

## JESUS' DIVINE POWER

Jesus encounters a man in Capernaum oppressed by demons. In Luke 4:34 he says, *"What do you have to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are, the Holy One of God."* Demons are referenced 22 times in Luke and 71 times in the Bible. And "unclean spirit" is noted 6 times in Luke and 24 times in the Bible. What are they?

There can be no theology without a demonology, notes GC Berkower. Angels are ministering spirits sent to serve those who inherit salvation (Hebrews 1:14) and they ministered to Jesus after His temptation (Matthew 4:11). Demons are fallen angels, followers of Satan's rebellion against God. These unclean spirits oppress people as the devil's deceitful spiritual agents.

**1- Jesus displays God's power** - He rebuked the demonized man, saying, *"be silent and come out of him! And when the demon had thrown him down in their midst, he came out of the man, having done him no harm."* Jesus simply ordered the demon by the authority of His word. This is the breath of God by which He also spoke all things into existence, the ultimate demonstration of divine power. Jesus Christ uses this same power of God in His miracles.

In Luke 3:22 Jesus Christ was declared by God to be the Son of God come in the flesh, full of the Holy Spirit. In Luke 4:1 He was anointed by the Spirit, to not only proclaim liberty but to set free the oppressed (Luke 4:18). This was promised and fulfilled by the Lord in real time. RC Sproul notes, "all the forces of hell appeared, to attempt to undermine the ministry of Christ, but the satanic kingdom bowed before the authority of Christ."

**2- People don't want to believe** - In Luke 11:14-23, Jesus casts out a demon, and people accused Him of doing it by the power of the prince of demons, Beelzebul. This word may mean "lord of heaven" which was deliberately distorted in 2 Kings 1:2 as "lord of the flies" to mock the heathen idol Ekron. King Hezekiah wanted to seek knowledge from it, and the prophet Elijah said *"is it because there is no God in Israel that you inquire of an idol?"* and Hezekiah died.

When Jesus is accused of being in league with the devil, He replies with logic and authority, *"if Satan is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? If I cast out demons by Beelzebul then by whom do your sons cast them out? But if it is by the finger of God that I cast them out, then the kingdom of God has come upon you."*

**3- Jesus sets people free** - Their own eyes and ears saw and heard the Lord Jesus Christ casting out demons by the word of His mouth. Luke 11:21 explains, *"when a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are safe. But when one stronger than he attacks him and overcomes him, he takes away his armor in which he trusted and divides his spoil."*

Jesus *"binds the strong man"* (Matthew 12:29, Mark 3:27) as a rabid dog on a leash. JI Packer notes that demons still have real, if limited, power and freedom of movement, but as John Calvin said, "they drag their chains wherever they go and can never hope to overcome God."

Back in Luke 4:36-37, the people of Capernaum *"were all amazed and said to one another, what is this word? For with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits, and they come out! And reports about Him went out into every place in the surrounding region."*

**4- Jesus is your protection** - Jesus' words do the works of God! Notice this man with a spirit of an unclean demon was in a synagogue. Many people in churches who were demonized have been set free by the power and authority of Jesus Christ, to embrace the good news of the gospel. Colossians 2:6-15 notes how the incarnation of Christ Jesus to rescue us on the cross and rise again accomplishes more than payment for sin, as He also secures new spiritual life and liberty from the power of sin. Jesus sets believers free from all that holds captive.

Satan, father of lies, became 'god' of this world when Adam abdicated his role as God's representative. Ever since, people have been subject to oppression by Satan and demons. But Jesus has defeated them. NT Anderson notes, "demonic powers are like invisible germs looking for someone to infect. Be aware of the reality and live a righteous life in Jesus Christ, as you have all the authority and protection you need to deal with whatever they throw at you." Your armor of salvation - anti-germicide - is Jesus and His written Word. Trust and obey! ☐