

The Demons Tremble

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While Jesus was on earth, He would often encounter people possessed with demons. The demons were described as *“evil spirits”* (Acts 19:13) who would torment those people in whom they had taken up residence (Mark 9:17-29; Luke 8:29). Although demon possession only occurred during the days of miracles (Zechariah 13:1-6; 1 Corinthians 13:8-12), please notice some facts about these demons from which we can benefit:

Demons believe in God. When Jesus would encounter one of these evil spirits, the spirit would readily acknowledge that fact that Jesus was the Son of the Most High God: *“And unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God”* (Mark 3:11). *“And devils also came out of many, crying out, and saying, Thou art Christ the Son of God. And he rebuking them suffered them not to speak: for they knew that he was Christ”* (Luke 4:41; cf. 8:27-28; Mark 5:6-7, etc.).

Demons fear God. Not only did they believe in God, they were sorely afraid to be in the presence of Jesus, their Judge, because they knew they had been wicked. They would beg Jesus not to torment them before their time: *“And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?”* (Matthew 8:29; cf. Mark 1:24, 5:7; Luke 4:34, 8:28). James told us that the demons *“also believe, and tremble”* (James 2:19). Demons tremble at the thought of facing the Lord God Almighty, because *“It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God”* (Hebrews 10:31); *“For our God is a consuming fire”* (Hebrews 12:29).

Demons fear God more than most people do today. When we think of demons, we tend to think of some of the most evil beings in existence, yet most people in the world have less respect for God than demons do! The demons tremble at the thought of God Almighty and His wrath, yet it seems that our world is losing its fear of God in so many ways. There are many today who say, *“There is no God”* (Psalm 14:1), yet they do not tremble. There are many who take God’s name in vain (Exodus 20:7; Matthew 6:9), yet they do not tremble. There are many who live in adultery (Hebrews 13:4), yet they do not tremble. There are many who spread false doctrine (James 3:1), yet they do not tremble. There are many who refuse to obey the Gospel (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9), yet they do not tremble. There are many who offer worship to God that He has not authorized (Leviticus 10:1-2; John 4:24; Colossians 3:17), yet they do not tremble. There are many who neglect the assemblies of the church (Hebrews 10:25-31), yet they do not tremble. How foolish it is to defy the most powerful Being in existence and live without fear of His

wrath! "...Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding" (Job 28:28; cf. Psalm 111:10, 112:1). No matter what men choose to do now regarding the will of God, one day every one of us will be on our knees in awe as we face the judgment of God Omnipotent: "For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Romans 14:11-12; cf. Philippians 2:8-12).

People will not be saved by belief alone anymore than demons will be saved by belief alone! This is precisely the point that James made when he wrote James 2:19-20: "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?" There are many today who fear God, but they have been taught that they can avoid God's punishment of Hell by merely believing in Christ. Although the Bible unquestionably teaches the necessity of belief (John 8:24), the Bible does not teach that belief alone saves! The phrase "faith only" is found in the Scriptures one time, yet it is preceded by the words "not by": "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only" (James 2:24). Peter said that we must not only fear God – we must also obey His commands: "But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him" (Acts 10:35; cf. Psalm 119:172). It is not enough to simply "have a zeal of God" – there must also be a proper knowledge of God's will and submission to His will (Romans 10:1-3). Demons are apparently more aware of the Truth than most people today, because they understand that both they and we will be judged by our works – not merely by what we believe.

And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:12-15; cf. 2:23, 22:12-14; Ecclesiastes 12:13-14; Matthew 7:21-23, 12:36-37, 16:27, 25:31-46; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Romans 2:5-6; Galatians 6:7-8; 1 Peter 1:17).

Although demons are far from what we would consider spiritual role models, there are lessons that we can learn from them. If we are outside of the safety of Christ's blood, let us also tremble at the thought of God's fiery wrath! May we repent of our sins, obey God's commands to be saved, and be faithful unto death, so that we will not regret our choices for all of eternity (Acts 2:38, 8:35-38; Revelation 2:10).

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