

The Nature of Demons

A. Their personality

Luke 8:27-30 is an excellent passage to demonstrate the personality of demons. In verse 28 the demon is referred to with pronouns like “he” and “I” demonstrating the being’s personality. And in verse 30 we see that the demon actually had a proper name, “Legion.”

Luke 8:27-30, "And when He had come out onto the land, He was met by a certain man from the city who was possessed with demons; and who had not put on any clothing for a long time, and was not living in a house, but in the tombs. And seeing Jesus, he cried out and fell before Him, and said in a loud voice, “What do I have to do with You, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg You, do not torment me.” For He had been commanding the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For it had seized him many times; and he was bound with chains and shackles and kept under guard; and *yet* he would burst his fetters and be driven by the demon into the desert. And Jesus asked him, “What is your name?” And he said, “Legion”; for many demons had entered him.

Demons possess the basic elements of personality. In Matthew 4 and Luke 4 we see the devil (who is a demon, or fallen angel), demonstrating the faculty of cognition—the act of knowing; perception; awareness—as we see that he knew who Christ was and spoke with Christ.

Demons have emotions. They not only know the judgement that awaits them, they also fear it (Luke 8:32; James 2:19).

Luke 8:32, “Now there was a herd of many swine feeding there on the mountain; and *the demons* entreated Him to permit them to enter the swine. And He gave them permission.”

James 2:19, “You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder.”

Demons have will. We see them exercise their volition in Luke 8:31 as they request Christ to not command them to go into the abyss.

Luke 8:31, “And they were entreating Him not to command them to depart into the abyss.”

B. Their properties

Being spiritual creatures, demons are angels, and therefore they are immortal, immaterial and invisible. They also make some material appearances in Scripture as do holy angels.

Demons are perverted beings and are referred to as such in Scripture. They are “unclean spirits” in Matthew 10:1; “evil spirits” in Luke 7:21; “spiritual forces of wickedness” in Ephesians 6:12; and in Matthew 12:45 some are more wicked than others. In 1 Timothy we see that they are deceitful and that they have perverted doctrines that men grow to accept.

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1 Timothy 4:1, “But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons.”

C. Their powers

Demons have supernatural intelligence. They are of a higher order of creatures than man. They know correct doctrine better than men and they also know how to corrupt it.

Demons have supernatural strength that is seen in their capability to possess people (Mark 5:3; Acts 19:16), their ability to punish people (Revelation 9), and their performance of miracles (2 Thessalonians 2:9).

2 Thessalonians 2:9, “*That is*, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders. ”

D. Their home (abode)

The abode of demons is in the “heavenlies” or the “heavenly places” (Ephesians 6:12). Where exactly the “heavenly places” are at we do not know, Scripture does not reveal it to us.

Ephesians 6:12, “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**”.

That there are multiple “heavenly places” is supported by the use of the plural in Ephesians 6:12, by the multiple references to the heavens (e.g., Ephesians 4:10; Hebrews 4:14; 7:26) and Paul’s implication that he went to the “third heaven” in 2 Corinthians 12:2. So at least there are three “heavens”. What the differences are between these “heavens” is not clear either, but it is clear that Satan and the rest of the demons have some degree of access to at least some of these “heavens.” It is in this heaven that most of them now live.

Ephesians 4:10, “He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the **heavens**, that He might fill all things.”

Hebrews 4:14, “Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the **heavens**, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.”

Hebrews 7:26, “For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the **heavens**,”

2 Corinthians 12:2, “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**.”

Some demons, namely those who sinned by taking wives from the daughters of men in Genesis 6, are in “prison,” which is likely hell (Tartarus).

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1 Peter 3:19, “In which also He went and made proclamation to the spirits *now* in prison.”

2 Peter 2:4, “For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment;”

In Revelation 9 we see a reference to four fallen angels who are bound at the river Euphrates. When this binding takes place is not exactly clear, but it is clear that fallen angels have access to the earth, and some may only have access to the earth. It is likely that if these angels are currently bound to this earthly region they are actively working Satan’s desires.

Revelation 9:14, "One saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, “Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates.” "

The abyss or the bottomless pit (NASB, Revelation 9:1) is another place of demonic abode. It may be that if there are demons there now they may have the ability to leave, but a time will come during the tribulation when from this place demons will come and afflict the world for a time. Then during the Millennial Kingdom, it will be the place where Satan and his angels will be imprisoned until the appointed time.

Revelation 17:8, “The beast that you saw was and is not, and is about to come up out of the **abyss** and to go to destruction. And those who dwell on the earth will wonder, whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast, that he was and is not and will come.”

Revelation 20:3, “And threw him into the **abyss**, and shut *it* and sealed *it* over him, so that he should not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time.”

The final place that awaits demons and unrepentant men is the lake of fire, hell.

Revelation 20:10, “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 20:15, “And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.”