, and will give to your descendants all these lands; and by your descendants all the nations of the earth shall bless themselves:

Genesis 26:2-4 (RSV)

Years later, Isaac passed on that blessing by giving his own blessing to his son Jacob as an inheritance in the same terms as above. This applied not only to Jacob himself but to his descendants, the Jews:

***²⁹ Let peoples serve you,
and nations bow down to you.
Be lord over your brothers,
and may your mother’s sons bow down to you.
Cursed be every one who curses you,
and blessed be every one who blesses you!”***

Genesis 27:29 (RSV)

If we were to follow this through the whole Bible, and indeed the whole history of the last 4,000 years, we would see very clearly that God blesses all those who bless Israel and the Jews, and he curses all those who curse Israel and the Jews. The examples are endless and I refer to a lot of them in my Israel article and audio series.

The long list of “coincidences” where people and nations who oppose Israel come to a grisly end are absolutely consistent and are impossible to explain away or deny. Moreover, they continue to occur even today. Therefore, no matter who you are, if you oppose, hate, criticise, mock, disparage, curse or belittle Israel or the Jewish people, you are the equivalent of a man who stands in the path of a high speed train. So don’t do it.

c) *the law of sowing and reaping:*

The law of sowing and reaping operates for everybody, and it can bring curses upon people whether they are Christians or not.

⁷ Do not be deceived; God is not mocked, for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.

Galations 6:7 (RSV)

Therefore, if a person sows in a sinful way, they will inevitably reap a bitter harvest, even if they are a Christian. God will ensure that whatever we do to others is done later to us and any wickedness we do will be returned to us *and multiplied*, just as a seed which we plant is multiplied in the harvest.

That is why that agricultural metaphor is used to reflect the fact that we will *get back more than we sowed*, whether it was good or evil. If so, and if we have done evil, what is that but a curse? Some might quibble over the word ‘curse’ and insist on calling it an adverse consequence sent by God. But how is that any different from calling it a curse?

d) *the law of humbling and exalting oneself:*

This law, likewise, operates in every person’s life, and can bring curses upon them whether they are a Christian or not.

¹¹For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

Luke 14:11 (RSV)

So, if a person, even a Christian, exalts himself, which means to puff himself up in pride as Nebuchadnezzar did when he beheld Babylon, then God will humble him. That simply means He will lower him, reduce him, diminish him, demote him etc. Again, how else can that be described as anything but a curse, and how can anyone deny that it comes from God Himself?

I stress that point because many argue that curses no longer exist and play no part in our lives. But they plainly do still exist and they do come from God. It is just that they no longer come as a consequence of breaking the Law of Moses specifically, because we are not under it. But that does not mean God does not operate in similar ways when we disobey *His other commands*, to the extent that He has said He will.

When curses operate, one consequence is that God allows demons access to our lives, to bring adverse circumstances upon us.

I have pondered for many years on the question of how exactly curses operate, i.e. what is the mechanism by which the curse is delivered, how does the unpleasant consequence get to us, and who delivers it? The answer is there appear to be many ways, and they are not fully explained to us. However, it seems to be self evident that one of those ways is that when a curse is affecting us demons are permitted to have increased access to our lives to harm, hinder, obstruct and diminish us.

We saw something like that happening above in the life of apostle Paul. However, I need to emphasise again that that was not a curse in operation, because Paul hadn’t done anything wrong. It was God allowing Paul to be hindered *for his own benefit*, to prevent him from becoming proud as a result of his

enormous knowledge and all the revelations and privileges he had been given. So, in many ways that was the opposite of a curse because it was intended for Paul's own good.

So, in that particular case, which was exceptional, it was not actually a curse at all, though it looked a bit like one. Even so, it still illustrates the general point. Therefore, when we are looking at curses, it is very clear that, in a similar manner, God uses demons to do jobs for Him by giving them the freedom to move into a person's life, whether they are a Christian or not, to cause whatever unpleasant consequences the curse is intended to bring.

So, for example, if a person was to exalt themselves, a demon might be permitted, or even instructed and sent, to do things to humble them by bringing them down a peg or two. Or if a person was to lie or steal or do something else which is sinful, a demon might be authorised to attack them, or you could say, to bring them a bitter harvest in return for whatever sinful act they 'sowed'.

An example of this is seen in the life of King Saul. He went wrong and behaved badly, disobeying God and being unfaithful to his calling. We see that God sent an evil spirit (demon) to harass and trouble King Saul. There is no getting away from that fact:

¹³ Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward. And Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah. ¹⁴ Now the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD tormented him. ¹⁵ And Saul's servants said to him, 'Behold now, an evil spirit from God is tormenting you.

1 Samuel 16:13-15 (RSV)

An even stranger episode is found in the life of King Ahab of the Northern Kingdom of Israel. He was a wicked King and on one occasion a genuine prophet called Micaiah advised him that he should not go to war with the King of Syria and prophesied that if he did it would end in disaster. But King Ahab did not listen. He chose to go to war and Israel was defeated and Ahab was killed.

Those are the background facts. The key point is that God gave a revelation to the prophet Micaiah of what was happening *behind the scenes in the spiritual realm*. It was revealed that God sent a lying spirit, i.e. a demon, to speak through some false prophets and to entice King Ahab to go to war so as to be defeated and killed:

¹⁸ And Micai'ah said, 'Therefore hear the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing on his right hand and on his left; ¹⁹ and the LORD said, 'Who will entice Ahab the king of Israel, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead?' And one said one thing, and another said another. ²⁰ Then a spirit came forward and stood before the LORD, saying, 'I will entice him.' And the LORD said to him, 'By what means?' ²¹ And he said, 'I will go forth, and will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.' And he said, 'You are to entice him, and you shall succeed; go forth and do so.' ²² Now therefore behold, the LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouth of these your prophets; the LORD has spoken evil concerning you.'

2 Chronicles 18:18-22 (RSV)

This is a strange passage, but we see from it that:

a) God sends a "lying spirit"

- b) It speaks through false prophets
- c) It misleads King Ahab
- d) And it entices him to go to war unwisely and be defeated and killed.

Each of the above steps were taken as *a form of judgment on King Ahab* because of his wicked life. So, God was cursing him, or opposing him if you prefer that word, and He was using a demon as His messenger or tool to do it. You might ask whether we can be sure it was a demon as opposed to an angel.

The answer is I can't be absolutely certain of that but it seems clear it was a demon because it was described as a "*lying spirit*", which one would not expect to be said of an angel. However, even if it was an angel, which I strongly doubt, the point remains that *it was sent* to deliver what was effectively a curse to King Ahab.

Demons will still interfere in your life, even where there are no curses in operation

All of us, whether we are Christians or not, come under relentless attack from demons and in all sorts of ways. That ought not to be seen as a controversial comment. In my opinion it is actually a statement of the downright obvious. However, many of us do not accept that demons are active in our lives, especially not in the lives of genuine Christians.

Many regard it as an insult even to suggest that a demon could be playing any part in their lives. They say that out of ignorance, mainly due to misguided teaching. Be assured however that demons have already played a part in your life for years, seeking initially to prevent you from ever becoming a Christian. Thereafter, they have been seeking to prevent you from growing into a faithful disciple.

You may be finding, right now, even in reading this book, that you come up against various distractions and diversions that demons have put in your way. They will certainly, try hard to prevent you reading this book, but even more so to prevent you reading the Bible. You may find you have struggled to concentrate, or have felt suddenly sleepy.

If so, this is very probably due to demonic interference. They seek to blind people's eyes and confuse their minds so they can't understand the Bible and especially the Gospel message. But if you have come through all that spiritual opposition and have become a Christian despite it all, the demonic resistance will only increase, not go away.

One or more demons will be made responsible for hindering you. They will then try hard to get you to give up being a Christian or, if that doesn't work, their 'Plan B' is to try to make you ineffective at reaching anyone else to share the Gospel with them. They are determined above all to stop you telling other people about Jesus.

If only we were as hard working and persistent as demons are

If we were even half as determined to do good as demons are to do evil, then we would do well. Their determination to keep going, year after year, century after century, is extraordinary. Why are they so committed? Why have they not grown tired of their campaign to ruin the lives of human beings? Why do they never seem to give up?

Part of the answer may be the hold Satan has over them. I don't know if this is true, and I have no specific authority to cite, but I suspect at least part of their zeal to destroy us comes from their own fear of Satan and of what he might do to them if they were to be slack in their work. Their own fear of him may provide an additional motivation, over and above their hatred towards us.

Demons have already been judged and are waiting to be sent to the Lake of Fire

So far, the demons have had about 6000 years on this Earth, waiting for their sentence to be carried out. In the end Jesus will throw them all into the Lake of Fire. The book of Revelation speaks of this dramatic future event:

¹⁰And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

Revelation 20:10 (NASB)

When Jesus was on the Earth the first time, during His ministry, He cast many demons out of people. On one occasion the demons mistakenly thought Jesus was going to bring forward the time for them to be tormented, i.e. the day when they are at last sent to the abyss, during the Millenium and then, after that, for all eternity, to the Lake of Fire:

²⁸When He came to the other side into the country of the Gadarenes, two men who were demon-possessed met Him as they were coming out of the tombs. They were so extremely violent that no one could pass by that way. ²⁹And they cried out, saying, "What business do we have with each other, Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?"

Matthew 8:28-29 (NASB)

Actually, that was not what Jesus intended. He merely cast them out of the person concerned, and was satisfied with that, without sending them on prematurely to their punishment. However, their response to Jesus illustrates how the demons fear the Lake of Fire and want to delay going to it.

Who can blame them? It is a dreadful prospect. Therefore, at least in that regard, they are a model for us because we ought to fear the Lake of Fire ourselves rather than ignoring it, or even treating it as a laughing matter, as so many of us do.

Demons have had nearly 6000 years of experience of undermining us. Therefore, we must use God's wisdom if we are to defeat them

During the 6000 years or so since this Earth was created, demons have had a vast amount of practice at dealing with human beings and causing sin, misery and chaos. They are therefore very skilled and experienced opponents, as they have seen it all before whereas we all have to begin as raw recruits and we only get one lifetime to learn how to fight.

Even then, the first part of that lifetime is as a child and in the last section of life we might be too old or frail to fight. So, our main opportunity for 'combat' is in the middle part of our lives and we need to use every moment of it. There is nothing you can do in your own natural ability to out smart them. They are more than a match for anything you can do to them in your own strength or ability. And even

if you were somehow cleverer than the demon harassing you, he only needs to speak to his 'supervisor' to get advice on how to outsmart you.

Yet, in God's strength, and if you go about things in the way He says, you are more than a match for them. The key is to humble yourself and then God will give you the grace and mercy that you need. Plus, you must submit yourself to God, which means being determined to obey Him. Then, and only then, are you in the right place to be able to resist the Devil and his demons:

⁶But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." ⁷Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ⁸Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

James 4:6-8 (NIV)

Apostle Peter also tells us to resist the Devil. Again, he is using the word Devil as shorthand to represent Satan and his demons, not just Satan himself:

⁸Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. ⁹Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

1 Peter 5:8-9 (RSV)

What is the occult? Why must we avoid it?

The word 'occult' just means 'hidden'. It refers to all those things that God, in His infinite wisdom, has chosen not to tell us. God has given us the Bible and that tells us everything He thinks we *need* to know. There is plenty in it to be getting on with for an entire lifetime. What He has not done is to tell us everything we might *want* to know. On the contrary, He has chosen to hide many things from us that we would dearly love to know.

We must just learn to be content with that. Some things are simply not meant to be looked into. It is just as a wise parent puts all dangerous medicines in a cupboard which is higher than the children can reach and tells them they mustn't open it. That cupboard is therefore 'occult' or off limits. Likewise, everything that God declares to be off limits is dangerous to us and should be avoided.

We would only be harming ourselves if we tried to enquire into such hidden things, especially if we are stupid enough to appoint demons as our tutors. That is of course what happens if we go to a medium or use tarot cards etc to try to find things out. Any response you get will not be from your deceased mother but from *a demon impersonating her*. Therefore, have nothing at all to do with any aspect of the occult.

Yet, there is something perverse in human nature that makes us prefer to get information illegitimately rather than legitimately, especially where we have been forbidden to look into it. That improper pursuit of hidden knowledge which God does not want us to have is what the occult is all about. But God forbids it – utterly. Therefore, any involvement you may have had in the occult, even in the distant past, will be very significant and please remember that when we get to Book 9 on casting out demons.

It will have harmed you when you did it and will continue to cause you great harm until and unless you repent of it and renounce it all. Therefore, ask yourself honestly, have you ever been involved, directly or indirectly, with horoscopes, tarot, ouiji, magic, the New Age, crystals, charms, spells, wicca, witchcraft, sorcery, superstitions, spiritualism, séances, tea leaves or any other kind of occult activity whatsoever?

Also, have you ever been involved in false, idolatrous religions such as Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Mormonism, Catholicism etc? They too are all off limits to us and any past involvement will have harmed us, and will still be harming us. If you have been involved in any of these things you need to specifically repent and turn away from all of it.

And you must also burn or destroy any “lucky charms”, crystals or little Buddhas or any other accursed objects, such as those hideous African masks made of wood depicting demonic faces which tourists buy. After you have thoroughly and sincerely repented then go on to renounce it all equally thoroughly.

Ask God to cleanse you of all its influence and consequences. Be aware that what you did, or said, or got involved in, can still be damaging you today, even if you no longer do it or have forgotten all about it. Therefore, ask God to reveal to you whether you have ever had any involvement in the occult of any type, or any false religion, even if it was many years ago, and if so, ask Him to bring it back to your memory.

If you have been involved then sincerely repent of it and earnestly renounce it. Don’t be glib or casual. Say what you mean and mean what you say. Ask God to cleanse you, to forgive you and to remove any ongoing influence that any form of occult activity or false religion might still have in your life.

You would be saying this to God as a prayer of confession of the sin and also of supplication in asking for help, not as a proclamation. However, proclamation will be needed next, so you yourself can *renounce* the occult activity in your own right, and *revoke* any words or oaths you spoke back then.

It must be you who renounces it in addition to asking God to forgive it and cleanse you of it. Yes, those are needed too, but so is your own personal renunciation of what you did or said. I say a lot more about this kind of renunciation in my Book 9.

I also need to emphasise the vital need to burn any occult books, pictures or objects you may possess. Do not keep any of it for a souvenir, not even one small item. Get rid of it all completely and do not sell it or even give it away to anyone else who might want it. If you did, it would be like handing them a bag of heroin.

I emphasise destroying these things because when a person decides to get rid of their old occult books, materials, pictures or objects, they will often feel drawn to hang on to some of it, even to one small item, perhaps for sentimental reasons as a souvenir of travel to far away places. People whom I seek to help have done this even when I told them not to keep anything and they promised to get rid of everything.

Do not yield to that temptation. It will be a demonic voice seeking to persuade you to hold onto something. But they only say it in order to keep you ensnared and to retain a hold over you. Resist that impulse and get rid of *all of it*. As they say in schoolboy football (soccer), “*if in doubt, kick it out*”.

Are the occult, witchcraft and demons real or imaginary?

Many of us find it extremely hard to believe demons are real. Some have a mental blockage in this area and find they can't believe. In fact, that intense difficulty in believing in demons is evidence, in itself, that people are being demonically resisted and their minds are being interfered with. Most of the time, in the West, the demons' policy is to seek to prevent you believing in them.

They will do this by many different means, for example by planting in your mind the idea that believing in demons is 'unscientific' and old fashioned and that you will be laughed at or criticised if you admit to it. If so, that makes it difficult to believe the occult or witchcraft are real either. So, if we come up against idolators, Satanists or witchcraft practitioners, many of us don't take it seriously or believe it to be real.

But Apostle Paul took it very seriously and said that when pagans offer sacrifices to their idols they are, in fact, making that offering to a demon, without realising it. Paul did not merely say such people *think* they are making the offering to a demon. He said they *are* doing so, i.e. the demons are real and making an offering to them really matters:

¹⁴Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry. ¹⁵I speak as to sensible people; judge for yourselves what I say. ¹⁶The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? ¹⁷Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread. ¹⁸Consider the people of Israel: are not those who eat the sacrifices participants in the altar? ¹⁹What do I imply then? That food offered to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything? ²⁰No, I imply that what pagans sacrifice they offer to demons and not to God. I do not want you to be participants with demons. ²¹You 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.

1 Corinthians 10:14-21 (ESV)

Note also what the book of Exodus says about the magic or witchcraft practised by Pharaoh's magicians in Egypt. They saw Moses performing amazing miracles by God's power, to turn his walking stick into a snake, the river Nile into blood and to create swarms of frogs. However, when Moses did those things, by God's power, *the magicians then did the very same things* using the power of demons.

There can be no question that they merely *alleged* they could do these things. They really did, and not by using God's power either. That account demonstrates undeniably that Satanic and demonic power are absolutely real:

⁸ Then the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, ⁹ "When Pharaoh says to you, 'Prove yourselves by working a miracle,' then you shall say to Aaron, 'Take your staff and cast it down before Pharaoh, that it may become a serpent.'" ¹⁰ So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and did just as the LORD commanded. Aaron cast down his staff before Pharaoh and his servants, and it became a serpent. ¹¹ Then Pharaoh summoned the wise men and the sorcerers, and they, the magicians of Egypt, also did the same by their secret arts. ¹² For each man cast down his staff, and they became serpents. But Aaron's staff swallowed up their staffs.

Exodus 7:8-12 (ESV)

¹⁹ And the LORD said to Moses, “Say to Aaron, ‘Take your staff and stretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt, over their rivers, their canals, and their ponds, and all their pools of water, so that they may become blood, and there shall be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, even in vessels of wood and in vessels of stone.’”

²⁰ Moses and Aaron did as the LORD commanded. In the sight of Pharaoh and in the sight of his servants he lifted up the staff and struck the water in the Nile, and all the water in the Nile turned into blood. ²¹ And the fish in the Nile died, and the Nile stank, so that the Egyptians could not drink water from the Nile. There was blood throughout all the land of Egypt. ²² But the magicians of Egypt did the same by their secret arts. So Pharaoh's heart remained hardened, and he would not listen to them, as the LORD had said.

Exodus 7:19-22 (ESV)

⁵ And the LORD said to Moses, “Say to Aaron, ‘Stretch out your hand with your staff over the rivers, over the canals and over the pools, and make frogs come up on the land of Egypt!’” ⁶ So Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt, and the frogs came up and covered the land of Egypt. ⁷ But the magicians did the same by their secret arts and made frogs come up on the land of Egypt.

Exodus 8:5-7 (ESV)

Why so many Christians don't believe that demons play any part in their lives

As with other areas of theology, people tend to get their ideas and beliefs from what they have been told, or from their church's denominational traditions, rather than by simply believing what the Bible says. Therefore, if a man's church tells him demons play no active part in his life, that tends to become an immovable fixture in his mind.

It can become a mental stronghold or barricade which prevents him being able even to form the thought, let alone hold the firm belief, that demons could be real or active in his life. That viewpoint will not shift, even when he reads numerous New Testament accounts about demonic activity, deliverance from demons, the power of witchcraft and the occult. Any such references will be unconsciously edited out of whatever he reads, without even realising he is doing so.

If a person's mind is set in a rigid position then no matter what they see later in the Bible, or in their own experiences, it washes off them like water off a duck's back. That fixed idea comes from false teaching or their church's traditions or what they have been told by others or from what demons have whispered into their minds until they embrace the thought as their own.

It then causes them to ignore anything they read in the Bible or which they experience in life that contradicts that fixed idea which has become ingrained in their mind. Therefore, although many people are obviously being demonically attacked, most of us will insist it is something else causing it rather than a demon.

In this way, a man's theology or the church traditions and familiar customs and practices he has grown up with create immovable barriers, beyond which he will not allow his mind to go. This happens all the time and is another reason why we need to examine ourselves rigorously to get our theology right and to correct our approach to interpreting Scripture.

Then the Bible can help us to identify areas where our beliefs are wrong, even if we have held them all our lives. Sometimes our failure to realise demons are involved is just due to a lack of knowledge and understanding. Look at Job. He suffered all those calamities and he and his friends spent a long time discussing it, and wondering why God was allowing it, or even doing it, but it never occurred to any of them to wonder whether Satan was behind it.

They all assumed it came from God which, in one sense, it did, albeit indirectly, because God *allowed* it. Nevertheless, it was still Satan who *actually did it*. But the possibility of Satan's involvement never entered their minds, even though they all knew of his existence. Here Job is speaking, but he fully assumes it is God attacking him and he does not even mention Satan:

*¹"I loathe my own life; I will give full vent to my complaint; will speak in the bitterness of my soul.
²"I will say to God, 'Do not condemn me; Let me know why You contend with me. ³'Is it right for You indeed to oppress, To reject the labour of Your hands, And to look favourably on the schemes of the wicked?*

Job 10:1-3 (NASB)

It is a little bit like believing there are such things as Grizzly bears but only as something theoretical and far away and thus never expecting to actually meet one while out shopping or at work. Many Christians admit that demons may exist, in theory, but they are always assumed to be somewhere else, affecting someone else at some other time.

Like grizzly bears, demons are never thought to be here, affecting us today, in our own town or village. We therefore urgently need to remove those false ideas and replace them with an accurate biblical understanding of demons. We need to know what they are and how best to resist them. But, above all, that needs to become real to us, not mere theory.

Demons are not little monsters with horns. They must look like us, just as angels do.

It is one of Satan's cleverest tactics that he has caused so many of us (in the West) not to believe in him. If he can keep us believing he doesn't exist, or that he only exists in theory, or only did things in the past or somewhere else, to someone else, never here and now, and never to us, then we become defenceless.

We are hardly going to be well placed to resist an enemy whom we refuse to believe is real, or even one whose existence does not *feel* real, even if we notionally believe in him, in theory. Part of the cause of this widespread disbelief about Satan and demons is that so many of us have an unrealistic grotesque image of them with horns, red tights and a pitch fork.

Then, as C S Lewis said, if we cannot believe in that absurd caricature, we do not feel able to believe in them at all, not even as they really are. That is why Satan's policy in the West is to promote the idea that believing in demons means a person is unsophisticated, uneducated and even ridiculous.

He knows few of us are brave enough to express a view if it means we would be laughed at. However, demons are not ridiculous looking figures in red tights. There is every reason to suppose they look just like us. At any rate, one can see from the Bible that almost every angel that has ever appeared to anybody looks like us.

The only exceptions to that are some of the beings that Ezekiel sees in Heaven or the cases where an angel appears in a glorified form, i.e. shining with bright light and seeming to be very powerful. But even then, they still look like us in their basic appearance, other than the shining light etc. Also, Hebrews 13:2 tells us that some of us have "*entertained angels unawares*", i.e. some of us have met and spoken with angels *without even realising it*. I believe that happened to me and I tell the story in Book 9.

But, how could that be the case unless angels look like us? If they looked strange and different we would notice and would not be "unaware". So, if angels do look exactly like us, it follows that demons must look like us too, because they are just angels who have rebelled and fallen into sin. There is no reason to suppose the fall has altered their appearance.

It evidently has not altered Satan's, since the Bible says he can still appear as an '*angel of light*'. Certainly, when Satan entered Heaven to discuss Job with God in the presence of angels, none of them seemed to see anything different or untoward in his appearance. Indeed, it is quite possible that some of those angels didn't know who he was.

So, we need to stop picturing demons in our minds as hideous monsters, or as ludicrous figures in red tights. They are not like either of those images and it makes all the difference in taking them seriously when you realise that. The reality is when you sit down to eat with your family, there are demons around the room, perhaps standing alongside each of you, who are invisible but absolutely real.

If you were able to see all of them standing around in your home, they would look just like ordinary, good looking humans, probably about 30 years old. As you go about your business or talk with your family, that group of demons are all listening to what you each say, and are whispering into each of your minds, seeking to influence your conversations and actions. Try to picture them that way because it is a far more realistic image.

Why people get offended at the very suggestion that a demon may be involved in their life.

Many people become offended at the suggestion that a demon might be involved in their life or adding to their problems. I have seen people recoil with shock and disgust at the very idea of that. They become angry and view it as a personal insult, as if you had just suggested they might have fleas. I was at someone's house some years ago and the conversation came round to a particular man in the church who had been having extremely distressing mental problems.

He had deep depression and severe anxiety attacks and also heard audible voices saying horrible things and he had bizarre delusions. I politely asked this person, who was not a relative of his, but just a friend, whether anything had been done to investigate the possibility of a demonic cause to some of the problems. I saw that as a distinct likelihood given all the facts and the strange symptoms.

He was hearing voices in his head but the point is those voices *only ever said nasty, vicious, macabre things*, not a random selection of good and bad things, as one might expect if it was a purely medical problem, caused by something organic. I only spoke of it as a possibility that a demon might be involved. I was not being categorical about it.

Even so, some of the man's friends, who were at the house, were affronted at the very idea. There was an awkward silence and then one of them 'corrected' me quite firmly and 'defended' the man, as if I had just insulted him. They explained to me that the man's problems were "*purely medical*" and they knew this to be a certain *fact* because:

- a) he had seen a psychiatrist (a non-Christian) who had said so
- b) some Christian doctors from the same church had also said that his problems were medical.

But those doctors, even the Christian ones, didn't believe that demons play *any part in any of our lives*, just the same as the people I was speaking to. Every one of them had a rigid theology which had no place for demons. Thus, their conclusions about this particular man and his problems were pre-ordained by their pre-existing mindset, no matter what the facts suggested and no matter what the Bible says.

They were therefore incapable of even considering any demonic cause for his problems, not even the horrible voices in his head. So far as they were concerned it was purely 'medical' and that was all there was to it. Nothing more needed to be said. But points a) and b) above prove nothing at all.

People see what they expect to see and are unable to see anything else that does not fit within their pre-arranged theology, even if it is a metaphorical barn door that is only 10 feet away. They expect to see the things they believe in, not the things they don't believe in.

Therefore, if people believe mental problems are all caused by illness, they will only ever see mental illness, never demonic oppression, no matter how many blatantly obvious cases of demonisation they came across. Of course, it can work the other way too. A smaller group of people explain too many things in terms of demonic involvement and don't think *any* mental problems are ever due to brain injuries, traumas, stress or chemical imbalances.

Clearly, that extreme stance isn't correct either, and some mental problems are obviously purely medical or physical, such as when people get head injuries or a range of other possibilities. For example it is well known that an infection can cause a person to hallucinate. There are many possible causes of mental, emotional and spiritual problems. I fully accept that. However, there is still no getting away from the fact that *one of those causes is demons*.

Sadly, the friends of the distressed man I referred to above saw the idea of his having a demon as the equivalent of somebody having venereal disease. It was as if, on hearing that a man's wife has a painful rash, one was to say out loud, and in public: "*I wonder if it's VD*". The offence taken really can be at that level.

But there shouldn't be any sense of being insulted at all. Offence is only taken because the person's theology is mixed up and mistaken to begin with. That confusion causes them to see the whole picture wrongly and therefore to misunderstand the meaning and implications of a person being demonised.

When a demon attacks you he is paying you a compliment. It means he thinks you are a threat and are worth attacking.

The truth is there is nothing rude or critical about saying demons play an active part in people's lives and offence ought not to be taken. We are all affected by demons to some extent, including me. I am

not only speaking of others. The only questions each of us need to ask are *in what way*, and *how severely*, are we demonised?

It will vary widely from person to person in its nature and extent and in the precise details of what it leads to or what damage is caused. So, far from being an insult, if a demon is attacking you or trying to hinder you, it is actually a back-handed compliment. It means the demon thinks you are a threat and someone worth opposing. And they ought to know about that, having had nearly 6,000 years of practice at harassing humans.

Therefore, if their attack upon you or your ministry is a compliment when it is rightly understood, then so too is the suggestion that you might be being opposed. It means the person suggesting it sees you as a person whom demons would consider worthy to be opposed. How can that be anything other than a compliment?

Think of it the other way for a moment. What would it imply if we were to say a demon is *not* attacking or harassing you? To me it could only imply either that the demon thinks you are on their side, or that you are already making such a terrible mess of your life you don't need any 'help' from them in damaging it further. So, think more carefully before you announce that demons play no part in your life.

The mistaken belief that we are now living in the Millennium and that all demons are therefore bound and unable to deceive us.

This lack of understanding about demons flows partly from the fact that many churches have a wrong understanding of the end times and of Jesus' return to the Earth. If you were to ask those who believe demons no longer play any part in our lives "*Why are demons not active and where are they now?*" the answer you will often be given is the demons have been *bound*, i.e. put in chains and restrained, by Jesus.

Many hold that wrong belief as the indirect result of another mistaken belief, which has to do with Bible prophecy and the right way to interpret it. The problem is many people, for example most of those in Reformed churches, wrongly assume we are now already living in the Millennium. They believe this current period, the Church age, *is* Jesus' millennial reign on the Earth and He is now reigning on Earth indirectly through the Church, which is His body.

That viewpoint is known as "*amillennialism*", which literally means "no Millennium". However, that term is itself misleading, as what they actually believe is we are already in the Millennium. So, you could say they believe there will be no future Millennium that is still ahead of us. That then explains the prefix "A" which means "no".

At any rate, if they believe this is now the Millennium, it follows they must also believe the demons are all locked away, because the book of Revelation says Satan (and, by implication, his demons as well) will be locked away during Jesus' 1000 year (millennial) reign on the Earth:

¹Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. ²And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; ³and he threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so

that he would not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time.

Revelation 20:1-3 (NASB)

Apostle John goes on to say:

⁷When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison, ⁸and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore.

Revelation 20:7-8 (NASB)

So, if a person has been brought up to hold to an amillennial viewpoint in relation to Bible prophecy, they will probably believe the following:

- a) The 1000 years referred to (six times) has only a “*spiritual meaning*” and is not to be taken literally. So, although the Church age has already been twice that length, this period we now live in is still assumed to be the Millennium.
- b) Therefore, it follows from what they assume that Jesus must now be reigning on the Earth (through His Church).
- c) It must also follow that Satan (and his demons) are currently bound in chains and locked away.
- d) Therefore, according to them, demons are unable to “*deceive the nations*” any longer.

It follows therefore, by their reckoning, that despite every appearance to the contrary, the demons are not active. They can't be, because they believe they are in prison. This is a classic case of forcing the facts we can see and hear to fit into a rigid pre-conceived view of what the Bible is assumed to mean.

Thus, no matter how active demons might actually be, those who take that amillennial approach cling to the view that demons can't possibly be active because they are certain this is the Millennium. Therefore the demons must all be in chains. But the obvious response to that is, as the saying goes, “*If Satan is chained up at the moment, then his chain is too long!*”

However, all of that reasoning about demons crumbles to nothing if we conclude, as I do, that this period we are currently living in is *not* the Millennium. That 1000 year reign will only occur in the future, after Jesus physically returns to Earth and that return clearly has not yet taken place. Therefore, there is nothing to prevent the demons being active and most of them are free, until the Millennium begins, to do as much damage as they are allowed to do, i.e. by God giving them permission to attack you and by you failing to defend yourself.

They are not wasting any time over that task because they know better than we do that the end of this present age is drawing near and Jesus' return is not far away. If anything, they are growing desperate and intensifying their activity, as is plain from all we see and hear. This is undoubtedly *an* apostate age for the Western churches and perhaps it is even *the* apostasy that Jesus said would come before His return to the Earth. I certainly think it is.

There couldn't be the epidemic of deception, error, carnality, corruption, perversion and abuse we have seen occurring in recent years, in both the world and the Church, unless demons are actively involved.

If anything, they seem to be working overtime at present and are achieving things they could never have done even a few decades ago in terms of promoting abortion, fornication, adultery, homosexuality, witchcraft, paedophilia, deception, gender confusion, the corrupting of our politicians and so on.

These events and the social and political movements, which in recent years have hit the Church and the world like a tidal wave, are not solely the work of men. There is clearly substantial demonic involvement behind it. That is true at a micro level within the lives of individuals and within churches and also at a macro level within nations, governments and institutions.

The things with which we are contending are not solely the works of men's sinful flesh nature either. There is much more to it. There is an obvious coordination to it all which goes far beyond what any human planning could achieve, even if it was done by a major corporation or a Government. Even they couldn't do it because it is worldwide and reaches into every kind of institution in exactly the same way and at exactly the same time.

The deluge of abortion, promiscuity and homosexuality, to name but three of the many unprecedented evils which have burst onto the world scene since the 1960's, demonstrates that the mind of an evil genius is involved. Whoever is behind this is capable of the world-wide choreography of thousands of different organisations, institutions and media outlets to bring about a coordinated, planned outcome.

There is nothing natural, spontaneous or coincidental about any of what we are seeing. It is incredibly well organised, in a way no human being, or even a large group, could ever achieve. So, for all of those reasons and more, we are clearly not in the Millennium and Jesus is not yet reigning on the Earth as King of Israel. Moreover, the Devil is not yet bound up in any prison and neither are his demons. They are anything but inactive.

Indeed, I believe the events of the last 100 years, and especially of the last 50 years, are Satan's preparation, setting the scene for the rise of the antichrist. But if all of that is true it means we are going to have to face their opposition and their various attacks upon us on an ever growing scale, right up until the Rapture. Therefore, in the chapters which follow we will look more closely at what demons get up to day by day in the lives of individuals.