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Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Matthew 8.

Topics.

- Jesus heals a leper and a centurion servant lying paralysed.
- The Kingdom of heaven.
- Jesus heals Peter's mother in law.
- Jesus healings were to fulfil what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah.
- The cost of following Christ.
- Legion (A man named Legion).

The Previous Chapter: in the previous chapter Jesus said, Judge not that you be not judged, he talked about asking, seeking and knocking, entering by the narrow gate and warned against false prophets. He told the disciples, not everyone who says, "Lord, Lord," will enter the Kingdom of heaven and spoke about a wise man who built his house on the rock and a foolish man who built a house on sand, and about a speck and log in the eye and giving pearls to dogs and pigs.

NOTE: for information concerning people, places and the meaning of words see Map Locations and People of the Bible, and Bible Dictionary on Website Menu.

MATTHEW 8:1-4

1

Jesus Heals a Leper.

- **Matthew 8:1-4:** When he came down from the mountain, great crowds followed him.
2 And behold, a leper came to him and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, if you will, you can make me clean." 3 And Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, "I will; be clean." And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. 4 And Jesus said to him, "See that you say nothing to anyone, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a proof to them."

NOTICE: the leper knew Jesus could heal him, but didn't know if he would heal him so he did not have absolute confidence or faith that Jesus would heal him, but he did have absolute faith Jesus could heal him so he simply and humbly asked Jesus to heal him and Jesus did.

Offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a proof: the LORD gave Moses, laws for leprous disease and for the day of a leprous persons cleansing (Lev. 14:1-14). Under the law when a person was suspected of having leprosy, they were considered unclean and separated from society. They were put into isolation with all others who had leprosy then after a certain time they were to show themselves to the priest to see if it was leprosy or just a scab, if the Priest declared them clean (healed) they could return to the city. Jesus is simply telling this healed leper to do the same so that he will be declared by the Priests that he is clean of leprosy and will then be accepted back into society.

MATTHEW 8:5-13

Jesus Heals a Centurion Servant is Lying Paralysed.

- **Matthew 8:5-13:** When he entered Capernaum, a centurion came forward to him, appealing to him, "Lord, my servant is lying paralysed at home, suffering terribly." And he said to him, "I will come and heal him." But the centurion replied, "Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof, but only say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I too am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. And I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." When Jesus heard this, he marvelled and said to those who followed him, "Truly, I tell you, with no one in Israel have I found such faith. I tell you, many will come from east and west and recline at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." And to the centurion Jesus said, "Go; let it be done for you as you have believed." And the servant was healed at that very moment.

NOTICE: the centurion did not have absolute faith Jesus would heal his servant, but he had absolute faith Jesus could heal him so the centurion appeals to Jesus to heal his servant. The great faith Jesus commends the centurion for is not that he absolutely believed Jesus would heal his servant, but that he believed Jesus was able to heal his servant without even having to go to him. Even though the centurion had this great faith he still appeals to Jesus and asks Jesus to heal his servant (he does not demand it or claim it as some teach today). The words, "As you have believed" (v13) are not implying that the centurion had absolute faith that Jesus would heal his servant, it means Jesus did not have to go to the servant to heal him and that he would heal him as the centurion has asked. Though the centurion had absolute faith that Jesus could heal his servant he does not command or demand it, but rather in compassion for his servant humbly asks Jesus to speak the word, because he was not sure if Jesus would heal him.

The Kingdom of heaven: (v11) this is the future literal Kingdom of God to come to earth when Jesus returns the second time as King of kings and Lord of lords, we know this because Jesus says many will come and recline at his table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the Kingdom of heaven (Kingdom of God in Mark and Luke) thus those that belong to God will eat with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in God's future Kingdom to be established on earth. The Kingdom of God existed in the Old Testament under David and Solomon in a literal and visible form, today it is a faith and conscience Kingdom and when the Lord Jesus Christ returns as King of kings and Lord of lords, the Kingdom will again exist in a literal and visible form. For further information on the past, present and future Kingdoms see the title:

2

- Kingdom (ON WEBSITE MENU).

Many will come and see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the Kingdom (v11).

The Kingdom in this context refers to the return of the Lord Jesus Christ as, King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:11-16) to rule and reign from God's Holy City Jerusalem (on Mount Zion God's Holy Mountain) to establish God's Kingdom on earth during his millennial reign. In the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4-5) the dead in Christ and the faithful, who are alive, will be gathered together to rule and reign as kings and priests with the Lord over those nations who are left outside the Holy City of God. Christ the King united with his people will not only bring peace to the Middle East, but establish God's Kingdom of steadfast love, faithfulness, righteousness, joy and peace throughout the world and the glory of God will cover the earth.

Jesus will do justice to the poor and oppressed, he will be a faithful and compassionate King forever. He will not allow anyone to strike terror in the earth or use lies and deception to enlarge their own wealth and power. The land will abundantly produce and even the deserts will flourish. The animals will not feed on each other and even the lamb will be able to lie down with the wolf and everyone will eat of their own hands because all

that they plant will produce. All nations the LORD has made will come and worship before the Lord Jesus Christ. They will glorify God's Name, proclaiming the LORD is great and does wondrous things and that He alone is God. The book of Revelation states:

- Jesus Christ, the faithful witness who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood has made us kings and priests unto God and his Father is coming in glory and every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him and all kindreds of the earth (Revelation 1:5-7).

And in Revelation chapter five we are told that:

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he redeemed a people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation and made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Revelation 5:9-10).

At the end of this glorious Kingdom age God descends to earth on a Great White Throne the sea, death and hades (the grave) give up the dead. They stand before God and are judged according to what is written in certain heavenly books according to what they have done. Death and those counted unworthy are cast into the Lake of Fire a symbol of eternal destruction (i.e., total extinction) (also called the, Second Death) (Rev 20:11-15). Christ hands the Kingdom over to his heavenly Father and God is ALL in ALL and ETERNITY begins in all its fullness and majestic royal glory. For further information see titles:

- The Second or Great White Throne Judgment.

In, Resurrection (ON WEBSITE MENU).

Outer Darkness: (v12) the sons of the Kingdom, refers to the Jews (especially the chief priests, Pharisees and scribes) they are called sons of the Kingdom because they are Jews and descendants of Abraham, but by extension it can embrace any Christian who believes they will be accepted, but are rejected, such as the hypocrites that stands before the Lord thinking they had done marvelous things for the Lord, only to hear him say, "depart from me you workers of iniquity" (Matt. 7:21-23). Outer Darkness carries the idea of being the extreme opposite to light, it implies rather than people being in the light they will be in darkness meaning someplace outside the Kingdom of God and separated from God. Maybe outer darkness refers to being amongst the nations seen in the following verses that are living on planet earth outside the majestic New city of Jerusalem. Outer darkness is certainly an apt description of living outside of the New and Holy city of Jerusalem when its light is contrasted to the light of the nations. There will be enormous grief because these sons of the Kingdom thought they would be accepted into the glorious city of the New Jerusalem to be established on earth with the Lord Jesus Christ its royal and majestic King.

3

MATTHEW 8:14-17

Jesus Heals Peter's Mother in Law.

- **Matthew 8:14-17:** And when Jesus entered Peter's house, he saw his mother-in-law lying sick with a fever. ¹⁵He touched her hand, and the fever left her, and she rose and began to serve him. ¹⁶That evening they brought to him many who were oppressed by demons (daimon) and he cast out the spirits with a word and healed all who were sick. ¹⁷This was to fulfil what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah: "He took our illnesses and bore our diseases."

Peter was a married man, notice in this healing there is no mention that Peter's mother in law did or said anything Jesus simply saw her sick, walked over and touched her and she was healed instantly. This was to fulfil what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah (v17) is cited from the following verse of Isaiah:

- Surely, he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. ⁵But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his stripes we are healed (Isaiah 53:4-5).

Jesus healings fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah (Note Isaiah chapter fifty-three is a great chapter to read since it is full of echoes of the Lord Jesus Christ).

He took our illnesses and bore our diseases: (v17) this expression is cited from Isaiah's prophecy that states, "By his stripes you have been healed," (Isaiah 53:4-6). This expression has been misunderstood by some today, based upon these prophetic words of Isaiah there are a certain few ministers and pastors who proclaim that everyone who believes in the Lord Jesus Christ should be able to be fully healed no matter what their sickness, illness or disability maybe. They claim that providing a believer has enough faith they can claim (some say demand) from God a full and perfect healing. The implication of this is of course that all who are not healed or suffering cancer, terminal illness, disabilities etc., are only suffering them because they do not have enough faith. Generally, these congregations are told if they learn certain keys of faith, they will be able to overcome their sickness, disease or disability. Those under this type of teaching are bound to such preachers; because they desperately desire to find these keys of faith that they might be healed and who can blame them? Should such keys of faith exist wouldn't we all not only desire them, but once obtained be healing all our suffering family members and friends and those who came to us as Jesus and the apostles healed the sick (no matter what they believed and who they were) out in the open public places they visited. Now if this is not what Isaiah had in mind when he spoke the words, "By his stripes you have been healed," what did he mean". The best way to answer this question is to begin at the meaning of the word "stripes." It comes from the Greek word (*molops*) and means black eye or blow-mark (i.e., the enraged and swollen marks of a blow; the marks we refer to when we use the expression "he was beaten black and blue" referring to wounds made from outraged anger by beating). Christ to redeem us from our faults allowed his enemies to scourged (whip) his body until it was black and blue with bruises and wounds and this all on account of our sins and not for his.

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By his stripes you have been healed, means by Christ's own death in contrast to offering a bloody sacrifice as the Jews had been doing for over four-thousand years the Lord was himself the sacrifice and it is by his death and not the death of bulls, goats and lambs that we are healed. Sin is a disease, a natural and hereditary one (inherited from our earthly father Adam). It can be likened to an epidemic virus that reaches to all people, and to all the powers and faculties of our minds, hearts, emotions and passions. It is a sickness that is not only nauseous and loathsome, but cannot be healed by anything that even our world's best medical scientists, doctors and surgeons can do. The end result of this sickness is death and the darkness of the grave never to rise again. Christ is the only physician, and his blood is the only balm and sovereign medicine that has the power to cleanse from all sin. It is the forgiveness of sin, which is meant by the words, "By his stripes you have been healed," it means we have been healed wholly healed from our sin. This is because the sting of death, which is sin, is taken away, and the strength of sin, which is the law, is dead to those who are in Christ. The healing the prophet Isaiah had in mind when he spoke the words, "By his stripes we are healed," (Isaiah 53:4-5) was healing from our sin and healing from death to eternal life it is in this sense we have been healed by Christ's strips and wounds (i.e., his suffering and his death).

To be smitten by God: before time began God in His eternal mind and eternal foreknowledge not only planned and purposed that Jesus would be the central focus of His plan of Salvation for mankind, but also that Jesus would die for our sins that we may be saved by faith and by grace. In the book of John Jesus said, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal

life." (John 3:16). This was God's plan from the beginning. Some today may feel that because Christ did not appear during the Old Testament age, the faithful during those generations were saved solely by adhering to ceremonial rites, holy days and keeping religious customs and traditions, but this is not so. They were saved by having faith in the promised Messiah the Christ to come and not by works of the flesh or by self-effort, but because they by faith looked:

- Toward the promised seed of the woman spoken of in Genesis. (Gen. 3:15).
- Toward the promised seed of Abraham. (Gen. 26:4) (Gal. 3:16).
- Toward the prophet Moses said was to come like him. (Deut. 18:15) (Acts 3:22) (Acts 7:37).
- Toward the Holy One to come (whose body God will not let see corruption in death) (Psalm 16:9-11).
- Toward the promised seed of David. (Psalm 89:4) (Psalm 132:11) (Jer. 23:5) (Matthew 1:1).
- Toward the Messiah the Christ all the Old Testament prophets and the Scriptures speak of such as (Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53). The Lord Jesus himself said, "I have come to do your will, O God, as it is written of me in the scroll of the book (Heb. 10:7) (the scroll of the book refers to the Scriptures).

Added to this even though Old Testament Israel offered animal sacrifices to God they were not saved by them; they were a type and shadow of Christ the Lamb of God without blemish the Saviour to come and it is his blood that cleanses them. This is because the power of Christ's cleansing blood flows back to the foundation of the earth so that the faithful of the Old and New Testament are saved by the same Saviour and the same Redeemer. In the book of Revelations, it is written:

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- All that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. (Rev. 13:8).

And Peter wrote:

- You were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot foreordained before the foundation of the world and manifest in these last times for you. (1 Peter 1:18-20).

These verses shine a brilliant spotlight on the truth that Jesus was not only the central focus of God's eternal mind and of His eternal plans and purposes for mankind's salvation and for eternity, but also the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. The cleansing power of Jesus blood shed on the cross of Calvary doesn't just cover and cleanse only those who have come to the Lord after his death and resurrection, but flows all the way back to the foundations of the earth to Adam and Eve like an invisible spiritual river cleansing all the faithful of the Old Testament from the fall of Adam onward who by faith looked to the coming and the appearing of the promised Messiah the Christ.

MATTHEW 8:18-22

The Cost of Following Christ.

- **Matthew 8:18-22:** Now when Jesus saw a great crowd around him, he gave orders to go over to the other side (of the Sea of Galilee). ¹⁹ And a scribe came up and said to him, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." ²⁰ And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." ²¹ Another of the disciples said to him, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." ²² And Jesus said to him, "Follow me, and leave the dead to bury their own dead."

Jesus did not own a house or have a permeant place of residence (v20). Jesus is focused on going over the other side of the Sea of Galilee with his disciples he is fully aware that he only had a limited amount of time and of course was far more focused on the living than the dead. He did not have time to wait around a few days for this disciple to bury their father. Jesus is challenging this disciple to leave his dead father behind if he wants to follow Christ? Sometimes to do the will or work of God a believer will have to lay aside what they want to help another. Jesus focus toward death is totally different to ours, attending a funeral may comfort those that loved the person who has died, but it can't do anything for the dead person, whereas, taking the Gospel the living and healing the sick can, not only that Jesus was fully aware he would be facing the most brutal, bloody and cruel death himself very soon. Whoever thinks this was harsh of Jesus consider this: whoever is alive when the Lord returns to gather the faithful to himself will be in this exact same position. There will be no time to look back to our unbelieving families. It is certainly not wrong to love our unbelieving families, in fact it is right and godly thing to do, but if we are put in a position of choosing between them or Christ the Lord must always be our highest love. As much as we love our unbelieving family and friends (and it is right and proper that we do), the Lord must always be pre-imminent in our heart, mind and thoughts. If he is not the following prayer Paul prayed for all those who belong to the family of Christ can never be answered:

- May God, according to the riches of his glory grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God (Ephes. 3:16-19).

MATTHEW 8:23-27

6

Jesus Power over Nature: he Calms the Sea of Galilee.

- **Matthew 8:23-27:** And when he got into the boat, his disciples followed him. ²⁴And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being swamped by the waves; but he was asleep. ²⁵And they went and woke him, saying, "Save us, Lord; we are perishing." ²⁶And he said to them, "Why are you afraid, O you of little faith?" Then he rose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. ²⁷And the men marvelled, saying, "What sort of man is this, that even winds and sea obey him?"

The disciples were afraid and said to Jesus, we are going to die, save us, Jesus asked them, "why are you afraid, O you of little faith?" The disciple still did not fully understand who it was they had in the boat with them perhaps that is why Jesus said they had little faith they still only saw Jesus as a great prophet, rather than the Son of God. While they were with him they should have known they had no need to fear.

MATTHEW 8:28-34

Two Demon Possessed Men coming out of the Tombs met Jesus.

This story is also found in (Mark 5:1-20) (Luke 8:28-34).

NOTE: the following is not a dogmatic interpretation in every detail, but hopefully will give an overview of the story as recorded by Matthew, Mark and Luke and aid the reader in discovering even greater detail within the three different author's writings.

- **Matthew 8:28-34:** And when he came to the other side, to the country of the Gadarenes, two demon (daimon) possessed men met him, coming out of the tombs (or caves), so fierce that no one could pass that way. ²⁹And behold, they cried out, "What have you to do with us, O Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?" ³⁰Now

a herd of many pigs was feeding at some distance from them.³¹ And the demons (daimon) begged him, saying, "If you cast us out, send us away into the herd of pigs."³² And he said to them, "Go." So they came out and went into the pigs, and behold, the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea and drowned in the waters.³³ The herdsmen fled, and going into the city they told everything, especially what had happened to the demon-possessed men.³⁴ And behold, all the city came out to meet Jesus, and when they saw him, they begged him to leave their region.

THE STORY: Matthew says two men coming out of the tombs (or caves) met Jesus, while Luke says, a man from the city who lived in the tombs met Jesus, and Mark says, immediately a man came from the tombs to meet Jesus (Mark 5v2). Matthew is telling the same story focused on two men who lived at the tombs (or caves), while Luke and Mark are speaking about the same man who even though he was from the city is at this moment living amongst the tombs, thus the reason Luke says from the city and Mark says from the tombs. Luke and Mark are focused on the same man (called Legion) (both are in the same area) so there are actually three men in the story recorded in Matthew Mark and Luke. Two who are living in the caves on the mountain who see or meet Jesus when he gets off the boat and another man also with demons who is coming from the city to meet Jesus. The term, "immediately meet," (Mark 5v2) can simply mean the man coming out from the tombs immediately ran toward Jesus when he saw him. Near the end of the story all three men are in front of Christ. The caves were probably a place where people with mental disorders lived so there may have been other mentally ill people present but just not recorded in the story. Matthew, Mark and Luke focus only on the detail of the story that amazed them personally. The demon possessed men would not have understood completely how their healing came about, but they accepted that they were healed by the love and power of God and that is the focal message of the story. We may not fully understand all the detail of what took place but the message is very clear God through Christ healed troubled men the world at that time would have considered demon possessed and human waste. Matthew in his story has:

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- 7
- Two men who lived in caves.
 - No man coming from the city.
 - No man called Legion.
 - Neither of the two men asking to go with Jesus.

Matthew gives an account of the same event as Mark and Luke but his focus is on two men while Mark and Luke whose story is the same focus on the other man named Legion coming from the city.

Two demon possessed Gadarene men meet Jesus: Jesus had been ministering in Capernaum on the north side of the Sea of Galilee (Matt. 8:5). Now he has sailed with his disciples and arrived on the east side of the Sea of Galilee to the region of the Gadarenes (the country of the Gerasenes), on his arrival he meets two demon possessed men coming out of the tombs (or caves). A tomb was a place of remembrance (sepulchre) and a place of burial and in this story is in the same area as the Caves.

The two men speak to Jesus: Jesus has done amazing miracles on the other side of the Lake of Galilee; many people had followed him by walking around the Lake as he sailed with his disciples across it. No-doubt many stories would have been told of him and it is most likely these stories have reached the men at the caves. The fact that these two men cried out to Jesus implies they were probably some distance away from him. Having heard stories of who Jesus is and believing they were demon possessed as well as thinking Jesus may have come to torment them before the time (of eternal judgment) they were probably afraid to get to close to him especially since they thought Jesus may torment them even more. The fact that these two men asked Jesus if he had come to torment them "before the time" shows that they had an understanding of God and eternal judgment (v29).

NOTICE: (v31) it appears the demons begged Jesus to send them into the pigs some distance away, but even though it is recorded that demons spoke to Jesus in actual reality it is still the two men that are speaking. The human voice can sound quite distorted when someone is in this state of mind, nevertheless the two men from the caves believing, they are possessed by evil inferior gods and the only way to be healed of their mental disorder is to get the demons out by sending them into the pigs. We can only speculate at the reasons the man did not want Jesus to send the demons into the country, some suggest the man was asking Jesus not to send him out of the country they say the word "them", should be "he" but this would not fit with (Mark 5:12) which has the demons begging Jesus to let them enter the pigs and Luke says, the demons begged Jesus not to send them into the abyss (a bottomless pit) (Luke 8:31). Perhaps the men feared that the demons would possess other humans (this is only human reasoning, there are probably many other speculations) remember even though these men are seriously troubled they are not wicked evil people. Jesus does what the two men asked and sends the demons into the pigs and they fall over a steep cliff and drown.

NOTICE: these are not wild pigs there are herdsmen looking after them (v33). When the people of the city (probably the farmers who owned them and those who are employed as herdsmen) hear about the pigs being drowned they beg Jesus to leave their region.

THE OLD TESTAMENT RECORDS A SIMILAR STORY IN WHICH A SICKNESS IS TRANSFERRED FROM ONE PERSON TO ANOTHER

Naaman, was a great man, honourable, mighty in valour, but he was a leper Elisha hears of it and sends a messenger to Naaman, saying, go and wash in the Jordan and you shall be healed, Naaman obeyed and he was healed. Gehazi (Elisha's servant) after being told by Elisha not to ask Naaman for any reward sneaks off after Naaman and does exactly what Elisha had told him not to, he by lying to Naaman asks him for a reward. Naaman gives Gehazi two talents of silver, when Elisha hears of it, Gehazi lies again to Elisha and Elisha tells him the leprosy that Naaman had shall now cleave onto Gehazi and to his seed forever, Gehazi went out from Elisha's presence a leper as white as snow. This story shows that even the word of a prophet can transfer a sickness onto another (2 Kings 5:1-21).

8

A DIFFICULT CHAPTER

This is a difficult chapter to understand, even for those holding to the traditional or conventional Christian belief that an immortal evil god called Satan controls hundreds of thousands of evil eternal spirit gods called demons less powerful than himself and sends them to earth to torment people and inflict all kinds of mental and physical sickness onto the innocent including deafness and blindness. This concept raises the question, "What would be the point of Jesus casting evil gods called demons into pigs knowing that when the pigs die, the so-called immortal demons would be free to go and possess and destroy multitudes of other living human beings.

DEMONS, DEVILS AND SICKNESS

The English word demon and demons are not found in the entire King James Bible. In the New Testament of the King James Bible the translators have unfortunately translated both (diabolas) and (daimion) as devil or devils which gives a completely wrong understanding of the Greek words diabolos (devil) and daimon (demon). This has over the years led to a misunderstanding of the difference between devils and demons. Most well

recognized and globally accepted modern Bibles have translated demons (daimion) and devils (diabolas) correctly. The word demons (daimion) was believed to be an inferior deity or god and primarily relates to sickness whereas devils (diabolas) means a false accuser or slander and primarily relates to people's behavior and not sickness.

THE JEWS AND DEMONS

The Jews believed demons to be an inferior evil god or deity that held possession of those with severe sickness either bodily or mentally those that were mentally sick were believed to be possessed by an evil inferior god called daimon. They believed that the demons (daimonions) so held possession of them as not only to afflict them with ills, but also to dethrone the reason and take its place themselves and that people possessed with demons were forced by the demons to express the mind and consciousness of the demons dwelling in them, and the only cure was by the expulsion of the demons. The fact that the Pharisees and scribes and certain Jews believed John the Baptist and Jesus were possessed by demons (Jn. 7:20) (Jn. 8:48-49) (Jn. 10:19-20) (Matt. 11:18) clearly shows us that just because the religious leaders of Jesus era believed mental illness, deafness, blindness and sickness they didn't understand were a result of demons does not mean it is a true fact.

THE BIBLICAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SICKNESS AND DEMONS

In most instances when people had an illness that does not control the person, it is referred to in biblical writings as a sickness, but when a sickness (mental illness) controls a person to do things they do not want to do (have fits etc.), they are referred to as having demons or an unclean spirit. Sickness commonly related to illnesses the people understood, while demons primarily relate to severe illnesses and diseases, either bodily or mentally the people did not understand. Just because people believe something does not mean it is true if the Bible were being written today it would contain words like bi-polar disorder, schizophrenia, epilepsy, melancholy, loss of speech etc., which in the New Testament are referred to as unclean spirits, demons or caused by demons as are paralysis, blindness and deafness and any other sickness the people did not understand.

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ONE SUPER EVIL GOD IN CONTROL OF MILLIONS OF LESSER EVIL GODS

Any force in a human that controls a person to do things they cannot control themselves, things that affects their behavior and mental well-being, voices or words in the mind and severe diseases, either bodily or mentally, (such as schizophrenia, paralysis, blindness, deafness, loss of speech, epilepsy, melancholy, insanity and seizures etc., plus speeches that entice people against the things of God and God Himself) are all commonly called demons in the New Testament. But the Bible does not present a picture of one super evil god (slightly less in power than God) being in control of millions of lesser evil gods.

This is a modern-day misunderstanding of the language of the Bible. Demons are not evil people as Hollywood portrays demon possessed people in their movies. People in the Bible that had demons were morally good people and, in some cases, only children who were sadly afflicted with severe diseases, either bodily or mentally such as paralysis, blindness, deafness and loss of speech, epilepsy, melancholy and insanity, etc. In the opinion of the Jews demons had entered their bodies, and so held possession of them as not only to afflict them with ills, but also to

dethrone the reason and take its place themselves. The people of Jesus age believed the possessed were driven to express the mind and consciousness of the demons dwelling in them; and their only cure was thought to require the expulsion of the demon.

THE ORIGIN OF DEMONS

A demon is believed to be a supernatural being, spirit, or force capable of influencing human lives, usually by evil means. Demons have played a role in the traditions of most religions. The practice of expelling demons (exorcism) that possess people or places has been carried out by many religions. The belief in evil spirits and their ability to influence the lives of people dates from prehistoric times. Many early people believed that spirits occupied all elements of nature. Evil spirits or demons were spirits that brought harm to living people. Societies that believed in demons sought to influence the actions of both good and bad spirits through worship and sacrifices. Some ancient societies, including those in Egypt and Babylonia (now Iraq), believed that such spirits were responsible for the functions of the body and that demons caused specific illnesses. The word demon originated from an ancient Greek term, daimon, which referred to beings whose special powers placed them between people and the gods. These beings had the ability either to improve people's lives or carry out the punishment of the gods. Basic Christian ideas about demons originated from references to evil beings or unclean spirits in the Old Testament. By the middle ages, Christian theology had developed an elaborate hierarchy of angels, who were associated with God, and fallen angels, or demons, who were led by Satan. Satan himself was considered the original fallen angel. Islam also developed a complex system of demons. Muslim writings describe a group of evil beings, called jinn, who cause destruction and preside over places where evil activities take place. The original jinn were called Iblis, who was cast out by Allah for refusing to worship Adam, the first man.

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MODERN DAY MISUNDERSTANDING OF DEMONS

Demons can be seen as any controlling power or force in people that is destructive to their well-being, science says, anorexia and such like are mental problems and not physical, doctors call anorexia a destructive mental power or force whereas the Bible calls it, demons meaning, something that is destructive to a humans well-being. Today's generations primary understanding of demons comes from Hollywood and not New Testament or spiritual thinking because of this to think of someone having a demon is highly offensive as it implies, they are either extremely evil or extremely morally bankrupt which not one of the persons who are said to have demons in the Bible were. It is not the Bible that is wrong, but the modern-day misunderstanding of the terminology and language of the Bible because modern generations have been influenced by a wrong understanding of the language used during the time of Jesus and the apostles.

SOME SIMILAR BIBLICAL STORIES

A WOMAN AND HER DAUGHTER

a Greek Syrophenician woman asked Jesus to cast forth the demon (daimon) (meaning an inferior deity or god) out of her daughter, Jesus said the demon is gone out of her daughter and when she went to her house, she found her daughter healed. This is a woman's young daughter, a child. The child would not be evil or morally bankrupt, this was not an inferior evil god or deity possessing the child as the Jews believed but a mental disorder or disease (Mark 7:23-30).

A man tells Jesus that a spirit takes his child, and the son cries out during his epileptic fits and the boy suffers bodily harm. This is a man loved his son, the child would certainly not be evil or morally bankrupt, the spirit, is not an evil god possessing the child as the Jews believed, but a mental disorder, illness or disease (Luke 9:37-41).

A LUNATIC

A man came to Jesus and asked him to have mercy on his son telling Jesus that his son is lunatic (meaning affected by the moon), and often has very bad fits that sometimes seriously harm the boy (Matt. 17:14-18). The Jews believed evil inferior gods caused mental disorders and the Greeks believed the moon could cause bodily seizures or fits. Today we know the moon does not cause illness, but understand that the child had epilepsy or a similar disease and was having a fit, the Greeks and the Jews knew nothing of epilepsy or the like so they simply referred to illnesses and sicknesses they did not understand as being the result of the moon or the sick person being possessed by inferior evil gods. The Jews mistaken understanding of demons was the same as the Greeks wrong belief about the moon.

THERE ARE MANY SO-CALLED GODS IN HEAVEN AND ON EARTH

The Bible teaches that there is only one real God and creator of all that exists and His name is I AM the God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob, yet the apostle Paul says there are many so-called gods in heaven and on earth (1 Cor. 8:5). Immediately after making this statement Paul says, nevertheless not everyone possesses this knowledge. Meaning the knowledge that there are many gods, neither do they understand how and why (1 Cor. 8:7). Pagans believed in various gods, often referred to as "the god." These false but very real illusionary gods are created by a very strong belief in "the god" in the imagination of the mind. The New Testament calls these gods demons (daimonion), but that does not mean real inferior false gods actually exist, they are and entity created by a false belief of the mind, but to the person believing in false gods and demons they are very real entities this is most likely why Jesus did not try to explain the medical terms as we know them today.

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Jesus rather than go into lengthy detail to explain in detail the medical causes of sickness simply used the common language of his era and manifested God's power over all other gods people believed in by supernaturally healing people. Once a person saw and experience the healing power of God why would they continue to believe in their false inferior gods who had no power? When Jesus gave this same healing power to his apostles to heal physical sickness and spiritual or mental disorders of the mind it was not solely so they could deliver people from their sickness, but to prove to the people that they were teaching the words of the only true God and the only way to eternal salvation. Thus, the apostles and Jesus ministry were not to teach medical science, but to connect people separated from God to God.

DEMONS (ILLUSIONARY GODS AND THE MIND)

Demons as evil spiritual gods only exist in the mind of those who believe in them, they are an image of the mind created by imagination through a false belief in them. This false image in the mind will affect a person's emotions and feelings accordingly because the human nervous system

cannot tell the difference between a real image of the mind and a false one. The imaginary but real images of the mind create real emotions and feelings of fear through the human nervous system and these feelings in turn reinforce and convince those that believe in demons or monsters that real evil gods do exist.

NOT EVERYTHING IS BLACK AND WHITE

Perhaps everything regarding demons is not quite as black and white as I have explained, even the best doctors and scientist in the world today still don't fully understand the cause of many of these illness, but one thing that is very clear and is black and white is that those in the Bible who were said to be possessed by demons were not evil wicked people in fact some were children and others humbly fell at the Lords feet and wanted to follow him added to this God through the Lord Jesus Christ showed them great compassion and mercy.

For further information see the titles:

- Devils.
- Demons.

Both titles are in, Satan and his Family (ON WEBSITE MENU).

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.

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