

Worshipping Devils

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The word “devils” appears often in the four gospels, and in other places in the King James Version of the Bible, but that is a misleading translation of the words involved. The word “devils” does not exist in the original Greek manuscripts of the New Testament, and for one simple reason: there are no “devils”. There is only one Devil. Other unclean spirits are demons, and that is the word that the apostles used when referring to evil spirits other than the Devil himself. In the Old Testament, the words “devils” appears four times, but the two words originally used refer to specific kinds of demons, as you will see. It is doubly wrong to translate these two words as “devils” in the Old Testament not only because there is but one Devil but also because the word “Devil” itself is not revealed as a name for Satan until the temptation of Jesus in the New Testament. In every case, then, whenever the word “devils” is used in the King James translation, or in any other, it is an imperfect translation of what was originally written. Demons can be considered “devils” only in the sense that they are like the Devil in their hearts and rebelled as he did against God.

Paul taught that these demons are the “gods” that Gentiles around the world worshiped (1Cor. 19:20-21): *“The things that the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice unto [demons], and not unto God, and I do not desire for you to have fellowship with demons. You cannot drink of the cup of the Lord and of the cup of demons. You cannot be partakers of the Lord’s table, and of the table of demons.”*

When we read these two verses in their context, it is clear that the way to have fellowship with demons is to worship with those who worship in ways other than the way God has commanded. In this covenant, the commanded way to worship God is “in spirit and in truth” (Jn. 4). Whoever worships in any other way is worshipping demons, for their worship is according to the will of demons rather than God and is therefore unclean and unacceptable to God. Paul’s mission, he told the Church in Rome, was to make the worship of the Gentiles acceptable to God “being sanctified by the holy Ghost” (Rom. 16:15). It is not what we think we are doing that makes our worship either a worship of God or of demons; rather, the determining factor is whether our worship is sanctified by the holy Ghost. Without that, all worship is worship of either demons or of self (some people worship their own will power - Col. 2:20-23).

Evils spirits can teach men. Ancient poets such as Homer and Virgil prayed earnestly that certain of these “gods” would possess them and reveal to them mysteries of the past and open their eyes to the unseen realm of the gods, so that they could tell their epic tales convincingly. I am persuaded to believe that demons did possess those and other such famed “poets” and did reveal to them magnificent lies, lies that destroyed countless souls in the ancient world. Paul said that the holy Ghost had plainly spoken to him that the Church itself would turn from the truth of Christ and would begin to follow after “doctrines of demons” (1Tim. 4:1) and that many saints would hire men to teach them such doctrines (2Tim. 3:1-4). This happened, and the Church is now completely divided and confused by the confused and conflicting doctrines of Christianity. The Apostle John, moved also by the Spirit of God, described the religion of Christianity as becoming *“the habitation of demons, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird”* (Rev. 18:2). That is why God wants His people out of it! By participating in the religion of Christianity, the children of God are having fellowship with demons, and while they remain at the table of demons, they are in danger of suffering the wrath of God that is coming upon that religion. Concerning Christianity, God foretold not only of His terrible wrath that would destroy it (Rev. 18) but also of

demons dancing with delight amid the destruction (Isa. 13:21).

The Jews who forsook the Law of the Lord and learned heathen ways of worship did not think they were worshiping evils spirits, the enemies of all that is pure and good. They would have insisted that they were not doing so. But their insistence that they were worshiping gods and not evil spirits did not change the facts or confuse God. God does not listen and learn from men; He demands that men listen and learn of Him. In Leviticus 17:1-7, the Lord said He was providing a place for Israel to worship Him so that *"they shall no more offer their sacrifices unto demons, after whom they have gone a-whoring."* The Hebrew word for these demons was pronounced something like "Sayier", and these evils spirits were, apparently, hairy creatures with goat-like bodies or feet. The ancient "god" named Pan had such a body, and many ancient nations worshiped him. These evil beings are also mentioned in 2Chronicles 11:15, as being among the gods that Israel worshiped after they had cast out God's Levites as their teachers and priest and rejected both the law of Moses and the revelations of David.

Another kind of demon that was worshiped by Israel was the "bull-colossus" type. We see these bull figures at the entrance ways of ancient palaces of heathen kings. They were supposed to be protective spirits, and foolishly, Israel trusted in them instead of trusting God for their protection. Israel provoked God to jealousy by their attraction to these demons before they even reached the Land of Promise (Dt. 32:15-20). And once they entered into the land, they proved their devotion to them by burning their own children to them on their altars (Ps. 106:34-39, KJV): *"They did not destroy the nations, concerning whom the LORD commanded them, but were mingled among the heathen and learned their works. And they served their idols, which were a snare unto them. Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils and shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and daughters, whom they sacrificed to the gods of Canaan. And the land was polluted with blood."*

Later, in a long and passionate indictment of Israel for her unfaithfulness to Him, God including these heart-rending words: *"Moreover thou has taken thy sons and thy daughters, whom thou has borne unto me, and these hast thou sacrificed unto them to be devoured. Is this of thy whoredoms a small matter, that thou has taken my children and [turned them over to idolatrous priests] to pass through the fire for [demons]?"* (Ezek. 16:20-21).

It is better not to worship at all than to worship in a way that God has not commanded because it is better not to worship at all than to worship demons. Every way of worship but God's way is evil. Every other religion but His "pure and undefiled religion" is delusive and destructive. When Homer or Virgil prayed to be possessed by the demons called Muses, they thought they were pursuing a righteous course. They were pleading for their own damnation! Instead of being enlightened, as they thought, they were being led into deep darkness, and the grand stories that the Muses revealed to them inspired whole nations to sin continually against the living God. Those who are possessed by spirits of Christianity are following in the footsteps of such deluded men, pursuing a course that will not take them and their followers to the place they think they are going. *"Thinking to be wise"* wrote Paul, *"they became fools."*

Let us pray to be "possessed" by the sweet Spirit of Truth, the holy Spirit that Jesus Christ suffered and died for us to received. Outside of that, there is no trustworthy guide for our souls.