

38b ACTS

Let's pick up our study now. We have covered the first two points in our study of demons. You can call it the doctrine of demons.

Of course, that cuts both ways. But we've seen that, of course, as is common knowledge, there are the minions of Satan falling from heaven, Satan himself, Lucifer, which is the Latin term, but we talked about it in the break. The origin of that in Hebrew is halel, h-y-l-e-l, basically, which comes from a root that means, it's actually, I think, the same root that halel, in the sense of hallelujah, comes from, to praise, to glorify, to magnify, to lift up, something that is brought forth as being glorious, and it has come to mean, in modern minds, something that shines.

But that shining one translation is really a reading back of the second word, son of Shachar, s-h-a-c-h-a-r, which in most lexicons is listed as being the dawn, or daybreak, or sunrise, however, you always find it, nearly always, you find it in the company of a word that means to raise or to lift up, and this is the lifting of the darkness. The darkness was seen as a blanket that was over the world, and when the dawn comes, it is the darkness that lifts, it's not the dawn that lifts. And unfortunately, because people have understood Shachar to be dawn, and that Satan is being called the son of the dawn, then they read that back into Halel, and that has become shining one, or Lucifer, which is the equivalent in Latin.

But he's not a shining one, he has appropriated this title, son of the morning is a title that belongs to the Lord Jesus, it is the name of a reward that is promised to some of the overcomers over in Revelation 2 and 3, and so on. So we saw all that. Now, we also saw Beelzebub, the exalted lord, or lord of high things, lord of the heights, high lord, lord of the flies, lord of dung, depending on whether your tongue is firmly in your cheek or not, the Israelites like to call him Beelzebub, rather than Beelzebul, and we saw that this is an element in some of the other ancient names.

It's fascinating, for example, to look at Zebulun, who receives his name in Genesis chapter 30, but then the later history of the tribe of Zebulun, when you get to the predictions that Jacob makes for his sons, there is a lot of poetry and there's a lot of allusion and wordplay that goes on there, and Zebulun, which has the idea of being exalted and raised up, he says, you're going to dwell down by the sea, you're coming all the way down to sea level, and the tribal land of Zebulun is actually on the coast. Zebulun and Naphtali are down in the flatlands, and this carries all the way through the history of the tribe of Zebulun. When you get to Mount Ebal and Mount Gerazim, Naphtali and Zebulun are on the mountain where the curses are pronounced, along with Dan and the other Ne'er-do-well tribes.

So, I don't want to discourage you if you're named Dan, but it's a fate of those tribes, or

if you're named Naphtali or Zebulun, I feel sorry for you on a number of counts. But point three here, demons are active in human history. They aren't just off on their own separate track, and God has allowed them to be active in human history.

You see them in the Old Testament in terms of the prohibitions in the Law of Moses, do not engage in sorcery. The Greek word that is used to render this is pharmakeia, which we get pharmaceutical, and our word for drugs is actually because of the effect that drugs can have, pharmaceuticals that can alter your mind and do strange things to your body. Well, this traces its roots back to the idea of spirits.

Even in medieval times in England, people believed that your health and your moods and so on were influenced by humors. We talk about something being humorous, but humor, H-U-M-O-R, actually means a fluid, and it had to do with they thought that there were these different fluids that would wax and wane in your body, and you had melancholy and sanguine and choleric, and another one that I can't think of. And so the balance of these different humors, and so when they said, well, someone is in an ill humor, it meant that one or another of these things, phlegmatic is the other one, choleric is sort of an anger, phlegmatic is kind of apathetic, melancholy is sad, and what was the other one? Sanguine is on top of the world doing well.

At any rate, these balance, but these were spirits or humors. The reason they think fervent spirits means alcoholic beverages, liquids, so all of this was seen to be intermingled in the body, and this goes back to ancient days when people realized that there were spirits or humors or influences that could be in your body that could do things to you, so pharmakeia in Greek and so on. But demons are in fact involved and allowed by God to be involved in human history.

They are behind the pagan deities and pagan worship, such as you find detailed. In fact, God chides Israel in Deuteronomy 32, 16 through 18, for being seduced by these demonic spirits. If you read Deuteronomy 32, you find there that they are referred to as foreign gods.

He says they provoked him, God, to jealousy with foreign gods. With abominations they provoked him to anger. They sacrificed to demons, not to God.

To gods they did not know, to new ones, new arrivals, that your fathers did not fear. Of the rock who begot you, you are unmindful, and you have forgotten the God who fathered you. These are believers who have been lured away into false religion, idolatry, and spiritism and demon worship.

They are begotten by God. They are fathered by him. It goes on to say in Deuteronomy 32, 19, when the Lord saw it, he spurned them because of the provocation of his sons and his daughters.

And he said, I will hide my face from them. I will see what their end will be, for they are a perverse generation, children in whom there is no faith. We are not talking about salvation here.

We are talking about living faith, daily faith, righteousness by faith. They have provoked me to jealousy by what is not God. They have moved me to anger by their foolish idols.

But I will provoke them to jealousy by those who are not a nation. I will move them to anger by a foolish nation, for a fire is kindled in my anger and shall burn to the lowest hell. It shall consume the earth with her increase and set on fire the foundation of the mountains.

So here you have the idea of the fires of Sheol, the fires of the judgment of God, burning up the promises and the plenty and the bounty that God had promised to his people because of their faithlessness and their turning in the direction of these false gods behind whom are the demons themselves. You have the same idea in Psalm 106. Many places in scripture you have the idea of sometimes they are called goat demons.

In Psalm 106.36 they served their idols which became a snare to them. They even sacrificed their sons and their daughters to demons and shed innocent blood, the blood of their sons and daughters whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan, and the land was polluted with blood. As you know, I am not a rabid political type of person.

But I will simply point out to you that abortion in this country kills something on the order of 1.6 million sons and daughters. This is serving the idol of convenience or of unwillingness to tread a difficult path. Obviously, if you plan poorly, obviously, if you are caught up in a moment, obviously, if you are victimized in some way, you can get pregnant.

And there is all the sympathy and all of the support available for people who find themselves in that situation. We have countless organizations who do nothing but, and the Gladney organization here, the Buckner Benevolence, we have many, many organizations that are in the business of caring for people who are in that sort of situation. I just saw in the news where after the President signed the partial birth abortion ban, there are now three federal cases.

I actually went to the Planned Parenthood website or whatever it is, the center for the, whoever it is that is behind these suits, and tried to understand how they can justify this because this is only a fraction. This only accounts for about 250,000 abortions out of the 1.6 million. It is a very small fraction that undergo this procedure where the fetus is partially extracted from the womb and then its skull is crushed or punctured.

Now, aside from all of the debates, when does life begin and so on, any normal person thinking about such a procedure, recognizing the characteristics of life that you learn in

grade school science, growth, respiration, circulation, the very minimal, I mean most people wouldn't harm a puppy, wouldn't harm a pregnant dog, but will go down and have these procedures performed. And all I'm saying is when you go to a passage like Psalm 106, looking at a nation, individuals make decisions and it doesn't matter what any individual has done. God, you know, that's between individuals and the Lord in one sense.

But as a nation, to not only tolerate, but encourage and celebrate and redefine right and wrong so that Roe v. Wade is celebrated as a woman's right to choose and to push this legislation on the basis that, well, it's all about the health of the mother. Talk to anybody who is familiar with this and the health of the mother is in only a fraction of the cases. Now, I know people, I know people well who have done this, maybe before they were believers or whatever, and all I'm saying is when you look at this, we think, well, these are these poor primitive bronze age people living back in Old Testament days.

Read this again in Psalm 106. They serve their idols, which become a snare to them. They even sacrifice their sons and their daughters to demons and shed innocent blood, the blood of their sons and daughters whom they sacrifice to the idols of Canaan, and the land was polluted with blood.

What are the idols of Canaan? Why would someone do this in ancient days? I want a better life. I want better crops. I want more fruitful orchards.

I want my vineyard to produce more. The gods will bless us if we show them how serious we are about pleasing them. Well, we have made a god out of our emotion, as the New Testament says, the god of our feelings.

Well, I just don't think I can cope. I just couldn't handle it. I would be devastated.

What would people say? What would it do to my family? I don't have support. How can I get on with my life? I couldn't finish my education, etc., etc. And again, I'm not trying to stand on any kind of a soapbox.

I'm simply pointing out that the Word of God applies. This passage applies. And if you want to see a land just as bathed in blood as ancient Canaan, just look around.

We're in it. And the people who stand up and celebrate this destruction and loss of life and slaying of infants who are American citizens because they are conceived and would have been born here, it is no different than letting them be born and get a couple of months along and saying, you know, this isn't working out economically. I think I'll just crush his skull.

The same people who raise holy cane when someone leaves a baby in a car or shakes it to death have been down to the clinic. And how can one reconcile this? It is because doctrine of demons twists the truth. The subtlety of this twisted truth makes it seem

consistent, makes it seem right.

Someone can have a perfectly unwrinkled worldview in this regard. How does it happen? This is my whole point. Again, I'm not trying to say anything per se political or about abortion as such.

I think most of us have the common sense to figure that out. But it is an example of the power of the doctrine of demons that this isn't obvious to someone. Even a secular person knows what is cruelty, knows what is the taking of a life.

And yet, this has been redefined. It has been taken away. And this is doctrine of demons.

These are the same demons that ruled in the land of Canaan and accomplished the same objective in a slightly different way. But the objective is the same. The purpose is the same.

Get people distracted. Get them busy. Let there be a big debate.

The demonic agenda loves there to be a big political debate about this because to the extent that you get distracted and wrapped up in that, you're not looking at the Word of God. You're not living by the Word of God. We do have a responsibility, by the way, to our culture.

The Bible says, let your light so shine before men that they see your good works. You can't just sit in your living room and think, oh, how wrong. Oh, how bad.

There is a time to be aware of who's running for office and who to vote for. There is a time to send a letter or to take some other action. There's nothing wrong with being proactive as Christians because to hand our culture and our civilization and our country over to people simply because they are the loudest and simply because they are the most vocal doesn't honor the Lord.

There is a time to stand up. There is a time to act. I'm not saying let's all go grab a sign, but we will see the opportunities when they come.

We can make our voices heard. We can vote for people who represent biblical values. And we can encourage them once they get in office and express our views.

We live in a free country. It is a democracy where voices need to be heard. Why hand it to the noisy? Why hand it to the stupid? Why hand it to the deluded and deceived who are following the gods of Canaan? Well, you find the same thing in Leviticus 17.7, 2 Chronicles 11.15, Isaiah 13.21. Sometimes these are called the goat demons, but they are all the same thing.

These masquerade as being part of nature, as being part of the status quo, and yet they are in fact minions of Satan. Point four. These are the forces that oppose the Lord Jesus.

Matthew 4. Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. This is a part of God's plan to allow Satan, his hegemony, his power, his influence, as the God of this world. Could God throw Satan in the bottomless pit at any point in human history? Absolutely, of course.

Why doesn't He? Isn't that one of people's biggest objections when they hear the Gospel? They say, you know, if there really was a God who is good and righteous, why is there so much evil in the world? How could God let thus and so happen? If there was a God, we couldn't have such a bad world. So why doesn't God make it that way? Well, it is a part of God's master plan to allow Satan to run out his strength, to make his point. This would be all the same as if you have a trial in a courtroom and every time the defense... I mean, the guy is guilty.

You know, watch the practice or something. They got all these filthy, guilty clients that they're defending, trying to get them off in a loophole in the law. Well, in our judicial system, even if the guy is just guilty of sin, you still let him stand up and make his defense.

As soon as his lawyer stands up, you don't say, shut up. Go back to jail. You know, that's not justice.

You get a hearing. You get to try out your case. You get to make your point.

God is letting Satan make his point. He's saying, alright, you say you can run a civilization apart from me? Knock yourself out. I'm going to limit you to this one planet.

I'm going to give you these humans. If you can get them to follow you, go crazy. Do whatever you think you can do.

Hence, suffering, misery, death, degeneration, perversion, corruption, the stench, the sickly, sweet stench of death is all over Satan's world. He is the God of this world, and it stinks like a rotting corpse. And people say, how could a God let this corpse rot and stink? For all eternity, people and angels will look back and say, we don't need to go down that road again.

Look over... You notice that little column of never-ending smoke? We tried that living without God. I think it's been done. It is a high price to pay.

It grieves God that people suffer. It grieves God that people are lost and hell-bound. It grieves God to cast Satan and his angels into the lake of fire.

They're His creation. They were perfect in the day that He created them. And they willingly chose against Him.

It's all the same as if a set of parents had a child that just rebelled and repudiated and

scorned and mocked and ran the other direction from them. It's painful. God loves the world, and yet the world will not all be saved.

But there is a time where Satan has his day, has his way. It's limited in the span of eternity. It is extremely short.

But that's what we're in right now. Mark 5, verses 1-10, you get the same thing. To conquer the demons is to conquer Satan.

You go back to Luke 10 here when Jesus mentions the fact that because the 70 have prevailed over demons, this throws Satan down from his zebul, his lofty place. Point 5, these demons are not ignorant. They know God.

Remember James 2.19? Even the demons believe and tremble. They tremble, but they do not repent. God can, by a show of force, get submission, get acknowledgement, but not love, not faith, not obedience.

It was pointed out during the break about the Egyptians after the plagues. It was unmistakably clear that every single god in Egypt was humiliated and mocked and embarrassed by the overarching supremacy of the God of Israel. Did the Egyptians turn en masse? They did not.

Even the people of Israel quickly forgot the power of their own God. All they had to do was look over their shoulder and see the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire, and yet they could sit and moan and complain and say God has brought us out in the wilderness to die. Here's the towering pillar of cloud.

Manna is falling every day. Oh, He's brought us out here to die. We're all going to die with supernatural manifestations all around them, with a history of supernatural intervention by God.

A few days pass, and they're ready to quit. They're ready to abandon themselves. Well, the demons know God.

The demons have seen God. The demons recognized Christ and knew He had the power to cast them into the abyss. But there is no indication of repentance, appeal, change.

If there is any form of angelic salvation, it's not revealed to my knowledge in Scripture. Demons are described in the Bible as unclean, unclean spirits, Luke 4.33, Luke 6.18. They promulgate deceptive thinking. This is their business.

This is what they do. 1 John 4.1 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits whether they are of God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God.

Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God. Every spirit

that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. This is the Spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming and is now already in the world.

Some of the descriptions, I think, in the book of Revelation talk about those who have survived the assault of the Antichrist and have not taken His mark and so on. I think they symbolize people throughout history, certainly in the church age, because His Spirit is already at work. And there are those who fall for His line and those who don't.

John, back in the 1st century A.D., says the Spirit of Antichrist is already in the world. People either fall for it or they don't. 1 Timothy 4.1 Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith doing what? Giving heed to seducing spirits, deceiving spirits, and doctrines of demons.

Speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron. Turn on your Christian broadcasting TV programs and watch the parade of seared consciences go by. It's frightening.

Speaking lies in hypocrisy. Sow your seed into my ministry and God will bless you. Sow your seed into that ministry and kiss it goodbye, because the seed that should have been planted is going to be cooked and eaten.

Demons can perform miracles. They have supernatural power and with enough cooperation on the part of human participants, they can in fact make a dent in this physical and corporeal existence of ours. Revelation 16.14 you have the three frog demons or whatever that come out and they perform miracles and deceive many.

You go back to Exodus 7. There were demons behind the magicians in Egypt who got the rods to turn into snakes and so on. I will tell you, I believe this to be true even in our day. There are funny things going on.

There are teacups flying across the room and smashing. There are coins dropping out of ceilings. There are in fact corporeal manifestations of demons where in the course of conducting a seance, a thread-like substance begins to form in the room and begins to take the shape of a body.

It is typically always connected by some of these threads back to the medium. And skeptical people, I have not actually seen this, have no wish to, but skeptics who are seeking to disprove this, especially back in the 1800s, came back believers, have seen firsthand these things take place. I have talked firsthand to missionaries.

In fact, my aunt and uncle I just spoke with a few days ago just visited with the Porterfields, Bruce Porterfield, who was with the New Tribes Missions down in South America. And he can tell you stories about demon activity in the jungles of South America that absolutely rivets you to your chair. And they do have power.

When they are invited, when they are encouraged, when they have willing human participants, there is supernatural, dark, miraculous activity that takes place around them. This is why it is dangerous for people to fool around with the occult. It is dangerous for people to fool around with New Age.

It is dangerous for people to fool around with drugs. Because drugs, meditation, and a focus on the occult, and all these people that dress in black, what do we call that? Gothic. And the music that goes along with that, the ACDC and the Black Sabbath and all the other really dark, repetitive, hypnotic lyrics and thumping that goes along with that is mimicked and is echoed, or is an echo of what you find in the eastern meditative areas where there is active infiltration of demons.

It does the same thing. And young people have no idea what they're messing with when they go that way. They find out the hard way when they are unable to extricate themselves from that power.

So they are in the world. They do have the ability to perform miracles. And they actively oppose believers.

Ephesians chapter 6, verses 10 through 20. That is why it is important for us not to just be fat, dumb, and happy. We need to put on the full armor of God.

Be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world. Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the cunning deceptions, the wiles of the devil.

We do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, powers, and rulers. You know this verse. But listen, we tend to define our successes and failures by what happens.

And it is faulty thinking. It is faulty analysis. It is faulty measurement.

That is like running your car with no oil for 50 miles. And you arrive at your destination and you say, well see, that was fine. And you ignore the smoke and the heat and the burnt bearings and the fact that now your car will never start again.

You just measure it by the fact that you actually got from point A to point B. That is a faulty measure of good transportation. In the same way, if we measure our success or failure by what happens, we are missing it because we are not wrestling against flesh and blood. Our struggle is not in the physical arena.

It is in the area of thought. This is where demons excel, is in infiltrating our thinking, in getting our minds to follow a worldly pattern, to accept worldly standards, or an absence of standards. We talked about the post-modern culture where standards are really not an issue.

Someone says, well, you say this is wrong, by your definition I am sure it is, but I just don't care. It doesn't bother me for it to be wrong because I like it. I feel comfortable in this mode.

I feel comfortable being gay. I feel comfortable being amoral. I feel comfortable sleeping when, where, and with whom I want to.

I feel comfortable mooching off of society or mooching off of my family. I don't have any inhibitions of conscience when it comes to making my own way or being independent. You find people that actually seem to have no scruples, no conscience, no compass, no rudder, and they truly do not.

And this is a big bite out of the demonic, philosophical hamburger. And it's just about as nutritious. We wrestle against principalities.

We wrestle against powers. We wrestle against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual wickedness in the heavenlies, in the sky, in the place from where Satan fell. It's in government.

It's in places of authority. It's in the place of justice. It has ever been thus.

Solomon complained that he saw wickedness where there was supposed to be justice. He saw wickedness where there was supposed to be good rulers. It's always going to be that way under the sun.

But behind this are the demons. And we must stand therefore, having girded, Paul says, girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace. We are going to walk out to be assaulted by these forces.

There is a pile of great armor standing right there by the door. All we have to do is pick it up and put it on and we have nothing to fear. There are, by the latest estimate, some, for the IBM based PC, the Intel based PC family, there's something like 16,000 separate viruses in the wild.

There are no viruses for the Mac in the wild. There are no known viruses. Zero.

All 16,000 are for us Windows people. I just read this in an article. I sent you the link.

Matthew is a Mac guy. And so I figured he would be encouraged. But if you have good antivirus software on your machine, you can browse the internet and check your email with impunity because you have good armor.

You are protected against the assault of these. If you are foolish and do not patch your system and do not put on the armor, your system will be hijacked and will grind quickly to a halt and become unusable if it even has anything left on it at all. It's all a matter of

knowing where the protection is.

Gird your waist with truth. Put on the breastplate of righteousness. Shoe your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace.

Above all, take the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench a few of the fiery darts of the wicked one. It's not what it says. All the fiery darts.

If you've got the shield of faith, there is not a single dart that will penetrate. Not one. All of the... Did you see this? All of the fiery darts are quenched by the shield of faith.

It's an all or nothing deal. Either they all get through or they all get stopped. It's an all or nothing proposition.

So, it makes sense to me, being a pre-postmodern thinker that logic dictates, pick up the shield of faith. Quench the fiery darts. Take the helmet of salvation.

Take the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. Praying always with prayer and supplication in the Spirit. Being watchful.

Being alert. With perseverance. Praying for everybody else.

We pray for each other. Stay alert and pray. That is the solution.

We have nothing to fear from demons, just like we have nothing to fear from viruses, if we just make sure we've got our stuff on. But woe unto the hapless villager that walks outside the city gates without his armor. We will be slaughtered and we will hurt a lot.

Fiery darts hurt a lot. Scorpion stings, snake bites hurt a lot. It is up to us whether or not we arm ourselves.

Quickly, the ultimate fate of demons is to be cast into the lake of fire, Matthew 25, verse 41. In the meantime, those who are cast out, which is primarily documented in Jesus' day and in the days of the apostles, seem to have to go to the abyss. Once they have inhabited a person and are then driven out, their destination seems to be the abyss because they plead mightily with Jesus not to send them to the abyss.

I'm thinking specifically of the legion over in Luke chapter 8. Please don't send us to the abyss. Send us into the swine instead. Not realizing that the swine, even though they are unclean animals, would rather die than be infected with a demon, run off into the water, and of course, they can't live in a dead carcass and they end up going to the abyss anyway.

But Satan and his demons do set the course of this world, Ephesians 2. Don't waste your time trying to reform the world. It is set by Satan, Ephesians 2. They determine the course of this world. He's been expelled from access to the third heaven, Ephesians 1.21,

Job 1.6. They are, of course, normally non-corporeal.

They have no flesh and bones. Luke 24.39, when Jesus is resurrected, He says, Feel my hands and my feet. You see that spirits do not have flesh and bone as you see that I have.

Spirits do not have it. However, that's why they seem to have a crying need for corporeal experience. It seems as though they have some limitations as to what they can do in the fall that they've been subjected to.

It's kind of like being blinded. In falling from heaven, there is some sort of limitation. And they seem to partially recover from this when a human being lets them inhabit a body.

And that's why they crave it. And that's why many of them will share a single body and take turns. The legion all shared one guy because they all wanted the chance to drive.

Whether they can see and hear and have some sort of sensation, evidently there is a sort of lack that has been imposed on them as a result of the fall. And this is their drug of choice. If I can get into a human, I get some relief.

Matthew 8.16 They've already been judged. Their fate is sealed. Matthew 8.29, Luke 8.31, Revelation 20.

1, 2, 10, and 15. And angels are strong. Psalm 103.20 Mark 5.4 2 Peter 2.11 What's the bottom line? Yes, there is a strong enemy.

Yes, they are dangerous. But not if we do what we're supposed to. They are dangerous to the disobedient.

They are dangerous to the faithless. They are dangerous to the apathetic. They are dangerous to those who purposely walk in the direction of darkness.

You and I don't have to worry about them as long as we are more concerned about the kingdom. Lay up for yourself treasure in heaven where moth does not corrupt. Thieves do not break in and steal.

Even angelic thieves cannot take away our inheritance, our part that the Lord Jesus Christ died on the cross to give us. Well, quick summary on demons there. We'll pick up in Acts 16 and move into 17 next time.

Father, thank you for the privilege of studying your Word. We thank you so much for your power that is shared with us and is given to us through your Word and in the presence of your Spirit. We pray that He will lead us and guide us into the truth.

Remind us of these principles from your Word in the days ahead. We pray it in Jesus' name. Amen.

